

Bible Readings and Commentaries

Book 3 of 6

**Third Half-Year of Triennial Torah Cycle
For Sabbath Service**

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Triennial Torah Cycle from the Ancient Holy Temple

The first Sabbath of the Month Nisan (the month that begins two weeks before Passover), every third year, is the time to start the triennial Torah reading cycle. This is the reading cycle that was used in the Holy Temple, and apparently the one that Yeshua followed. As the readings progress through the three years, the subjects will be seen to correspond to times of festivals and major events.

Each Sabbath's readings are called a seder (order of service). Each seder includes a portion of the *Torah* (meaning Instruction), *Haftara* (meaning Completion of the Torah -- a reading from the Prophets), and a Psalm to be sung.

The cycle begins with *Bereshit (In the beginning)* / Genesis 1, and Psalm 1, and a portion of Isaiah on the same subject. A reading of corresponding topic from the Apostolic Writings (NT) is suggested for each Sabbath. The title of a Torah reading is the first significant word(s), which predates today's common system of chapters and verses.

The Psalms, used in numerical order, agree in subject with the Torah portions throughout the three years.

These blessings are to accompany the Bible readings:

Before Torah Reading:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who chose us from among all peoples by giving us Your Torah.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, giver of the Torah."*

After Torah Reading:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who in giving us Yeshua, the Living Torah, has planted everlasting life in our midst.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, giver of the Torah."*

Before Prophets and Apostles:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who selected good prophets, delighting in their words which were spoken truthfully.
Blessed are You, Yahweh, Who chose the Torah, Your servant Moses, Your people Israel,
and the prophets of truth and righteousness."*

After Prophets and Apostles:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Rock of Ages, righteous throughout all generations.
You are the faithful God, promising and then performing, speaking and then fulfilling,
for all Your words are true and righteous.
Faithful are You, Yahweh our God, and faithful are Your words,
for no word of Yours shall remain unfulfilled;
You are a faithful and merciful God and King.
Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, Who are faithful in fulfilling all Your words."*

Each reader who does not personally say the blessings should say "Amen" to the blessings as indicated in the text.

Egypt: Past, Present, and Future

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה בֹּא אֶל־פַּרְעֹה כִּי־אֲנִי הִכְבַּדְתִּי אֶת־לִבּוֹ /

Vayomer Yahweh el-Moshe, Bo el-Pharaoh ki ani hikbaditi et-libo /

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart)

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them, ² and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and how I performed My signs among them, that you may know that I am Yahweh." ³ Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, "Thus says Yahweh, the God of the Hebrews, 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before Me? Let My people go, that they may serve Me.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁴ 'For if you refuse to let My people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring **locusts** into your territory. ⁵ 'They shall cover the surface of the land, so that no one will be able to see the land. They will also eat the rest of what has escaped-- what is left to you from the hail-- and they will eat every tree which sprouts for you out of the field. ⁶ 'Then your houses shall be filled and the houses of all your servants and the houses of all the Egyptians, something which neither your fathers nor your grandfathers have seen, from the day that they came upon the earth until this day.'" And he turned and went out from Pharaoh.

*Reader 3** Amen. ⁷ Pharaoh's servants said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve Yahweh their God. Do you not realize that Egypt is destroyed?" ⁸ So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, "Go, serve Yahweh your God! Who are the ones that are going?" ⁹ Moses said, "We shall go with our young and our old; with our sons and our daughters, with our flocks and our herds we shall go, for we must hold a feast to Yahweh." ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Thus may Yahweh be with you, if ever I let you and your little ones go! Take heed, for evil is in your mind. ¹¹ "Not so! Go now, the men among you, and serve Yahweh, for that is what you desire." So they were driven out from Pharaoh's presence.

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹² Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Egypt for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Egypt and eat every plant of the land, even all that the hail has left." ¹³ So Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, and Yahweh directed an east wind on the land all that day and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. ¹⁴ The locusts came up over all the land of Egypt and settled in all the territory of Egypt; they were very numerous. There had never been so many locusts, nor would there be so many again. ¹⁵ For they covered the surface of the whole land, so that the land was darkened; and they ate every plant of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. Thus nothing green was left on tree or plant of the field through all the land of Egypt.

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹⁶ Then Pharaoh hurriedly called for Moses and Aaron, and he said, "I have sinned against Yahweh your God and against you. ¹⁷ "Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to Yahweh your God, that He would only remove this death from me." ¹⁸ He went out from Pharaoh and made supplication to Yahweh. ¹⁹ So Yahweh shifted the wind to a very strong west wind which took up the locusts and drove them into the Red Sea; not one locust was left in all the territory of Egypt. ²⁰ But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go.

*Reader 6** Amen. ²¹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand toward the sky, that there may be **darkness** over the land of Egypt, even a darkness which may be felt." ²² So Moses stretched out his hand toward the sky, and there was thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. ²³ They did not see one another, nor did anyone rise from his place for three days, but all the sons of Israel had light in their dwellings.

*Reader 7** Amen. ²⁴ Then Pharaoh called to Moses, and said, "Go, serve Yahweh; only let your flocks and your herds be detained. Even your little ones may go with you." ²⁵ But Moses said, "You must also let us have sacrifices and burnt offerings, that we may sacrifice them to Yahweh our God. ²⁶ "Therefore, our livestock too shall go with us; not a hoof shall be left behind, for we shall take some of them to serve Yahweh our God. And until we arrive there, we ourselves do not know with what we shall serve Yahweh." ²⁷ But Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he was not willing to let them go. ²⁸ Then Pharaoh said to him, "Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!" ²⁹ Moses said, "You are right; I shall never see your face again!"

Isaiah 19:1-25

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ The oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, Yahweh is riding on a swift cloud and is about to come to Egypt; the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them. ² "So I will incite Egyptians against Egyptians; and they will each fight against his brother and each against his neighbor, city against city and kingdom against kingdom. ³ "Then the spirit of the Egyptians will be demoralized within them; and I will confound their strategy, so that they will resort to idols and ghosts of the dead and to mediums and spiritists. ⁴ "Moreover, I will deliver the Egyptians into the hand of a cruel master, and a mighty king will rule over them," declares Lord Yahweh of hosts.

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁵ The waters from the sea will dry up, and the river will be parched and dry. ⁶ The canals will emit a stench, the streams of Egypt will thin out and dry up; the reeds and rushes will rot away. ⁷ The bulrushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile and all the sown fields by the Nile will become dry, be driven away, and be no more. ⁸ And the fishermen will lament, and all those who cast a line into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread nets on the waters will pine away. ⁹ Moreover, the manufacturers of linen made from combed flax and the weavers of white cloth will be utterly dejected. ¹⁰ And the pillars of Egypt will be crushed; all the hired laborers will be grieved in soul.

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹¹ The princes of Zoan are mere fools; the advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid. How can you men say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"? ¹² Well then, where are your wise men? Please let them tell you, and let them understand what Yahweh of hosts has purposed against Egypt. ¹³ The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, the princes of Memphis are deluded; those who are the cornerstone of her tribes have led Egypt astray. ¹⁴ Yahweh has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; they have led Egypt astray in all that it does, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. ¹⁵ There will be no work for Egypt which its head or tail, its palm branch or bulrush, may do.

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹⁶ In that day the Egyptians will become like women, and they will tremble and be in dread because of the waving of the hand of Yahweh of hosts, which He is going to wave over them. ¹⁷ The land of Judah will become a terror to Egypt; everyone to whom it is mentioned will be in dread of it, because of the purpose of Yahweh of hosts which He is purposing against them. ¹⁸ In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to Yahweh of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction. ¹⁹ In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh near its border. ²⁰ It will become a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them.

*Reader 12** Amen. ²¹ Thus Yahweh will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to Yahweh and perform it. ²² Yahweh will strike Egypt, striking but healing; so they will return to Yahweh, and He will respond to them and will heal them. ²³ In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrians will come into Egypt and the Egyptians into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. ²⁴ In that day Israel will be the third party with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, ²⁵ whom Yahweh of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed is Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance."

Jeremiah 4:6

*Reader 13** Amen. ⁶ "Lift up a standard toward Zion! Seek refuge, do not stand still, for I am bringing evil from the north, And great destruction.

I Samuel 6:6

⁶ "Why then do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? When He had severely dealt with them, did they not allow the people to go, and they departed?"

Psalm 47 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.*

¹ O clap your hands, all peoples; shout to God with the voice of joy. ² For Yahweh Most High is to be feared, a great King over all the earth. ³ He subdues peoples under us and nations under our feet. ⁴ He chooses our inheritance for us, the glory of Jacob whom He loves. Selah. ⁵ God has ascended with a shout, Yahweh, with the sound of a trumpet. ⁶ Sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises to our King, sing praises. ⁷ For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a skillful psalm. ⁸ God reigns over the nations, God sits on His holy throne. ⁹ The princes of the people have assembled themselves as the people of the God of Abraham, for the shields of the earth belong to God; He is highly exalted.

Matthew 24:29-44

*Reader 14** Amen. ²⁹ "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man will appear in the sky with power and great glory. ³¹ "And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. ³² "Now learn the parable from the fig tree: when its branch has already become tender and puts forth its leaves, you know that summer is near; ³³ so, you too, when you see all these things, recognize that He is near, right at the door. ³⁴ "Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place. ³⁵ "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.

*Reader 15** Amen. ³⁶ "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone. ³⁷ "For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. ³⁸ "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away; so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ "Then there will be two men in the field; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴¹ "Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one will be left. ⁴² "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. ⁴³ "But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ "For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

Matthew 25:31 - 26:30

*Reader 16** Amen. ³¹ "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. ³² "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; ³³ and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; ³⁶ naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or thirsty, and give You something to drink?' ³⁸ 'And when did we see You a stranger, and invite You in, or naked, and clothe You?' ³⁹ 'When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ "The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'

*Reader 17** Amen. ⁴¹ "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴² for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me nothing to drink; ⁴³ I was a stranger, and you did not invite Me in; naked, and you did not clothe Me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit Me.' ⁴⁴ "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?' ⁴⁵ "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' ⁴⁶ "These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

*Reader 18** Amen. ^{26:1} When Yeshua had finished all these words, He said to His disciples, ² "You know that after two days the Passover is coming, and the Son of Man is to be handed over for crucifixion." ³ Then the chief priests and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, named Caiaphas; ⁴ and they plotted together to seize Yeshua by stealth and kill Him. ⁵ But they were saying, "Not during the festival, otherwise a riot might occur among the people." ⁶ Now when Yeshua was in Bethany, at the home of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him with an alabaster vial of very costly perfume, and she poured it on His head as He reclined at the table. ⁸ But the disciples were indignant when they saw this, and said, "Why this waste?" ⁹ "For this perfume might have been sold for a high price and the money given to the poor." ¹⁰ But Yeshua, aware of this, said to them, "Why do you bother the woman? For she has done a good deed to Me. ¹¹ "For you always have the poor with you; but you do not always have Me. ¹² "For when she poured this perfume on My body, she did it to prepare Me for burial. ¹³ "Truly I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of in memory of her."

*Reader 19** Amen. ¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?" And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. ¹⁶ From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Yeshua. ¹⁷ Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Yeshua and asked, "Where do You want us to prepare for You to eat the Passover?" ¹⁸ And He said, "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, 'My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your

house with My disciples." 19 The disciples did as Yeshua had directed them; and they prepared the Passover. 20 Now when evening came, Yeshua was reclining at the table with the twelve disciples. 21 As they were eating, He said, "Truly I say to you that one of you will betray Me." 22 Being deeply grieved, they each one began to say to Him, "Surely not I, Lord?" 23 And He answered, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the bowl is the one who will betray Me." 24 "The Son of Man is to go, just as it is written of Him; but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." 25 And Judas, who was betraying Him, said, "Surely it is not I, Rabbi?" Yeshua said to him, "You have said it yourself." *Reader 20** Amen. 26 While they were eating, Yeshua took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." 27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins. 29 "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom." 30 After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Commentary:

In last week's portion (v.9:13), we saw the beginning of the last set of three plagues. Moses was to station himself before the Pharaoh (as with the first plague of each set, at the Nile River, over which he claimed to be god) to give warning. Yahweh said that He allowed the Pharaoh to yet remain alive, so that His sovereignty and His Name would be declared throughout the world (v.9:16). The seventh plague was hail that severely damaged the trees and food crops.

(V.10:1) The Midrash teaches that the eighth plague was measure for measure: the Egyptians forced Israelite slaves to tend their crops, so the locusts devoured the crops. Moses was instructed to "*come to Pharaoh*" (as with the second plague of each set, at his palace, his seat of authority).

(V.6) The locusts struck in the opposite manner from what we would normally expect: they first struck the Pharaoh's house, then his servants, then lastly the commoners' of Egypt. Punishment came first to those most responsible.

(V.2) (Heb.) "*hitallalti*" (made a mockery of) contains the root word (Heb.) "*all*" (first cause), showing that Yahweh is the first cause of all things. The purpose of this plague was to show the Egyptians, and the Israelites ("*your son and your son's son*"), that Yahweh controls all of "nature".

The Pharaoh only relented to let the men go; not the women, children, and herds. But he asked of Moses, "*remove from me this death*" (v.17), before the locusts ate the very roots of the plants, for the Egyptians were in danger of starvation.

Here Yahweh showed that men, women, and children are equally required to worship Him (v.9). This case is seen specifically to relate to the observance of Shavuot / Pentecost / Firstfruits, and the receiving of the Torah: their betrothal to God.

(V.21) The ninth plague was darkness. As with third plague of each set, after the Pharaoh rejected the first two plague-witnesses, no warning was forthcoming. For three days in all of Egypt – except where the Israelites dwelt in Goshen – there was such a darkness that it could be felt, and no one even got up to move about.

The Pharaoh remained defiant, because Yahweh had foretold (v.7:3) His purpose, before Moses ever went to the Pharaoh, to harden the Pharaoh's heart, so that all the world would know that He is Yahweh – the Eternal who actively rules over all the creation, over all nature, over all men. And Yahweh had stated beforehand that He would bring great judgments upon Egypt: these first three sets of three plagues were judgments against their various gods, and runners-up to the planned final judgment.

God's judgments are in-kind, and they are certain. Because they are not immediate, sinners continue in their ways.

Ecclesiastes 8: 11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.

Ecclesiastes 9:13-14 The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.

The fulfillment of Isaiah 19 has begun in our lifetime.

The Nile River runs 800 miles through Egypt, from Goshen where the Israelites dwelt to Cairo, where its valley is six miles wide. God designed the River as a life-sustaining feature of the land. The annual flooding of the river was part of the reason for the fertility of the area.

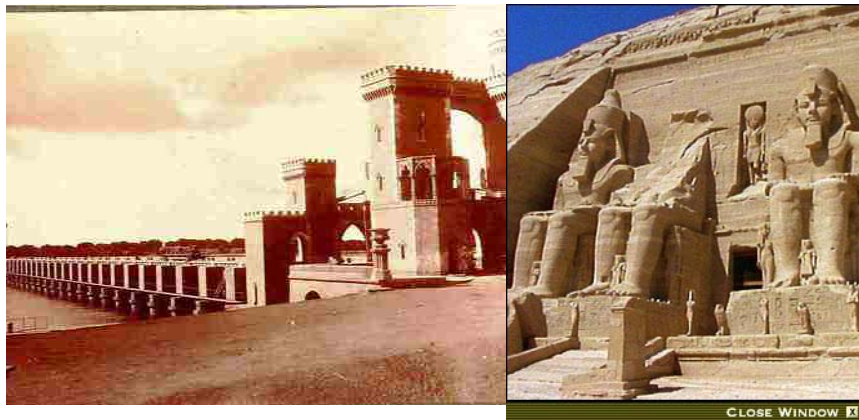
About thirty-five hundred years ago, in the time of Moses and the Pharaohs, Egypt was a large, strong, but idolatrous nation. Great statues of their Pharaoh-gods were carved into a mountainside near the Nile River, near a city now called Aswan.

In AD 1843, Mohammed Ali, the founder of modern Egypt, built a kind of dam on the Nile to provide irrigation for other areas, but it did not work well. In 1902, a better dam was built near Aswan.

In 1952, some Germans designed a great dam to better the existing one, but money was a problem. When Egypt applied to the World Bank for a loan, the US and Britain agreed to make the loan in order to keep Russia out of the picture. Upon discovering that Egypt had a weapons agreement with Russia, the US and Britain backed out, and Russia financed the project.

The new Aswan Dam was finished in 1972. It is more than two miles long and almost a mile thick of solid concrete. It created 500 mile long Lake Nassar, the world's largest man-made lake. It raised the ground water table as far away as Algeria.

The lake flooded the town of Aswan. The stone statues were cut from the mountain, and pieced back together at a higher elevation, with an artificial mountain created for them. The site is known as Kalabsha Temple.



The Dam was so disastrous that there was talk of tearing it down! The previous fertile areas of the Nile dried up and became useless.

Why hasn't Osama bin Laden's terror network executed an attack on U.S. soil since 9-11?

Simple, says Dr. Jack Wheeler, creator of an acclaimed intelligence website dubbed "the oasis for rational conservatives": The U.S. has threatened to nuke the Muslim holy city of Mecca should the terror leader strike America again.

On his website, [To the Point](#), Wheeler explains how the Bush administration has identified the potential of wiping Mecca off the map as bin Laden's ultimate point of vulnerability – the Damoclean Sword hanging over his head.

"Israel ... recognizes that the Aswan Dam is Egypt's Damoclean Sword," writes Wheeler. "There is no possibility whatever of Egypt's winning a war with Israel, for if Aswan is blown, all of inhabited Egypt is under 20 feet of water. Once the Israelis made this clear to the Egyptians, the possibility of any future Egyptian attack on Israel like that of 1948, 1967, and 1972 is gone."

- World Net Daily 1/7/2005

Now hear what God purposed thousands of years ago:

(Isaiah 19:5-15) The River will be parched and dry. And the canals will emit a stench, the streams of Egypt will thin out and dry up; the reeds and rushes will rot away. The bulrushes by the Nile, by the edge of the Nile and all the sown fields by the Nile Will become dry, be driven away, and be no more. And the fishermen will lament, and all those who cast a line into the Nile will mourn, and those who spread nets on the waters will pine away. Moreover, the manufacturers of linen made from combed flax and the weavers of white cloth will be utterly dejected. And the pillars of Egypt will be crushed; all the hired laborers will be grieved in soul. The princes of Zoan are mere fools; the advice of Pharaoh's wisest advisers has become stupid. How can you men say to Pharaoh, "I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings"? Well then, where are your wise men? Please let them tell you, and let them understand what Yahweh of hosts has purposed against Egypt. The princes of Zoan have acted foolishly, the princes of Memphis are deluded; those who are the cornerstone of her tribes Have led Egypt astray. Yahweh has mixed within her a spirit of distortion; they have led Egypt astray in all that it does, as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. And there will be no work for Egypt which its head or tail, its palm branch or bulrush, may do.

Now hear what's coming:

(Isaiah 19:18-21) In that day five cities in the land of Egypt will be speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to Yahweh of hosts; one will be called the City of Destruction. In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh near its border. And it will become a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt; for they will cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, and He will send them a Savior and a Champion, and He will deliver them. Thus Yahweh will make Himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day. They will even worship with sacrifice and offering, and will make a vow to Yahweh and perform it.

Then follows Yom Teruah (Feast of Trumpets).

(Matthew 24:29) "But immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken, 30 and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. 31 "And He will send forth His angels with a great trumpet and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

“This Day is a Memorial – a Permanent Ordinance”

וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה עֹד נֹנֵעַ אֶחָד אֶבְיָא עַל-פְּרַעְהָ וְעַל-מִצְרַיִם /

Vayomer Yahweh el-Moshe, od nega echad aviy El-Pharaoh v'al-Mitzraim /

Then Yahweh said to Moses, "One more plague I will bring upon Pharaoh and upon Egypt)

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Now Yahweh said to Moses, "One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt; after that he will let you go from here. When he lets you go, he will surely drive you out from here completely. ² "Speak now in the hearing of the people that each man ask from his neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold." ³ Yahweh gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Furthermore, the man Moses himself was greatly esteemed in the land of Egypt, both in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁴ Moses said (*to the Pharaoh*), "Thus says Yahweh, 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, ⁵ and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the firstborn of the slave girl who is behind the millstones; all the firstborn of the cattle as well. ⁶ 'Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been before and such as shall never be again. ⁷ 'But against any of the sons of Israel a dog will not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how Yahweh makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.' ⁸ "All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out, you and all the people who follow you,' and after that I will go out." And he went out from Pharaoh in hot anger. ⁹ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt." ¹⁰ Moses and Aaron performed all these wonders before Pharaoh; yet Yahweh hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not let the sons of Israel go out of his land.

*Reader 3** Amen. ^{12:1} Now Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ² "This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. ³ "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. ⁴ 'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. ⁵ 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

*Reader 4** Amen. ⁶ 'You shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight (*between noon and sunset*). ⁷ 'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸ 'They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. ⁹ 'Do not eat any of it raw or boiled at all with water, but rather roasted with fire, both its head and its legs along with its entrails. ¹⁰ 'And you shall not leave any of it over until morning, but whatever is left of it until morning, you shall burn with fire.

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹¹ 'Now you shall eat it in this manner: with your loins girded, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and you shall eat it in haste-- it is Yahweh's Passover. ¹² 'For I will go through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments-- I am Yahweh. ¹³ 'The blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁴ 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a Feast to Yahweh; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. ¹⁵ 'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the previous day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel. ¹⁶ 'On the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you. ¹⁷ 'You shall also observe the Feast of Unleavened Breads, for on this very day I brought your hosts out of the land of Egypt; therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as a permanent ordinance. ¹⁸ 'In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening. ¹⁹ 'Seven days there shall be no leaven found in your houses; for whoever eats what is leavened, that person shall be cut off from

the congregation of Israel, whether he is an alien or a native of the land. ²⁰ 'You shall not eat anything leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened breads.'"

*Reader 7** Amen. ²¹ Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families, and slay the Passover lamb. ²² "You shall take a bunch of hyssop and dip it in the blood which is in the basin, and apply some of the blood that is in the basin to the lintel and the two doorposts; and none of you shall go outside the door of his house until morning. ²³ "For Yahweh will pass through to smite the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, Yahweh will pass over the door and will not allow the destroyer to come in to your houses to smite you. ²⁴ "And you shall observe this event as an ordinance for you and your children forever. ²⁵ "When you enter the land which Yahweh will give you, as He has promised, you shall observe this rite. ²⁶ "And when your children say to you, 'What does this rite mean to you?' ²⁷ you shall say, 'It is a Passover sacrifice to Yahweh who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when He smote the Egyptians, but spared our homes.'" And the people bowed low and worshiped. ²⁸ Then the sons of Israel went and did so; just as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

Jeremiah 46:13-28

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹³ This is the message which Yahweh spoke to Jeremiah the prophet about the coming of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to smite the land of Egypt: ¹⁴ "Declare in Egypt and proclaim in Migdol, proclaim also in Memphis and Tahpanhes; say, 'Take your stand and get yourself ready, for the sword has devoured those around you.' ¹⁵ Why have your mighty ones become prostrate? They do not stand because Yahweh has thrust them down. ¹⁶ "They have repeatedly stumbled; indeed, they have fallen one against another. Then they said, 'Get up! And let us go back to our own people and our native land away from the sword of the oppressor.' ¹⁷ They cried there, 'Pharaoh King of Egypt is but a big noise; he has let the appointed time pass by!' ¹⁸ "As I live," declares the King Whose name is Yahweh of Hosts, "Surely one shall come who looms up like Tabor among the mountains, or like Carmel by the sea. ¹⁹ "Make your baggage ready for exile, O daughter dwelling in Egypt, for Memphis will become a desolation; it will even be burned down and bereft of inhabitants.

*Reader 9** Amen. ²⁰ "Egypt is a pretty heifer, but a horsefly is coming from the north-- it is coming! ²¹ "Also her mercenaries in her midst are like fattened calves, for even they too have turned back and have fled away together; they did not stand their ground. For the day of their calamity has come upon them, the time of their punishment. ²² "Its sound moves along like a serpent; for they move on like an army and come to her as woodcutters with axes. ²³ "They have cut down her forest," declares Yahweh; "Surely it will no more be found, even though they are now more numerous than locusts and are without number. ²⁴ "The daughter of Egypt has been put to shame, given over to the power of the people of the north." ²⁵ Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel, says, "Behold, I am going to punish Amon of Thebes, and Pharaoh, and Egypt along with her gods and her kings, even Pharaoh and those who trust in him. ²⁶ "I shall give them over to the power of those who are seeking their lives, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of his officers. Afterwards, however, it will be inhabited as in the days of old," declares Yahweh.

*Reader 10** Amen. ²⁷ "But as for you, O Jacob My servant, do not fear, nor be dismayed, O Israel! For, see, I am going to save you from afar, and your descendants from the land of their captivity; and Jacob will return and be undisturbed and secure, with no one making him tremble. ²⁸ "O Jacob My servant, do not fear," declares Yahweh, "For I am with you. For I will make a full end of all the nations where I have driven you, yet I will not make a full end of you; but I will correct you properly and by no means leave you unpunished."

Micah 7:15

"As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you miracles."

Psalms 48 (To be sung.) A Song; a Psalm of the sons of Korah.

¹ Great is Yahweh, and greatly to be praised, in the city of our God, His holy mountain. ² Beautiful in elevation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion in the far north, the city of the great King. ³ God, in her palaces, has made Himself known as a stronghold. ⁴ For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, they passed by together. ⁵ They saw it, then they were amazed; they were terrified, they fled in alarm. ⁶ Panic seized them there, anguish, as of a woman in childbirth. ⁷ With the east wind You break the ships of Tarshish. ⁸ As we have heard, so have we seen In the city of Yahweh of Hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish her forever. Selah. ⁹ We have thought on Your lovingkindness, O God, in the midst of Your temple. ¹⁰ As is Your name, O God, so is Your praise to the ends of the earth; Your right hand is full of righteousness. ¹¹ Let Mount Zion be glad, let the daughters of Judah rejoice because of Your judgments. ¹² Walk about Zion and go around her; count her towers; ¹³ consider her ramparts; go through

her palaces, that you may tell it to the next generation. ¹⁴ For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death.

John 3:13-25

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹³ "No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man. ¹⁴ "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; ¹⁵ so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life. ¹⁶ "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. ¹⁷ "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. *Reader 12** Amen. ¹⁹ "This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil. ²⁰ "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. ²¹ "But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." ²² After these things Yeshua and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing. ²³ John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized-- ²⁴ for John had not yet been thrown into prison. ²⁵ Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purification.

Commentary:

Background

Moses was brought up in a Pharaoh's house: a Pharaoh was his step-grandfather. The Pharaoh with which we are herein dealing was doubtlessly a successor, since Moses was eighty years old at this time (Exodus 7:7). This Pharaoh may have been brought up in the same house as Moses.

Moses knew both Hebrew (which means *from the other side*) – the language from the other side of the dispersion at Babel – and the Egyptian language. He would have had no problem communicating with the Pharaoh. God had prepared Moses for this task, as He would later prepare the Apostle Paul with knowledge of many languages (1 Corinthians 14:18).

Exodus 11

(V.9) *"Then Yahweh said to Moses, 'Pharaoh will not listen to you, so that My wonders will be multiplied in the land of Egypt.'"* We have seen now for several chapters that God's purpose was to make His Name known to His people and the whole world. He raised up this Pharaoh for His own purpose, and said from the outset that He would harden the Pharaoh's heart throughout the ten plagues.

"Yahweh said to Moses, 'When you go back to Egypt see that you perform before Pharaoh all the wonders which I have put in your power; but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go'" – Exodus 4:21.

"But, indeed, for this reason I have allowed you (Pharaoh) to remain, in order to show you My power and in order to proclaim My Name through all the earth" – Exodus 9:16.

"For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, 'For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth'" - Romans 9:17.

(V.4-5) *"Thus says Yahweh, 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die'"* It was Yahweh who passed over, not a "death angel." (There is no Greek word "angellos" in Hebrews 11:28 to translate "angel".)

(V.8) *"All these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, 'Go out'"*. The slave-masters are to become the servants!

(V.1, 6-7) ***“One more plague I will bring on Pharaoh and on Egypt”***

“Moreover, there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been before and such as shall never be again. But against any of the sons of Israel a dog shall not even bark, whether against man or beast, that you may understand how Yahweh makes a distinction between Egypt and Israel.”

There is one more plague to come: Revelation 7:14-17 – *“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes.”*

(V.4-5) *“Thus says Yahweh, ‘About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, and all the first-born in the land of Egypt shall die, from the first-born of the Pharaoh who sits on his throne, even to the first-born of the slave girl who is behind the millstones.’”*

Matthew 24:37-41 – *“For the coming of the Son of Man will be just like the days of Noah. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, they were marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and they did not understand until the flood came and took them all away (in death); so shall the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there shall be two men in the field; one will be taken, and one will be left. Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken (in death), and one will be left.”*

Exodus 12

(V.2) *“This month shall be the beginning of months for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you.”*

Rosh Hodesh (Head-of-the-month) observance was the first commandment given to Israel as a nation. A thousand years later, in the Greek-Syrian persecution, three observances were prohibited: Rosh Hodesh, Sabbath, and circumcision. Without Rosh Hodesh, no Festivals can be observed, which prohibits observance of a multitude of other commandments.

(V.4) *“According to the number of persons”*: here we see why those who are to partake in the Feast must be determined by Nisan 10; the number of persons determines the lambs to be chosen on that day. The Sabbath preceding the Passover offering is called “Shabbat haGadol” – the Great Sabbath, in commemoration of that Nisan 10 in Egypt which was a Sabbath. The Nisan 10 preceding Yeshua’s crucifixion was likewise a Sabbath – when Yeshua came riding a donkey into Jerusalem on Palm Shabbat!

The Egyptians saw their gods – lambs and goats – being tethered for four days of examination, in preparation for sacrifice. Yeshua was also examined for “blemish” in the days leading up to His crucifixion.

(V.15) *“On the previous day you shall remove leaven from your houses”*: there may be no leaven present from noon on Nisan 14, the time for slaughtering the lambs.

(V16) *“On the first day (Nisan 15) you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day (Nisan 21); no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be eaten by every person, that alone may be prepared by you.”*

We may note, that on the Seventh Day of this exodus from Egypt, Moses told the people to “Stand still” (Exodus 14:13), and Yahweh would do the work.

There was no outward difference between the Egyptians and the Hebrews, as far as being worthy, but God made a distinction, and tells us to keep His people holy. There is no outward difference between the first six days of the week and the Sabbath; but God makes a distinction, and tells us to keep the Sabbath holy. Also, there are seven annual dates which God has commanded us to proclaim as holy.

God’s people are to set aside fifty-nine days of each year (number based on solar year) to be dedicated to his worship. On these days, we are not to work at our secular jobs, we are not to “seek our own pleasure”, we are not

even to speak our own words about mundane subjects. We are instructed by both Torah and Apostle to take part in a public worship service.

“If because of the Sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of Yahweh honorable, and honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure and speaking your own word, then you will take delight in Yahweh, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken” – Isaiah 58:13-14.

“These are the appointed times of Yahweh which you shall proclaim as sacred assemblies” – Leviticus 23:37.

“and let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near.” – Hebrews 10:24-25.

(V.3) Nisan 10: This is the day for choosing a lamb. Who is the Lamb, through whose blood you will be passed over, when judgment comes?

(V.6) The fourteenth day of this month is called the Preparation day (see John 19:14). *“And you shall keep it (the Passover Lamb) until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it between the evenings.”* That is, between noon (the start of the going down of the sun) and sunset (the final setting of the sun). A full explanation of this Hebrew Scripture is given in the Talmud. (Many, without knowledge of Hebrew or Talmud, promote various interpretations from English translations.)

(V.14-15) *“Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a Feast of Yahweh (later translated Lord’s Supper); throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread”.* Yeshua said, *“Do this in remembrance of Me”.*

Note that we are not only to avoid all leaven, but there is a positive commandment to eat matzot (unleavened breads). We are not only to avoid all sin, we are to perform positive *mitzvot*. We are to perform both the symbol and the antitype deed.

Now, concerning God’s judgments, which are “in kind”:

John 3:17-19 – *“For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil.”*

We may think of those who are openly sinful, who do not want to hear of God’s ways. But I think of so many, who say to me, “I feel this is a good way”, and don’t want to know what God says is His way. I hear such statements concerning obedience and learning vs. doing what one “feels” is right. Also claims of being “spirit-filled” by people who are Biblically illiterate, and think their feelings are God’s messages, so have no need to learn His Word. Then we see those who simply use religious position as a way of “making money”: they certainly don’t want to be exposed to “the light”; that was the case with those who sold animals at the Temple, and it is the case with much of “ministry” today. These have already been judged by Torah.

But Yeshua came to take our (believers’) judgment upon Himself. Consider how it may have felt to be in Goshen in Moses’ time: every Egyptian family is bewailing a dead firstborn, but not so much as a dog barked against the Hebrews. They were not, of themselves, better or more worthy than the Egyptians. Have you heard how that many people who live through great catastrophes, like the World Trade Center terrorism, feel guilty at being spared?

Yet, even as believers, we are not free to sin, just because of Yeshua taking our judgment: such “freedom” would make a farce of our faith (Romans 6:1, James 2:17). And if we perform *mitzvot* (acts in the service of God), but do them with wrong motives, we lose all future reward (Matthew 6:2).

Baptism represents starting clean, starting a new life of serving God. It represents purification from sin, not ignoring and continuing sin.

The Haftarah relationship:

(V.11:8) Moses said to the Pharaoh, *“And all these your servants will come down to me and bow themselves before me, saying, ‘Go out, you and all the people who follow you,’ and after that I will go out.”* Jeremiah 46:15,17 – *“Why have your mighty ones become prostrate? They do not stand because Yahweh has thrust them down. . . . They cried there, ‘Pharaoh King of Egypt is but a big noise; He has let the appointed time pass by!’”* Psalm 48:4-5 – *For, lo, the kings assembled themselves, they passed by together. They saw it, then they were amazed; they were terrified, they fled in alarm.* Psalm 48:11 – *Let Mount Zion be glad, let the daughters of Judah rejoice, because of Thy judgments.*

Vayhi Bachatzi / It Was at Midnight

Exodus 12:29-51 Isaiah 21:11 Psalm 49 Revelation 18:1-24

Commentary Y2-03

Nisan 17, 5762 / Mar 30, 2002

Nisan 21, 5765 / April 30, 2005

וַיְהִי בַחֲצֵי הַלַּיְלָה וַיְהוֹה הַכָּה כָּל-בְּכוֹר בְּאֶרֶץ /

Vayhi bachatzi halaylah vaYahweh hichah chal-b'chor b'erezt Mitzraim /

Now it came about at midnight that Yahweh struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt)

*Reader 1** Amen. ²⁹ Now it came about at midnight that Yahweh struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of cattle. ³⁰ Pharaoh arose in the night, he and all his servants and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no home where there was not someone dead.

*Reader 2** Amen. ³¹ Then he called for Moses and Aaron at night and said, "Rise up, get out from among my people, both you and the sons of Israel; and go, worship Yahweh, as you have said. ³² "Take both your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and go, and bless me also." ³³ The Egyptians urged the people, to send them out of the land in haste, for they said, "We will all be dead."

*Reader 3** Amen. ³⁴ So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls bound up in the clothes on their shoulders. ³⁵ Now the sons of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, for they had requested from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; ³⁶ and Yahweh had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they let them have their request. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

*Reader 4** Amen. ³⁷ Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, aside from children. ³⁸ A mixed multitude also went up with them, along with flocks and herds, a very large number of livestock. ³⁹ They baked the dough which they had brought out of Egypt into cakes of unleavened bread. For it had not become leavened, since they were driven out of Egypt and could not delay, nor had they prepared any provisions for themselves.

*Reader 5** Amen. ⁴⁰ Now the time that the sons of Israel lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years. ⁴¹ And at the end of four hundred and thirty years, to the very day, all the hosts of Yahweh went out from the land of Egypt. ⁴² It is a night to be observed for Yahweh for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for Yahweh, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁴³ Yahweh said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: no foreigner is to eat of it; ⁴⁴ but every man's slave purchased with money, after you have circumcised him, then he may eat of it. ⁴⁵ "A sojourner or a hired servant shall not eat of it. ⁴⁶ "It is to be eaten in a single house; you are not to bring forth any of the flesh outside of the house, nor are you to break any bone of it. ⁴⁷ "All the congregation of Israel are to celebrate this. ⁴⁸ "But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to Yahweh, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it.

*Reader 7** Amen. ⁴⁹ "The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you." ⁵⁰ Then all the sons of Israel did so; they did just as Yahweh had commanded Moses and Aaron. ⁵¹ And on that same day Yahweh brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.

Isaiah 21:11

*Reader 8** Amen. The oracle concerning Edom. One keeps calling to me from Seir, "Watchman, how far gone is the night? Watchman, how far gone is the night?"

Psalm 49 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Psalm of the sons of Korah.*

Hear this, all peoples; give ear, all inhabitants of the world, ² both low and high, rich and poor together. ³ My mouth will speak wisdom, and the meditation of my heart will be understanding. ⁴ I will incline my ear to a proverb; I will express my riddle on the harp. ⁵ Why should I fear in days of adversity, when the iniquity of my foes surrounds me, ⁶ even **those who trust in their wealth and boast in the abundance of their riches?** ⁷ No man can by any means redeem his brother or give to God a ransom for him-- ⁸ for the redemption of his soul is costly, and he should cease trying forever-- ⁹ that he should live on eternally, that he should not undergo decay. ¹⁰ For he sees that even wise men die; the stupid and the senseless alike perish and leave their wealth to others. ¹¹ Their inner thought is that their houses are forever and their dwelling places to all generations; they have called their lands after their own names. ¹² But man in his pomp will not endure; he is like the beasts that perish. ¹³ This is the way of those who are foolish, and of

those after them who approve their words. Selah. ¹⁴ As sheep they are appointed for Sheol; death shall be their shepherd; and the upright shall rule over them in the morning, and their form shall be for Sheol to consume so that they have no habitation. ¹⁵ But God will redeem my soul from the power of Sheol, for He will receive me. Selah. ¹⁶ Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich, when the glory of his house is increased; ¹⁷ for when he dies he will carry nothing away; his glory will not descend after him. ¹⁸ Though while he lives he congratulates himself – and though men praise you when you do well for yourself – ¹⁹ he shall go to the generation of his fathers; they will never see the light. ²⁰ Man in his pomp, yet without understanding, is like the beasts that perish.

Revelation 18:1-24

Reader 9* Amen. ¹ After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illumined with his glory. ² And he cried out with a mighty voice, saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place of demons and a prison of every unclean spirit, and a prison of every unclean and hateful bird. ³ "For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the passion of her immorality, and the kings of the earth have committed acts of immorality with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich by the wealth of her sensuality." ⁴ I heard another voice from heaven, saying, "Come out of her, my people, so that you will not participate in her sins and receive of her plagues; ⁵ for her sins have piled up as high as heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities. ⁶ "Pay her back even as she has paid, and give back to her double according to her deeds; in the cup which she has mixed, mix twice as much for her. ⁷ "To the degree that she glorified herself and lived sensuously, to the same degree give her torment and mourning; for she says in her heart, 'I sit as a queen and I am not a widow, and will never see mourning.' ⁸ "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for **the Lord God who judges her is strong.**

Reader 10* Amen. ⁹ "And the kings of the earth, who committed acts of immorality and lived sensuously with her, will weep and lament over her when they see the smoke of her burning, ¹⁰ standing at a distance because of the fear of her torment, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, Babylon, the strong city! For in one hour your judgment has come.' ¹¹ "And the merchants of the earth weep and mourn over her, because no one buys their cargoes any more-- ¹² cargoes of gold and silver and precious stones and pearls and fine linen and purple and silk and scarlet, and every kind of citron wood and every article of ivory and every article made from very costly wood and bronze and iron and marble, ¹³ and cinnamon and spice and incense and perfume and frankincense and wine and olive oil and fine flour and wheat and cattle and sheep, and cargoes of horses and chariots and slaves and human lives. ¹⁴ "The fruit you long for has gone from you, and all things that were luxurious and splendid have passed away from you and men will no longer find them. ¹⁵ "The merchants of these things, who became rich from her, will stand at a distance because of the fear of her torment, weeping and mourning, ¹⁶ saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, she who was clothed in fine linen and purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls; ¹⁷ for in one hour such great wealth has been laid waste!' And every shipmaster and every passenger and sailor, and as many as make their living by the sea, stood at a distance, ¹⁸ and were crying out as they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, 'What city is like the great city?' ¹⁹ "And they threw dust on their heads and were crying out, weeping and mourning, saying, 'Woe, woe, the great city, in which all who had ships at sea became rich by her wealth, for in one hour she has been laid waste!'

Reader 11* Amen. ²⁰ "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her." ²¹ Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, "So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. ²² "And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; ²³ and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. ²⁴ "And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth."

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (6) days of the Omer."*

Today is the last day that leaven is disallowed.

Nisan 17, 5762 / March 30, 2002

Third Day of the Feast of Unleavened Breads
Today is Resurrection Shabbat!

Shabbat shalom! This Nisan 17 is the weekly Sabbath day, the same as when Yeshua was raised from the tomb.

Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a fish before being vomited out onto the shore; concerning this Yeshua said, ". . . for as Jonah was three days and three nights in the fish's belly, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." The third night was past. This was the third day!

Using a challenge to His Sabbath day healings, Yeshua foretold His resurrection in parable, saying: "*What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit, on the Sabbath day will he not lay hold of it and lift it out?*" God was among them; the Lamb of God was in a pit for a three-day Sabbath; God lifted Him out on the Sabbath. Our healing from sin was a Sabbath day healing!

Yeshua left the linens, just as they had been folded about His body and head, in the sealed tomb. The Matzah-Man slipped out for a quiet walk toward Galilee.

The next morning, before sunrise on the first day of the week, two women would come to the sealed tomb to enbalm Yeshua's body, not knowing that He was gone.

Nisan 21, 5765 / April 30, 2005

Seventh Day of the Feast of Unleavened Breads
Today is the "Day of Faith"!

Today is an annual Holy Day – the Seventh Day of the Feast of Unleavened Breads (Exodus 12:16, Leviticus 23:8, Numbers 28:25), and a rehearsal day, commonly called the Day of Faith:

- It is an anniversary of Noah and his family being saved by faith when the rest of the world were drowned in the flood.
- It is the day Israel was saved by faith when the Egyptian army was drowned in the Red Sea. The Talmud teaches that some had faith to jump off the banks before the waters parted, and landed on dried seabed, while others entered after seeing the parted waters. All had greater faith after crossing and seeing the Egyptians killed (Exodus 14:31).
- It is the Torah's required day for a mikvah (Numbers 19:16-19), after which "doubting Thomas" could touch Yeshua and believe (John 20:24-29).

Three kinds of faith are distinguished in the Hebrew Bible:

- *Emunah b'moach* - Intellectual faith (belief in a fact or historical event - such as Yeshua's crucifixion).
- *Emunah b'lev* - Faith of the heart (trusting one's safety or security to something - such as salvation by Yeshua's work).
- *Emunah b'avarim* - Faith that encompasses one's entire being (the controlling factor of one's thoughts and activities).

The seven-day Feast of Unleavened Breads begins with the Passover Seder and ends with the Day of Faith – the first two annual Holy Days.

Exodus

Yahweh struck the firstborn in every Egyptian family with death. This was His stated purpose before Moses first went to the Pharaoh (Exodus 4:21-23). Now the Hebrews were paid for their years of forced labor, in silver and gold and clothing – spoiling the Egyptians – and they were thrust out of Egypt with all of their families and herds and belongings. (V.51) *“And on that same day Yahweh brought the sons of Israel out of the land of Egypt by their hosts.”*

There were about 600,000 adult men (v.37), which would represent an estimated three million people, leaving Egypt.

At the Pasover seder, we are taught that we are all to consider ourselves as having come out of Egypt at this time. By the Passover sacrifice of Yeshua, we were delivered from sin. (See the Haggadah – Parable of the Four Children.)

Having lived in Egypt, they were partakers of Egyptian idolatry. Soon after leaving, they would use their gold to make a calf idol. But later, they would learn to serve God with their wages, and give generously toward building the Tabernacle.

(V.37) *Now the sons of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, from the “Treasure City” to the “Temporary Dwellingplace”*. The total population, including women, children, and elderly, was about three million. They were a mixed multitude of all nations.

Some would insist that the Biblical Festivals and Sabbaths are only for the “Jews” (a more accurate term would be the “Hebrews”). The issue seems to be: who qualifies under God’s Covenant? Gentile believers are partakers of the Abrahamic Covenant (Ephesians 3:6). The Apostolic Writings (NT) clearly teach that the Festivals and Sabbaths are for all believers.

When (during creation week) was man created? (See Genesis 1:26-31.)

When was the Sabbath created? (See Genesis 2:1-3.)

Was man created for the Sabbath, or was Sabbath created for man? (See Mark 2:27.)

If (1) man was the last creation on the sixth day, and (2) the Sabbath was created immediately afterward, and (3) the Sabbath was created for man, then for what man was the Sabbath created? Only for the “Jew” who did not exist until 3000 years later? And for whom did God bless and sanctify (set apart) the Sabbath (Genesis 2:3) – for Adam (man) or only Abraham’s distant future descendants?

“Let no man (neither Jew nor or Roman) condemn you (Colossian gentile believers) . . . for practicing . . . (Biblical) Festivals or Sabbath days, which are prophetic shadows of what is to come – Messiah Himself, the body casting the shadow” (Colossians 2:16-17).

(Revelation 18:4) *“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, ‘Come out of her, my people, that you may not participate in her sins and that you may not receive of her plagues’”*. “Babylon” obviously represents a center for idolatrous religion and a great commercial center. It has been often equated with Rome, because that city rules over nations in religious matters, and is famous as a city of seven hills. It has also been equated with a renewed literal Babylon in Iraq, as well as several other places.

What seems clear here, is that we should stay clear of idolatrous religious systems, and not be too tied to this world’s commercial/financial structure. The Psalmist says (Psalm 49:5-6): *“Why should I fear in days of adversity, when the iniquity of my foes surrounds me, even those who trust in their wealth, and boast in the abundance of their riches?”* While our (US) money says, “In God we trust”, we are a nation that trusts in money – for sustenance, for health, for pleasure, for security, for pride, etc. Our schools (from grade schools to the biggest universities) were instituted primarily for Bible instruction, ethics, and skills; they are now based on money-making instruction and pleasure instruction, with ethics left out and the Bible teaching being forbidden.

Those who are too poor tend to dishonesty, and those who are too rich tend to forget God and trust in riches. *“Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, lest I be full and deny Thee and say, ‘Who is*

Yahweh? Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God” (Proverbs 30:8-9). I have seen some who come from poor families, then become prosperous, become possessed with staying prosperous. And I have seen some from richer families, who look down on those who aren’t interested in their style of living. It is no crime to be rich, but it is sin to seek to be rich – for riches to be one’s motivation, that which consumes one’s efforts. “Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction” (1 Timothy 6:9).

Paul said that he had known both poverty and plenty, and knew how to handle both. *“Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Timothy 6:6).*

We were not redeemed by the Passover Lamb to stay a slave to Egypt. We still have time to seek God’s way, and to make His service our motivation for life. We can still repent from using our wages of gold to make idols, and use our talents for the furtherance of the Kingdom.

As God said for His people in Moses' time to come out of Egypt, He is now saying of Babylon, "Come out of her My people!" We must leave this world's "Treasure City" for the "Temporary Dwellingplace" where God leads us to our eternal home.

(Isaiah 21:11) *"Watchman, how far gone is the night? Watchman, how far gone is the night?"*

God says that we will judge 1 Cor 6:2

John 3: ¹⁷ "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

John 12: ⁴⁷ "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world. ⁴⁸ "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.

Acts 10:42 this is the One who has been appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 17: ³⁰ God is now declaring to men that all people everywhere should repent, ³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

Rom 2: ¹⁶ on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

1 Cor 6: ² Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world?

Jude 1: ¹⁴ It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones, ¹⁵ to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Shabbat Mevarekhim (Announce Rosh Hodesh Iyyar)

(קִדְּשׁ־לִי כָּל־בְּכוֹרִים / Kadosh-liy chal-b'chor / Sanctify to Me every firstborn)

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Sanctify to Me every firstborn, the first offspring of every womb among the sons of Israel, both of man and beast; it belongs to Me."

*Reader 2** Amen. ³ Moses said to the people, "Remember this day in which you went out from Egypt, from the house of slavery; for by a powerful hand Yahweh brought you out from this place. And nothing leavened shall be eaten. ⁴ "On this day in the month of Abib, you are about to go forth. ⁵ "It shall be when Yahweh brings you to the land of the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Amorite, the Hivite and the Jebusite, which He swore to your fathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, that you shall observe this rite in this month.

*Reader 3** Amen. ⁶ "For seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there shall be a feast to Yahweh. ⁷ "Unleavened bread shall be eaten throughout the seven days; and nothing leavened shall be seen among you, nor shall any leaven be seen among you in all your borders. ⁸ "You shall tell your son on that day, saying, 'It is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt.'

*Reader 4** Amen. ⁹ "And it shall serve as a sign to you on your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead, that the law of Yahweh may be in your mouth; for with a powerful hand Yahweh brought you out of Egypt. ¹⁰ "Therefore, you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹¹ "Now when Yahweh brings you to the land of the Canaanite, as He swore to you and to your fathers, and gives it to you, ¹² you shall devote to Yahweh the first offspring of every womb, and the first offspring of every beast that you own; the males belong to Yahweh. ¹³ "But every first offspring of a donkey you shall redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck; and every firstborn of man among your sons you shall redeem.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁴ "And it shall be when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is this?' then you shall say to him, 'With a powerful hand Yahweh brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slavery. ¹⁵ 'It came about, when Pharaoh was stubborn about letting us go, that Yahweh killed every firstborn in the land of Egypt, both the firstborn of man and the firstborn of beast. Therefore, I sacrifice to Yahweh the males, the first offspring of every womb, but every firstborn of my sons I redeem.' ¹⁶ "So it shall serve as a sign on your hand and as phylacteries on your forehead, for with a powerful hand Yahweh brought us out of Egypt."

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁷ Now when Pharaoh had let the people go, God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for God said, "The people might change their minds when they see war, and return to Egypt." ¹⁸ Hence God led the people around by the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea; and the sons of Israel went up in martial array from the land of Egypt. ¹⁹ Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, for he had made the sons of Israel solemnly swear, saying, "God will surely take care of you, and you shall carry my bones from here with you." ²⁰ Then they set out from Succoth and camped in Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

Isaiah 46:3-4

*Reader 8** Amen. ³ (Sh'ma) "Listen to Me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, you who have been borne by Me from birth and have been carried from the womb; ⁴ Even to your old age I will be the same, and even to your graying years I will bear you! I have done it, and I will carry you; and I will bear you and I will deliver you.

Psalm 50 (To be sung.) A Psalm of Asaph.

¹ (El Elohim Yahweh) The Mighty One, God, Yahweh, has spoken, and summoned the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting. ² Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shone forth. ³ May our God come and not keep silence; fire devours before Him, and it is very tempestuous around Him. ⁴ He summons the heavens above, and the earth, to judge His people: ⁵ "Gather My godly ones to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." ⁶ And the heavens declare His righteousness, for God Himself is judge. Selah. ⁷ "Hear, O My people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you; I am God, your God. ⁸ "I do not reprove you for your sacrifices, and your burnt offerings are continually before Me. ⁹ "I shall take no young bull out of your house, nor male goats out of your folds. ¹⁰ "For every beast of the forest is Mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. ¹¹ "I know every bird of the mountains,

and everything that moves in the field is Mine. ¹² "If I were hungry I would not tell you, for the world is Mine, and all it contains. ¹³ "Shall I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of male goats? ¹⁴ "Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and pay your vows to the Most High; ¹⁵ Call upon Me in the day of trouble; I shall rescue you, and you will honor Me." ¹⁶ But to the wicked God says, "What right have you to tell of My statutes and to take My covenant in your mouth? ¹⁷ "For you hate discipline, and you cast My words behind you. ¹⁸ "When you see a thief, you are pleased with him, and you associate with adulterers. ¹⁹ "You let your mouth loose in evil and your tongue frames deceit. ²⁰ "You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son. ²¹ "These things you have done and I kept silence; you thought that I was just like you; I will reprove you and state the case in order before your eyes. ²² "Now consider this, you who forget God, or I will tear you in pieces, and there will be none to deliver. ²³ "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me; and to him who orders his way aright I shall show the salvation of God."

Hebrews 8:6 – 9:1; 9:13-15

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁶ But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. ⁷ For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second. ⁸ For finding fault with them, He says, **(Jeremiah 31:31-34)**

"Behold, days are coming", says Yahweh, "when I will effect a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; ⁹ not like the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them", says Yahweh. ¹⁰ "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days", says Yahweh: "I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ¹¹ And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. ¹² For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more."

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹³ When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. ^{9:1} Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. . . .

¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (13) days of the Omer; it is (1) week and (6) days of the Omer."*

When we recite these kinds of blessings, we need to understand and be mindful of what they mean. God has sanctified us – He has set us apart from other people, by having us perform certain things that others don't normally do. These things have significance for us to gain and maintain holy attitudes.

For seven weeks, we are to especially consider how we were freed from slavery to sin (Egyptian slavery) by the Passover Lamb, and we are maturing to be betrothed to Messiah. We should be counting the days, blessing God for this time to grow in faith.

Firstborn, Exodus, and Tefillin

Two sections (v.1-10 and 11-16) both begin with sanctification of the firstborn and end with tefillin (symbols worn on the forehead and arm).

(V.1-2) *"Sanctify to Me every first-born".*

The firstborn, from creation, were the priests – “sanctified” to God; they received the blessings and responsibilities of spiritual service. The salvation of the Hebrew firstborn at the Passover was related to the position of priesthood – carrying on the worship of the true God, while the Egyptian firstborn died and could not lead in their idolatry. Here an additional sanctification was placed upon the firstborn. The tefillin on the (1) “left” (weak – based on Heb. of v.16) arm and (2) forehead represent dedication to God in (1) deed and in (2) intellect.

“Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every first-born, the first issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine. For all the first-born are Mine; on the day that I struck down all the first-born in the land of Egypt, I sanctified to Myself all the first-born in Israel, from man to beast. They shall be Mine; I am Yahweh” – Numbers 3:12-13.

We see that, from a certain point in time, Yahweh took the Levites for priests instead of the firstborn. But the firstborn were still “His”. Yeshua came, not through Levi, but a priest after the order of Malchisedek – the firstborn.

We may note that this is one passage used to imply that Hebrew heritage is based upon the mother: the reference being to the firstborn who are “the first issue of the womb”.

(V.3) *“Remember this day”* . . . The form of the word here (infinitive) means to remember continually.

(V.10) *“you shall keep this ordinance at its appointed time from year to year.”*

The Feast of Unleavened Bread was established as an eternal memorial – “Do this in remembrance of Me”.

(V.8) *“And you shall tell your son”* is the basis for the Passover haggadah, including the parable of the four children (that we sing to the tune of Clementine). Why did we just eat unleavened breads for seven days? *“It is because of what Yahweh did for me when I came out of Egypt.”* We are to consider ourselves as having come out of Egypt at that time. By the Passover sacrifice of Yeshua, we were delivered from sin.

(V.13) The donkey was the only non-kosher animal of which redemption of its firstborn was required. The donkey is seen as symbolic of material possessions. It was redeemed by offering a lamb (or goat), the same as the Passover offering. Thus our material possessions are to be dedicated to God’s service, as having been purchased by Yeshua’s sacrifice.

(V.17) *God did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines.* Today this area is called Gaza, and it is populated by Arabs who call themselves “Palestinians” (Philistines). This would have been the short route, but they might have turned back if they had gotten into a battle situation so soon. So God leads us in the path of growth that we can bear.

(V.21) *Yahweh went before them in a pillar of fire by night*

(Psalm 50:3-5) *“May our God come and not keep silence; fire devours before Him, and it is very tempestuous around Him. He summons the heavens above, and the earth, to judge His people: gather My godly ones to Me, those who have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice.”*

We sing Psalm 121, concerning God’s people: *“Throughout the day the sun shall never smite; the moon shall not harm you in the silent night.”* They are protected during the sun-lit day by a cloud that the enemy cannot see through; they are protected during the moon-lit night by a fire that clears the way before them. All things are working together for their good (Romans 8:28). This is symbolized by our being freed in a time of pleasant weather – the Passover was in springtime.

The nations conspire together against God’s chosen ones (Psalm 83:3), but understand – they are filling up their own cup for the day of wrath (Jeremiah 25:15, Revelation 16:19, 17:4). God will summon the heavens and earth to judge, and when the nations are burned, we will be saved. We will obtain a clean land, a renewed earth with the Garden of Eden restored.

Now, to consider our past slavery and present freedom:

So if the uncircumcised man keeps the requirements of the Torah, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision? And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Torah, will he not judge you who though having the letter of the Torah and circumcision are a transgressor of the Torah? – Romans 3:26-27.

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Messiah, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which through the Law were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter – Romans 7:4-6.

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Messiah Yeshua. For the law of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the law of sin and of death – Romans 8:1-2.

Before faith came, we were under the Law of Sin and Death (Romans 8:2):

“The soul that sins, it shall die” – Ezekiel 18:4.

Sin is, by definition, transgression of the Torah. Because we transgressed Torah, the Law of Sin and Death said that we must die. But now, we are freed from the penalty, because Yeshua suffered once for our sins, and therefore there is no more condemnation. We are free to worship our Savior and Lord. While Torah principles to show us the way, we can walk by the Spirit without condemnation of the letter.

Hebrews 8-9 explains how God will renew His Covenant – the Abrahamic Covenant – with His people. While He formerly presented it in writing, He will ultimately write it on our hearts

The written Commandments were given because we lost the spirit by which we would naturally do righteousness. After our resurrection, we will no longer need the Commandments, because we will be filled with His spirit, and naturally and whole-heartedly serve God. We will be wholly sanctified.

Daber El-b'nei Yisrael / Tell the Sons of Israel

Exodus 13:21 – 15:21 Judges 4:4 – 5:31; Joshua 24:1-7; Isaiah 45:18-24 Psalm 51 Revelation 15:1-8

Commentary Y2-05

Iyyar 1, 5762 / Apr 13, 2002
Iyyar 5, 5765 / May 14, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ²¹ Yahweh was going before them in a pillar of cloud by day to lead them on the way, and in a pillar of fire by night to give them light, that they might travel by day and by night. ²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.

^{14:1} Now Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you shall camp in front of Baal-zephon, opposite it, by the sea. ³ "For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, 'They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in.' ⁴ "Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh." And they did so.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁵ When the king of Egypt was told that the people had fled, Pharaoh and his servants had a change of heart toward the people, and they said, "What is this we have done, that we have let Israel go from serving us?" ⁶ So he made his chariot ready and took his people with him; ⁷ and he took six hundred select chariots, and all the other chariots of Egypt with officers over all of them. ⁸ Yahweh hardened the heart of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and he chased after the sons of Israel as the sons of Israel were going out boldly. ⁹ Then the Egyptians chased after them with all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh, his horsemen and his army, and they overtook them camping by the sea, beside Pi-hahiroth, in front of Baal-zephon. ¹⁰ As Pharaoh drew near, the sons of Israel looked, and behold, the Egyptians were marching after them, and they became very frightened; so the sons of Israel cried out to Yahweh. ¹¹ Then they said to Moses, "Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt?" ¹² "Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹³ But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of Yahweh which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. ¹⁴ "Yahweh will fight for you while you keep silent." ¹⁵ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to Me? Tell the sons of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ "As for you, lift up your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, and the sons of Israel shall go through the midst of the sea on dry land. ¹⁷ "As for Me, behold, I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they will go in after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, through his chariots and his horsemen. ¹⁸ "Then the Egyptians will know that I am Yahweh, when I am honored through Pharaoh, through his chariots and his horsemen." ¹⁹ The angel of God, who had been going before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. ²⁰ So it came between the camp of Egypt and the camp of Israel; and there was the cloud along with the darkness, yet it gave light at night. Thus the one did not come near the other all night.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and Yahweh swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. ²² The sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ Then the Egyptians took up the pursuit, and all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. ²⁴ At the morning watch, Yahweh looked down on the army of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and cloud and brought the army of the Egyptians into confusion. ²⁵ He caused their chariot wheels to swerve, and He made them drive with difficulty; so the Egyptians said, "Let us flee from Israel, for Yahweh is fighting for them against the Egyptians."

*Reader 5** Amen. ²⁶ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and their horsemen." ²⁷ So Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its normal state at daybreak, while the Egyptians were fleeing right into it; then Yahweh overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. ²⁸ The waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen, even Pharaoh's entire army that had gone into the sea after them; not even one of them remained. ²⁹ But the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ³⁰ Thus Yahweh saved Israel that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. ³¹ When Israel saw the great power which Yahweh had used against the Egyptians, the people feared Yahweh, and they believed in Yahweh and in His servant Moses. ^{15:1} Then Moses and the sons of Israel sang this song to Yahweh, and said,

*Reader 6** Amen. "I will sing to Yahweh, for He is highly exalted; the horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea. ² "Yahweh is my strength and song, and He has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will

praise Him; my father's God, and I will extol Him. ³ "Yahweh is a warrior; Yahweh is His name. ⁴ "Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has cast into the sea; and the choicest of his officers are drowned in the Red Sea. ⁵ "The deeps cover them; they went down into the depths like a stone. ⁶ "Your right hand, O Yahweh, is majestic in power, Your right hand, O Yahweh, shatters the enemy. ⁷ "And in the greatness of Your excellence You overthrow those who rise up against You; You send forth Your burning anger, and it consumes them as chaff. ⁸ "At the blast of Your nostrils the waters were piled up, the flowing waters stood up like a heap; the deeps were congealed in the heart of the sea. ⁹ "The enemy said, 'I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my desire shall be gratified against them; I will draw out my sword, my hand will destroy them.' ¹⁰ "You blew with Your wind, the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the mighty waters. ¹¹ "Who is like You among the gods, O Yahweh? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders? ¹² "You stretched out Your right hand, the earth swallowed them. ¹³ "In Your lovingkindness You have led the people whom You have redeemed; in Your strength You have guided them to Your holy habitation. ¹⁴ "The peoples have heard, they tremble; anguish has gripped the inhabitants of Philistia. ¹⁵ "Then the chiefs of Edom were dismayed; the leaders of Moab, trembling grips them; all the inhabitants of Canaan have melted away. ¹⁶ "Terror and dread fall upon them; by the greatness of Your arm they are motionless as stone; until Your people pass over, O Yahweh, until the people pass over whom You have purchased. ¹⁷ "You will bring them and plant them in the mountain of Your inheritance, the place, O Yahweh, which You have made for Your dwelling, the sanctuary, O Yahweh, which Your hands have established. ¹⁸ "Yahweh shall reign forever and ever."

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁹ For the horses of Pharaoh with his chariots and his horsemen went into the sea, and Yahweh brought back the waters of the sea on them, but the sons of Israel walked on dry land through the midst of the sea. ²⁰ Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancing. ²¹ Miriam answered them, "Sing to Yahweh, for He is highly exalted; the horse and his rider He has hurled into the sea."

Judges 4:4 – 5:31

(Not read) ⁴ Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. ⁵ She used to sit under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim; and the sons of Israel came up to her for judgment. ⁶ Now she sent and summoned Barak the son of Abinoam from Kedesh-naphtali, and said to him, "Behold, Yahweh, the God of Israel, has commanded, 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take with you ten thousand men from the sons of Naphtali and from the sons of Zebulun. ⁷ 'I will draw out to you Sisera, the commander of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his many troops to the river Kishon, and I will give him into your hand.'" ⁸ Then Barak said to her, "If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go." ⁹ She said, "I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the honor shall not be yours on the journey that you are about to take, for Yahweh will sell Sisera into the hands of a woman." Then Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. ¹⁰ Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali together to Kedesh, and ten thousand men went up with him; Deborah also went up with him. ¹¹ Now Heber the Kenite had separated himself from the Kenites, from the sons of Hobab the father-in-law of Moses, and had pitched his tent as far away as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh. ¹² Then they told Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. ¹³ Sisera called together all his chariots, nine hundred iron chariots, and all the people who were with him, from Harosheth-hagoyim to the river Kishon. ¹⁴ Deborah said to Barak, "Arise! For this is the day in which Yahweh has given Sisera into your hands; behold, Yahweh has gone out before you." So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men following him. ¹⁵ Yahweh routed Sisera and all his chariots and all his army with the edge of the sword before Barak; and Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled away on foot. ¹⁶ But Barak pursued the chariots and the army as far as Harosheth-hagoyim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; not even one was left. ¹⁷ Now Sisera fled away on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. ¹⁸ Jael went out to meet Sisera, and said to him, "Turn aside, my master, turn aside to me! Do not be afraid." And he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. ¹⁹ He said to her, "Please give me a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a bottle of milk and gave him a drink; then she covered him. ²⁰ He said to her, "Stand in the doorway of the tent, and it shall be if anyone comes and inquires of you, and says, 'Is there anyone here?'" that you shall say, 'No.'" ²¹ But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent peg and seized a hammer in her hand, and went secretly to him and drove the peg into his temple, and it went through into the ground; for he was sound asleep and exhausted. So he died. ²² And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him and said to him, "Come, and I will show you the man whom you are seeking." And he entered with her, and behold Sisera was lying dead with the tent peg in his temple. ²³ So God subdued on that day Jabin the

king of Canaan before the sons of Israel. ²⁴ The hand of the sons of Israel pressed heavier and heavier upon Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin the king of Canaan.

^{5:1} Then Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam sang on that day, saying,

² "That the leaders led in Israel, That the people volunteered, Bless Yahweh! ³ "Hear, O kings; give ear, O rulers! I-- to Yahweh, I will sing, I will sing praise to Yahweh, the God of Israel. ⁴ "Yahweh, when You went out from Seir, when You marched from the field of Edom, the earth quaked, the heavens also dripped, even the clouds dripped water. ⁵ "The mountains quaked at the presence of Yahweh, this Sinai, at the presence of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ⁶ "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were deserted, and travelers went by roundabout ways. ⁷ "The peasantry ceased, they ceased in Israel, until I, Deborah, arose, until I arose, a mother in Israel. ⁸ "New gods were chosen; then war was in the gates. not a shield or a spear was seen among forty thousand in Israel. ⁹ "My heart goes out to the commanders of Israel, the volunteers among the people; bless Yahweh! ¹⁰ "You who ride on white donkeys, you who sit on rich carpets, and you who travel on the road-- sing! ¹¹ "At the sound of those who divide flocks among the watering places, there they shall recount the righteous deeds of Yahweh, the righteous deeds for His peasantry in Israel. Then the people of Yahweh went down to the gates. ¹² "Awake, awake, Deborah; Awake, awake, sing a song! Arise, Barak, and take away your captives, O son of Abinoam. ¹³ "Then survivors came down to the nobles; the people of Yahweh came down to me as warriors. ¹⁴ "From Ephraim those whose root is in Amalek came down, following you, Benjamin, with your peoples; from Machir commanders came down, and from Zebulun those who wield the staff of office. ¹⁵ "And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; as was Issachar, so was Barak; into the valley they rushed at his heels; among the divisions of Reuben there were great resolves of heart. ¹⁶ "Why did you sit among the sheepfolds, to hear the piping for the flocks? Among the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart. ¹⁷ "Gilead remained across the Jordan; and why did Dan stay in ships? Asher sat at the seashore, and remained by its landings. ¹⁸ "Zebulun was a people who despised their lives even to death, and Naphtali also, on the high places of the field. ¹⁹ "The kings came and fought; then fought the kings of Canaan at Taanach near the waters of Megiddo; they took no plunder in silver. ²⁰ "The stars fought from heaven, from their courses they fought against Sisera. ²¹ "The torrent of Kishon swept them away, the ancient torrent, the torrent Kishon. O my soul, march on with strength. ²² "Then the horses' hoofs beat from the dashing, the dashing of his valiant steeds. ²³ 'Curse Meroz,' said the angel of Yahweh, 'Utterly curse its inhabitants; because they did not come to the help of Yahweh, to the help of Yahweh against the warriors.' ²⁴ "Most blessed of women is Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite; most blessed is she of women in the tent. ²⁵ "He asked for water and she gave him milk; in a magnificent bowl she brought him curds. ²⁶ "She reached out her hand for the tent peg, and her right hand for the workmen's hammer. Then she struck Sisera, she smashed his head; and she shattered and pierced his temple. ²⁷ "Between her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay; between her feet he bowed, he fell; where he bowed, there he fell dead. ²⁸ "Out of the window she looked and lamented, the mother of Sisera through the lattice, 'Why does his chariot delay in coming? Why do the hoofbeats of his chariots tarry?' ²⁹ "Her wise princesses would answer her, indeed she repeats her words to herself, ³⁰ 'Are they not finding, are they not dividing the spoil? A maiden, two maidens for every warrior; to Sisera a spoil of dyed work, a spoil of dyed work embroidered, dyed work of double embroidery on the neck of the spoiler?' ³¹ "Thus let all Your enemies perish, O Yahweh; but let those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its might."

And the land was undisturbed for forty years.

Joshua 24:1-7

(Not read) ¹ Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and called for the elders of Israel and for their heads and their judges and their officers; and they presented themselves before God. ² And Joshua said to all the people, "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'From ancient times your fathers lived beyond the River, namely, Terah, the father of Abraham and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods. ³ 'Then I took your father Abraham from beyond the River, and led him through all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his descendants and gave him Isaac. ⁴ 'And to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau, and to Esau I gave Mount Seir, to possess it; but Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt. ⁵ 'Then I sent Moses and Aaron, and I plagued Egypt by what I did in its midst; and afterward I brought you out. ⁶ 'And I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and Egypt pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen to the Red Sea. ⁷ 'But when they cried out to Yahweh, He put darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea upon them and covered them; and your own eyes saw what I did in Egypt. And you lived in the wilderness for a long time.

Isaiah 45:18-24

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹⁸ For thus says Yahweh, who created the heavens (He is the God who formed the earth and made it, He established it and did not create it a waste place, but formed it to be inhabited), "I am Yahweh, and there is none else. ¹⁹ "I have not spoken in secret, in some dark land; I did not say to the offspring of Jacob, 'Seek Me in a waste place'; I, Yahweh, speak righteousness, declaring things that are upright. ²⁰ "Gather yourselves and come; draw near together, you fugitives of the nations; they have no knowledge, who carry about their wooden idol and pray to a god who cannot save. ²¹ "Declare and set forth your case; indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old? Who has long since declared it? Is it not I, Yahweh? And there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior; there is none except Me. ²² "Turn to Me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other. ²³ "I have sworn by Myself, the word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. ²⁴ "They will say of Me, 'Only in Yahweh are righteousness and strength.' Men will come to Him, and all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.

Psalm 51 *(To be sung)*

For the choir director. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; according to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions. 2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight, so that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, and blameless when Thou dost judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. 6 Behold, Thou dost desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part Thou wilt make me know wisdom. 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which Thou hast broken rejoice. 9 Hide Thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. 10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Thy presence, and do not take Thy Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit. 13 Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners will be converted to Thee. 14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; then my tongue will joyfully sing of Thy righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Thy praise. 16 For Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise. 18 By Thy favor do good to Zion; build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then Thou wilt delight in righteous sacrifices, in burnt offering and whole burnt offering; then young bulls will be offered on Thine altar.

Revelation 15:1-8

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹ Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. ² And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. ³ And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

"Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! ⁴ "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed."

⁵ After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, ⁶ and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (20) days of the Omer; it is (2) weeks and (6) days of the Omer."* (2005)

What we are reading about here happened about 3500 years ago. If you like to picture time frames in your mind: following this would be about 500 years of the Tabernacle, then 1000 years of the Holy Temple, with Yeshua coming near the end of that time.

Firstly, let us look at the sequence of events in this portion, then the events at the time of the crucifixion, and finally the times in our lives.

The Egyptian Passover 3500 years ago (AM 2448 by traditional count):

As Yahweh instructed through Moses, the Sons of Israel killed a lamb per family on Nisan 14, a “Wednesday”.

On the night of the 15th, they ate it, and in the morning left Egypt: they traveled from Rameses to Sukkot.

On Nisan 16 they traveled to Etham.

On the 17th – the third day, and a Sabbath – they camped at Pi-hachiroth, turning back toward Egypt.

On the 18th the three days were passed and Israel had not returned to Egypt, so the Pharaoh organized his armies to go after them.

Three days later, on Nisan 21, the Pharaoh’s armies found them at the Red Sea, causing bitter complaint from the people to Moses. Moses said (v.14:13), “Stand still and see Yeshua Yahweh” (the Salvation of the Lord), and the Sons of Israel passed through the Sea on dry land, but the Egyptian army was drowned. Then the people believed God – this is called the Day of Faith.

The Jerusalem Passover 2000 years ago (about AD 30):

The Passover Lamb of God – Yeshua – was crucified on Nisan 14, a “Wednesday”.

He was in the grave on the 15th, 16th, and 17th, returning to the world, “back toward Egypt”, late on the third day, which was a Sabbath.

On the 18th, a “Sunday” morning, some people came looking for Him.

The story of our life:

(V.2-4) “Tell God’s elect (*the Sons of Israel*): ‘Repent (*turn back*) and sit (*camp*) before the Word of Salvation (*the Mouth of Freedom / Pi-hachiroth*). You shall be between the High City (*Migdol*) and the world’s multitudes (*the sea*), camped in front of the god of the north (*baal-tzephon*). This god of the world (*Pharaoh*) will say that you are wandering aimlessly, and are trapped by the world (*wilderness*). He will chase you, but in the end, I will be honored, and all of the world will know that I am Yahweh.’ ”

We are to leave the treasure city (worlds delights) and go to the place of temporary dwelling here with God. We are to go “away from them” – be holy/separate from sinners. The world will think that we are totally confused, not knowing where we are going. When we come back toward the world, at our resurrection, it will be renewed – idolaters will be destroyed from it.

Shortly before His crucifixion, Yeshua said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19). He also said, “What man among you, having a lamb, if it fall into a pit, will he not raise it out on a Sabbath” (Matthew 12:11). Yeshua raised His temple, His body, from a pit on the third day, a Sabbath.

Yeshua was crucified on the fourth day of a week (Wednesday) and raised on a seventh day (Sabbath). He was also crucified on the fourth millennial day (prior to AM 4001, which begins the fifth millennium) and will raise up His Temple on the Sabbath Millennium; so His statement will also be literally fulfilled concerning the Temple at Jerusalem which was to represent Him.

Now let us look at some more details of today’s portions.

(V.20) *And Miriam the prophetess, Aaron’s sister* – She was called Aaron’s sister instead of Moses’ sister, because (1) she gave her first prophecy before Moses was born, when Aaron was a child, and (2) Aaron risked his life for her (Numbers 12:12).

(V.21-22) *Then Moses (Drawn out of Water) stretched out his hand over the sea; and Yahweh swept the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land, so the waters were divided. And the sons of Israel went through the midst of the sea on the dry land, and the waters were like a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.* They crossed the Red Sea on Nisan 21. The seven days from the Passover (Nisan 15) to the crossing of the Sea (Nisan 21) are memorialized by the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The Egyptians were so steeped in their idolatry that they refused to recognize Yahweh – even after all the plagues that struck them but not Israel, even upon seeing the sea parted: they still pursued. Is this not like our day, when the world worships theories of their own making, in order to reject God?

Israel was able to see the dead Egyptians on the shore, thus comprehending the full extent of God’s miraculous salvation. On the future, it is written, (Psalm 91:8) *“You will only look on with your eyes, and see the recompense of the wicked”*.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time” – 1 Peter 1:3-5.

Provision for our Journey

*Reader 1** Amen. ²² Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore it was named Marah. ²⁴ So the people grumbled at Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵ Then he cried out to Yahweh, and Yahweh showed him a tree; and he threw it into the waters, and the waters became sweet. There He made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them. ²⁶ And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of Yahweh your God, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for **I, Yahweh, am your healer.**"

*Reader 2** Amen. ²⁷ Then they came to Elim where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms, and they camped there beside the waters. ^{16:1} Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

*Reader 3** Amen. ² The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³ The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by Yahweh's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." ⁴ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. ⁵ "On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."

*Reader 4** Amen. ⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that Yahweh has brought you out of the land of Egypt; ⁷ and in the morning you will see the glory of Yahweh, for He hears your grumblings against Yahweh; and what are we, that you grumble against us?" ⁸ Moses said, "This will happen when Yahweh gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for Yahweh hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against Yahweh." ⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before Yahweh, for He has heard your grumblings.'"

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹⁰ It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of Yahweh appeared in the cloud. ¹¹ And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God.'" ¹³ So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁴ When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which Yahweh has given you to eat. ¹⁶ "This is what Yahweh has commanded, 'Gather of it every man as much as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.'" ¹⁷ The sons of Israel did so, and some gathered much and some little. ¹⁸ When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁹ Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it until morning." ²⁰ But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them. ²¹ They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt. ²² Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, ²³ then he said to them, "This is what Yahweh meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to Yahweh. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning." ²⁴ So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it.

(30x in 30v)

Isaiah 49:8-14

*Reader 8** Amen. ⁸ Thus says Yahweh, "In a favorable time I have answered you, and in a day of salvation I have helped you; and I will keep you and give you for a covenant of the people, to restore the land, to make them inherit the desolate heritages; ⁹ saying to those who are bound, 'Go forth,' to those who are in darkness, 'Show yourselves.' Along the roads they will feed, and their pasture will be on all bare heights. ¹⁰ "They will not hunger or thirst, nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; for He who has compassion on them will lead them and will guide them to springs of water. ¹¹ "I will make all My mountains a road, and My highways will be raised up. ¹² "Behold, these will come from afar; and lo, these will come from the north and from the west, and these from the land of Sinim." ¹³ Shout for joy, O heavens! And rejoice, O earth! Break forth into joyful shouting, O mountains! For Yahweh has comforted His people and will have compassion on His afflicted. ¹⁴ But Zion said, "Yahweh has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me."

Psalm 52 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Maskil of David,*

when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech."

¹ Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The lovingkindness of God endures all day long. ² Your tongue devises destruction, like a sharp razor, O worker of deceit. ³ You love evil more than good, falsehood more than speaking what is right. Selah. ⁴ You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue. ⁵ But God will break you down forever; He will snatch you up and tear you away from your tent, and uproot you from the land of the living. Selah. ⁶ The righteous will see and fear, and will laugh at him, saying, ⁷ "Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and was strong in his evil desire." ⁸ But as for me, I am like a green olive tree in the house of God; I trust in the lovingkindness of God forever and ever. ⁹ I will give You thanks forever, because You have done it, and I will wait on Your name, for it is good, in the presence of Your godly ones.

Philippians 4:4-23

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. ⁶ Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Messiah Yeshua. ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. ⁹ The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁰ But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity. ¹¹ Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² **I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity;** in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me. ¹⁴ Nevertheless, you have done well to share with me in my affliction. ¹⁵ You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the first preaching of the gospel, after I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone; ¹⁶ for even in Thessalonica you sent a gift more than once for my needs.

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹⁷ Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account. ¹⁸ But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am amply supplied, having received from Epaphroditus what you have sent, a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Messiah Yeshua. ²⁰ Now to our God and Father be the glory forever and ever. Amen. ²¹ Greet every saint in Messiah Yeshua. The brethren who are with me greet you. ²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. ²³ The grace of the Lord Yeshua the Messiah be with your spirit.

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (27) days of the Omer; it is (3) weeks and (6) days of the Omer."* (2005)

To recap the story, as it relates to our redemption:

On Nisan fourteen the Passover Lambs were slain and the blood put on the doorposts, prefiguring Yeshua's crucifixion on that date.

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, Israel traveled from the world's Treasure City (Rameses) to a Temporary Dwellingplace (Sukkot) where they could begin to mature in God's way. Then they traveled to "Away from Them" (Etham). Next they came to the Mouth of Freedom (Pi-hachiot), on the date that Yeshua would be freed from the grave. After three days, the Pharaoh's armies caught up with them. On the seventh and last day of Unleavened Bread, they passed through the split Red Sea.

(V.22) "*Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea*": once we come to the place of faith, we have the Torah to lead us on. Israel went from the Sea to the Wilderness of Shur / Vision, the name implying that there the people could be close to God.

After three days travel, they found no water. Then they came to a place of bitter water, so it was called Marah / Bitterness. (This is the root of the name Miriam / Mary.) The people therefore complained to Moses.

Even after witnessing such miracles as God had just performed for them, they had trouble believing that God would provide for their mundane needs, such as water and food. Like our society that trusts in money instead of God.

(Psalm 52:7) "*Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches, and was strong in his evil desire.*"

As water represents the Word of God, this is seen to mean that after neglecting Torah for three days, the people lost their vision and complained about having left the world's Treasure City. For this reason the prophets established the Second and Fifth Days of the Sabbath (Monday and Thursday), in addition to the weekly Sabbath, as days for Bible reading – so that three days would never elapse without Bible reading.

When we neglect Bible reading, it can become as a bitter chore. But God can make it a delight for us. Upon purifying the water for them, God said that He was their healer.

(V.26) "*I, Yahweh, am your healer*" – Ani Yahweh Roph-echa.
Some other titles combined with the Name Yahweh are:

(Isaiah 43:1) *Yahweh Bora-acha* – Yahweh our creator

(Jeremiah 23:6) *Yahweh Tzidkenu* – Yahweh our righteousness

(Exodus 17:15) *Yahweh Nissi* – Yahweh our Banner

(Genesis 22:14) *Yahweh Yireh* – Yahweh will see to it (our provider);

"In the Mound of Yahweh it will be provided"

(Judges 6:24) *Yahweh Shalom* – Yahweh our Peace

Because the lack of Torah study had caused a disaster, God gave the people mishpatim / judgments (the first category – moral and ethical laws) and hukim / statutes (the third category – commandments bonding God and man, having no obvious reasons). As we have seen to be typical, edut / ordinances (the second category – rituals and festivals showing spiritual truths) is implied: Sabbath observance was enjoined.

God gave these commandments because of sin: even His chosen people were failing to live by a view of Him. (Galatians 3:19) *Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made.*

This was the first of ten tests that God would give His people. As soon as the people accepted their place, they were brought to the place of abundant sweet water. Bible study becomes so abundant with sweets when we accept our place in it.

(V.16:1) One month after their departure from the world's Treasure City, on Iyyar 15, they came to the Wilderness of Sin (pronounced "seen"). This date would later become "Second Passover" (for those unable to partake of the first). [For us, this is next Shabbat.]

Here the people all complained about the lack of bread. God said that He would give them “bread from heaven”, but the people called it “manna / what’s this stuff”. Now God’s people would be taught to trust Him for their needs day-by-day, and to trust Him for provision for Sabbath without working on that day.

I heard from a Christian psychologist that one of men’s worst nightmares, though not usually spoken of, is about being unable to provide for their families. Certainly we men are to work for our families’ keep. But the problem, of which we are here concerned, is a lack of faith. The God who created us, and redeemed us, has promised to provide for us, and He tests us until we learn faith.

(V.20) *“But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul”*. Some still did not trust Yahweh, and violated Torah, saving some in case He did not provide for the next day. We do not ultimately gain by violating Torah. Our work only justifies that which God supplies to us if we work according to Torah principles. This is a concept that promotes honesty and integrity and responsibility.

We are taught that the Sabbath Day is not a day for “gathering bread”: it is not a day for working to earn our keep. (V.22) *“On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread”*, showing that we are to prepare for the Sabbath. Those who do not prepare ahead for the Sabbath, do not keep it holy – a day set aside for worship, because they have to do the work that was not prepared ahead.

Some think that they should be able to just take from others’ efforts and live at ease. Many work to be rich. But these are both contrary to the Biblical pattern. It is not wrong to employ others, and it is no sin to be rich; but seeking ease or riches brings out many ungodly traits.

“But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness” – 1 Timothy 6:9-11.

“Instruct those who are rich in this present world not to be conceited or to fix their hope on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly supplies us with all things to enjoy. Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share” - 1 Timothy 6:17-18.

Isaiah quotes Yahweh:

“They will not hunger or thirst, nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; for He who has compassion on them will lead them and will guide them to springs of water” – Isaiah 49:10.

The Psalmist said:

“The righteous will see and fear, and will laugh at him, saying, ‘Behold, the man who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in the abundance of his riches and was strong in his evil desire’” – Psalm 52:6-7.

Paul said:

“Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” – Philippians 4:11-13.

Three Tests of Faith

*Reader 1** Amen. ²⁵ Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to Yahweh; today you will not find it in the field. ²⁶ "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none." ²⁷ It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. ²⁸ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions? ²⁹ "See, Yahweh has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." ³⁰ So the people rested on the seventh day.

*Reader 2** Amen. ³¹ The house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey. ³² Then Moses said, "This is what Yahweh has commanded, 'Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'" ³³ Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it, and place it before Yahweh to be kept throughout your generations."

*Reader 3** Amen. ³⁴ As Yahweh commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept. ³⁵ The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. ³⁶ (Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)

*Reader 4** Amen. ^{17:1} Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of Yahweh, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink. ² Therefore the people quarreled with Moses and said, "Give us water that we may drink." And Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test Yahweh?" ³ But the people thirsted there for water; and they grumbled against Moses and said, "Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?"

*Reader 5** Amen. ⁴ So Moses cried out to Yahweh, saying, "What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me." ⁵ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ "Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ He named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested Yahweh, saying, "Is Yahweh among us, or not?"

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁸ Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. ⁹ So Moses said to Joshua, "Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand." ¹⁰ Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. ¹¹ So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹² But Moses' hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. ¹³ So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. ¹⁴ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven." ¹⁵ Moses built an altar and named it Yahweh is My Banner;

Isaiah 58:13-14

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹³ "If because of the Sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your own pleasure on My holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy day of Yahweh honorable, and honor it, desisting from your own ways, from seeking your own pleasure and speaking your own word, ¹⁴ then you will take delight in Yahweh, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken."

Psalm 53 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David.*

1 The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God;" they are corrupt, and have committed abominable injustice; There is no one who does good. ² God has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men to see if there is anyone who understands, who seeks after God. ³ Every one of them has turned aside; together they have become corrupt; there is no one who does good, not even one. ⁴ Have the workers of wickedness no knowledge, who eat up My people as though they ate bread and have not called upon God? ⁵ There they were in great fear where no fear had

been; for God scattered the bones of him who encamped against you; You put them to shame, because God had rejected them. ⁶ Oh, that the salvation of Israel would come out of Zion! When God restores His captive people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

John 6:1-71

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹ After these things Yeshua went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). ² A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. ³ Then Yeshua went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Therefore Yeshua, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?" ⁶ This He was saying to test him, for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little." ⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ⁹ "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?" ¹⁰ Yeshua said, "Have the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹ Yeshua then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. ¹² When they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." ¹⁵ So Yeshua, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁶ Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Yeshua had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Yeshua walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. ²⁰ But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." ²¹ So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going. ²² The next day the crowd that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Yeshua had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone. ²³ There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. ²⁴ So when the crowd saw that Yeshua was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Yeshua. ²⁵ When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You get here?" ²⁶ Yeshua answered them and said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. ²⁷ Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal."

*Reader 11** Amen. ²⁸ Therefore they said to Him, "What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?" ²⁹ Yeshua answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." ³⁰ So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?" ³¹ "Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.'" ³² Yeshua then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. ³³ "For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." ³⁴ Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." ³⁵ Yeshua said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. ³⁶ "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe."

*Reader 12** Amen. ³⁷ "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. ⁴⁰ "For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." ⁴¹ Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." ⁴² They were saying, "Is not this Yeshua, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?" ⁴³ Yeshua answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. ⁴⁴ "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. ⁴⁵ "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught of God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me."

*Reader 13** Amen. ⁴⁶ "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. ⁴⁷ "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. ⁴⁸ "I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ "Your fathers ate

the manna in the wilderness, and they died.⁵⁰ "This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die."⁵¹ "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."⁵² Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, "How can this man give us His flesh to eat?"⁵³ So Yeshua said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in yourselves."⁵⁴ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."⁵⁵ "For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink."⁵⁶ "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him."⁵⁷ "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me."⁵⁸ "This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever."

*Reader 14**⁵⁹ Amen. These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.⁶⁰ Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, "This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?"⁶¹ But Yeshua, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this, said to them, "Does this cause you to stumble?"⁶² "What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?"⁶³ "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."⁶⁴ "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Yeshua knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him.⁶⁵ And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father."⁶⁶ As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.⁶⁷ So Yeshua said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?"⁶⁸ Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life."⁶⁹ "We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God."⁷⁰ Yeshua answered them, "Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?"⁷¹ Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (34) days of the Omer; it is (4) weeks and (6) days of the Omer."* (2005)

Today's portion is about three tests of faith: will we walk with God, or according to our anxious concern for food, water, and safety? These three things ultimately represent faith in Yeshua as our savior, faith in God's Word as our constant need for direction, and faith in our promised destiny.

Food:

(V.16:1) One month after their departure from the world's Treasure City, on Iyyar 15 (which falls in this week), they came to the Wilderness of Sin (pronounced "seen"). Here the people all complained about the lack of bread. God said that He would give them "bread from heaven", to teach them to trust Him for their needs day-by-day, and to trust Him for provision for Sabbath without working on that day.

On Nisan fourteen the Passover Lambs were slain and the blood put on the doorposts, prefiguring Yeshua's crucifixion on that date. This week, on Iyyar 15, is the second Passover seder, for those who were unable to eat the Passover a month ago. Both the Passover Lamb and the Bread from Heaven represent Yeshua.

John 6:

(V.2-6) On a day approaching Passover, when people would be letting their bread run out, Yeshua went up on a mountain with His disciples, and a great multitude followed Him. As God tested Moses, so Yeshua tested Philip, saying, *"Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?"*

(V.14) *When therefore the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world."*

"The Prophet" refers to Deuteronomy 18:15, *"Yahweh your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me (Moses) from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him"* (See Acts 7:37).

(V.32-37) *Yeshua therefore said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world.” They said therefore to Him, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” Yeshua said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you, that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”*

(V.65-68) *And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.” As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with Him anymore. Yeshua said therefore to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?” Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.”*

Water:

(V.17:1) They journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of Yahweh, and camped at Rephidim (a contraction of a Hebrew phrase “rafu y’dayhem min hatorah” – “they loosened their grip on the Torah” (*Mechilta*) because they had become “lax” in their faith), and there was no water (no light of Torah) for the people to drink.

(V.5-6) *“Take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile (to bring forth plagues!), and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.”* The rock (Yeshua) had not moved: the people had backslid. The Word is always available, but we tend to put our eyes on the world instead.

Safety:

(V.8) Then Amalek (descendants of Esau, also called Edom) came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. When we are lax in Torah study, the world comes in to capture us.

Amalek, as Esau’s grandson, knew Israel’s boundaries, and that Israel posed no threat; yet they attacked Israel in defiance of God. This is what we are seeing today in faith-less Israel with the falsely-so-called Palestinians! Israel and Esau/Amalek/Edom/Rome are representatives of good and evil, godliness and idolatry. Yeshua will ultimately defeat and annihilate Amalek (See Obadiah 1:21 and Revelation 18:1-4).

See Psalm 53:6 – *“When God restores His captive people, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.”*

Faith . . . is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8-9). It is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4) – to turn around towards God. Only God can restore those captivated by the world’s Treasure City.

To recap the previous weeks:

On the first day of Unleavened Bread, Israel traveled from the world’s Treasure City (Rameses) to a Temporary Dwellingplace (Sukkot) where they could begin to mature in God’s way. Then they traveled to “Away from Them” (Etham). Next they came to the Mouth of Freedom (Pi-hachiroth), on the date that Yeshua would be freed from the grave. After three days, the Pharaoh’s armies caught up with them. On the seventh and last day of Unleavened Bread, they were baptized in the split Red Sea. Israel went from the Sea to the Wilderness of Shur / Vision, the name implying that there the people could be close to God. After three days travel without Torah study (water), they came to a place of bitter water, so it was called Marah / Bitterness. The people therefore complained to Moses. Even after witnessing such miracles as God had just performed for them, they had trouble believing that God would provide for their mundane needs, such as water and food. Like our society that trusts in money instead of God. Because the lack of Torah study had caused a disaster, God gave the people commandments – “added because of transgression”.

(V.28-29) *Then Yahweh said to Moses, “How long do you refuse to keep My commandments (Mitzvot) and My instructions (Torah)?”*

Categories of *Mitzvot* of the *Torah* (*Deeds to serve God according to His Instruction*):

1 משפטים Psalm 119:7 KJV, NAS - Judgments, NLT - Laws

Mishpatim / Judgments – moral and ethical laws (No murder, No stealing, Being truthful)

2 עדות Psalm 119:88 KJV, NAS - Testimonies, NLT - Decrees

Edut / Ordinances – rituals and festivals showing religious truths (Baptism, Passover, Sabbath)

3 חקם Psalm 119:8 KJV, NAS - Statutes, NLT - Principles

Hukim / Statutes – bonding man to God, reasons not obvious (Kosher foods)

“See, Yahweh has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day.”
See Isaiah 58:13-14 – *“The mouth of Yahweh has spoken.”*

The Ascensions of Moses and Yeshua

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how Yahweh had brought Israel out of Egypt. ² Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took Moses' wife Zipporah, after he had sent her away, ³ and her two sons, of whom one was named Gershom, for Moses said, "I have been a sojourner in a foreign land." ⁴ The other was named Eliezer, for he said, "The God of my father was my help, and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh."

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁵ Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, came with his sons and his wife to Moses in the wilderness where he was camped, at the mount of God. ⁶ He sent word to Moses, "I, your father-in-law Jethro, am coming to you with your wife and her two sons with her." ⁷ Then Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, and he bowed down and kissed him; and they asked each other of their welfare and went into the tent. ⁸ Moses told his father-in-law all that Yahweh had done to Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel's sake, all the hardship that had befallen them on the journey, and how Yahweh had delivered them.

*Reader 3** Amen. ⁹ Jethro rejoiced over all the goodness which Yahweh had done to Israel, in delivering them from the hand of the Egyptians. ¹⁰ So Jethro said, "Blessed be Yahweh who delivered you from the hand of the Egyptians and from the hand of Pharaoh, and who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians. ¹¹ "Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods; indeed, it was proven when they dealt proudly against the people." ¹² Then Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, took a burnt offering and sacrifices for God, and Aaron came with all the elders of Israel to eat a meal with Moses' father-in-law before God.

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹³ It came about the next day that Moses sat to judge the people, and the people stood about Moses from the morning until the evening. ¹⁴ Now when Moses' father-in-law saw all that he was doing for the people, he said, "What is this thing that you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge and all the people stand about you from morning until evening?" ¹⁵ Moses said to his father-in-law, "Because the people come to me to inquire of God. ¹⁶ "When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and **I judge between a man and his neighbor and make known the statutes of God and His laws.**" ¹⁷ Moses' father-in-law said to him, "The thing that you are doing is not good. ¹⁸ "You will surely wear out, both yourself and these people who are with you, for the task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹⁹ "Now listen to me: I will give you counsel, and God be with you. You be the people's representative before God, and you bring the disputes to God, ²⁰ then teach them the statutes and the laws, and make known to them the way in which they are to walk and the work they are to do. ²¹ "Furthermore, you shall select out of all the people able men who fear God, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain; and you shall place these over them as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. ²² "Let them judge the people at all times; and let it be that every major dispute they will bring to you, but every minor dispute they themselves will judge. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. ²³ "If you do this thing and God so commands you, then you will be able to endure, and all these people also will go to their place in peace."

*Reader 6** Amen. ²⁴ So Moses listened to his father-in-law and did all that he had said. ²⁵ Moses chose able men out of all Israel and made them heads over the people, leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. ²⁶ They judged the people at all times; the difficult dispute they would bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves would judge. ²⁷ Then Moses bade his father-in-law farewell, and he went his way into his own land.

*Reader 7** Amen. ^{19:1} In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. ² When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain. ³ **Moses went up to God,** and Yahweh called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel: ⁴ 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. ⁵ 'Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; ⁶ and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'

Isaiah 6:1-13; 33:13; 61:6-10

*Reader 8** Amen. ^{6:1} In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw Yahweh sitting on a throne, lofty and exalted, with the train of His robe filling the temple. ² Seraphim stood above Him, each having six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. ³ And one called out to another and said, "Holy, Holy,

Holy, is Yahweh of hosts, the whole earth is full of His glory." ⁴ And the foundations of the thresholds trembled at the voice of him who called out, while the temple was filling with smoke. ⁵ Then I said, "Woe is me, for I am ruined! Because I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, Yahweh of hosts." ⁶ Then one of the seraphim flew to me, with a burning coal in his hand which he had taken from the altar with tongs. ⁷ And he touched my mouth with it and said, "Behold, this has touched your lips; and your iniquity is taken away, and your sin is forgiven."

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁸ Then I heard the voice of Yahweh, saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I. Send me!" ⁹ And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on listening, but do not perceive; Keep on looking, but do not understand.' ¹⁰ "Render the hearts of this people insensitive, their ears dull, And their eyes dim, lest they see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, and return and be healed." ¹¹ Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered, "Until cities are devastated and without inhabitant, houses are without people, and the land is utterly desolate, ¹² "Yahweh has removed men far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. ¹³ "Yet there will be a tenth portion in it, and it will again be subject to burning, like a terebinth or an oak whose stump remains when it is felled. The holy seed is its stump."

^{33:13} "You who are far away, hear what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge My might."

Psalm 54 *For the choir director; on stringed instruments.*

A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, "Is not David hiding himself among us?"

¹ Save me, O God, by Your name, and vindicate me by Your power. ² Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words of my mouth. ³ For strangers have risen against me and violent men have sought my life; they have not set God before them. Selah. ⁴ Behold, God is my helper; the Lord is the sustainer of my soul. ⁵ He will recompense the evil to my foes; destroy them in Your faithfulness. ⁶ Willingly I will sacrifice to You; I will give thanks to Your name, O Yahweh, for it is good. ⁷ For He has delivered me from all trouble, and my eye has looked with satisfaction upon my enemies.

Romans 8:19-39

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. ²³ And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it. ²⁶ In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; ²⁷ and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

*Reader 11** Amen. ²⁸ And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; ³⁰ and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

*Reader 12** Amen. ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? ³³ Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; ³⁴ who is the one who condemns? Messiah Yeshua is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. ³⁵ Who will separate us from the love of Messiah? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ Just as it is written, "For Your sake we are being put to death all day long; we were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." ³⁷ But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Messiah Yeshua our Lord.

Commentary:

Ascension Day is Iyyar 27 (Thursday May 9, 2002 / Sunday June 5, 2005)

Beginning with the great flood of Noah's time, this is the day in which the waters were dried off the face of the earth.

From Triennial Cycle Year 1 – Noah:

[1] On Nisan 1 the waters were gone from the surface – the earth was muddy; “*Now it came about in the six hundred and first year, in the first month, on the first of the month . . . the waters were gone from the surface of the earth*” – Genesis 8:13.

From Nisan 1 – the New Year for Festivals,

+ 13 days to crucifixion on Nisan 14,

+ 3 days to resurrection on Nisan 17,

+ 40 days to ascension = Iyyar 27.

[2] on Iyyar 27 the earth was dry. “*And in the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, the earth was dry*” – Genesis 8:14.

Then Elohim remembered Noah – a type of Yeshua.

Moses also typified Yeshua in many ways.

In today's reading, we see that “*Moses went up to God*” (v.19:3). (Israel entered the Wilderness of Sinai on Sivan 1 (v.19:1), and it was Sivan 2 when “*Moses went up to God*” – this is four days later than Iyyar 27. Moses also went up on Sivan 3 (v.19:8), Sivan 4 (v.24:1), Sivan 6 – Shavuot (v.24:9), Sivan 7 (v.24:18), Tammuz 18 (v.32:30), and Av 30 (v.34:4) – seven times.)

Yeshua was crucified on Nisan 14, at the Preparation of the Passover. He rose after three days and three nights. After forty more days, on Iyyar 27, He ascended into the heavens. The “*Water of Life*” was gone from the earth.

¹ The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Yeshua began to do and teach, ² until the day when He was taken up to heaven, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen. ³ To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God. ⁴ Gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; ⁵ for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." ⁶ So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" ⁷ He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; ⁸ but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." ⁹ And after He had said these things, He was lifted up while they were looking on, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. ¹⁰ And as they were gazing intently into the sky while He was going, behold, two men in white clothing stood beside them. ¹¹ They also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Yeshua, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven" – Acts 1:1-11.

Tomorrow (in 2005) is that date when they “*watched Him go into the heavens.*” In four months we celebrate the Day of Trumpeting, rehearsing for His return “*just the same way.*”

(V.1) Moses was once a homeless wanderer, and Jethro a priest of Midian (Exodus 3:1). Now the roles were reversed: Moses was high priest of God's people, and Jethro was coming to him in recognition of Yahweh his God. Actually, Jethro's name was originally Jether (*Yiter*), but when he came to faith in Yahweh, and in recognition for his service to Moses and Israel, he was called Jethro (*Yitro*), which means addition.

We see this story about Jethro in juxtaposition with the story of Amelek. Both Amelek and Jethro had heard about the miraculous events culminating in the exodus. But Amelek came to destroy God's people, whereas Jethro came to join and bless them.

(Isaiah 33:13) "You who are far away, hear what I have done; and you who are near, acknowledge My might."

(V.11) "Now I know" – seeing that as the Pharaoh had intended to kill all Hebrew boys in the sea, God punished "in kind" by drowning the Pharaoh and his armies in the sea. Jethro saw clearly that Yahweh was over all gods.

(V.16) Moses said, "I judge between a man and his neighbor, and make known the statutes (*hukim*) of God and His laws (*Torot*)." This is the definition of *halachic* judgment. Halacha means walk: how we are to walk with God in fulfillment of Torah. Moses taught the details of the application of Torah – God's instruction, as well as settling disputes. This became the position of the Temple Sanhedrin (71 judges) and the District Courts (21 judges) and Synagogue Courts (3 judges for each town). This is the pattern for our court system today in the USA.

(V.13) It may be noted that Moses sat to teach and judge, but the people stood.

The Courts were to teach and enforce God's instruction, not create new laws. Our civil courts of today are supposed to enforce the laws of our land, not create new ones. However, just as our local legislatures make rulings – such as setting highway speed limits to safeguard life, so the Biblical servants made halachic rulings – detailing fences to safeguard Torah laws.

Torah says to safeguard life: ancient halachic rulings and modern civil laws both serve to detail how we should act to fulfill this Torah mandate. Torah says to avoid sexual promiscuity: ancient halachic rulings and apostolic teachings both properly stipulate modest dress, as a fence to help us observe this Torah mandate. Even though the Torah does not specify "Thou shalt not look sexy in public", modest dress is the kind of judgment made by God's authority, and does not represent a new law.

The law "was added because of sin", because men were getting further away from the mark of glorifying God. When we are glorified, we will have no more desire or inclination to sin, and will no longer have need of written rules to learn how to glorify God.

In Romans we see that God foreordained certain people – He made a determination from eternity, which had nothing to do with simply knowing of their future works:

"For whom He foreordained," (v.8:29)

He predestined these people to become holy – to overcome:

"He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren;" (v.8:29)

Then, in time, He called them by the gospel (see 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)

"and whom He predestined, these He also called;" (v.8:30)

Those who are called are then justified:

"and whom He called, these He also justified;" (v.8:30)

Those who are justified are just-as-if-they-had-never-sinned; they will be glorified, with incorruptible bodies. This after-resurrection life relates to Yeshua's ascension:

"and whom He justified, these He also glorified" (v.8:30).

Now, when we are called, we see that everything that happens to us is for our ultimate good:

"And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (v.8:28).

When we are called, here is how things begin to work for our good: the gospel is brought to us and faith is granted. Then, being justified, everything that happens to us is for our learning and overcoming – for our growth in holiness.

If we love God, we will desire to please Him, to learn from our experiences – whether they seem good or evil by this world's standards.

Friday May 17, 2002 is Sivan 6 - Hag Shavuot / Pentecost

This year Pentecost is on the same day of the week as at the Giving of the Torah at Mt.Sinai and at the giving of the Gospel by the Apostles to all nations at Jerusalem.

Monday June 13, 2005 is Sivan 6

“I Am Yahweh Your God”

*Reader 1** Amen. ^{6b} These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel." ⁷ So Moses came and called the elders of the people, and set before them all these words which Yahweh had commanded him. ⁸ All the people answered together and said, "**All that Yahweh has spoken we will do!**" And Moses brought back the words of the people to Yahweh. ⁹ Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold, I will come to you in a thick cloud, so that the people may hear when I speak with you and may also believe in you forever." Then Moses told the words of the people to Yahweh. ¹⁰ Yahweh also said to Moses, "Go to the people and consecrate them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their garments; ¹¹ and let them be ready for the third day, for on the third day Yahweh will come down on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

*Reader 2** Amen. ¹² "You shall set bounds for the people all around, saying, 'Beware that you do not go up on the mountain or touch the border of it; whoever touches the mountain shall surely be put to death. ¹³ 'No hand shall touch him, but he shall surely be stoned or shot through; whether beast or man, he shall not live.' When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they shall come up to the mountain." ¹⁴ So Moses went down from the mountain to the people and consecrated the people, and they washed their garments. ¹⁵ He said to the people, "Be ready for the third day; do not go near a woman."

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁶ So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. ¹⁷ And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸ Now Mount Sinai was all in smoke because Yahweh descended upon it in fire; and its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently. ¹⁹ When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and God answered him with thunder. ²⁰ Yahweh came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and Yahweh called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²¹ Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Go down, warn the people, so that they do not break through to Yahweh to gaze, and many of them perish. ²² "Also let the priests who come near to Yahweh consecrate themselves, or else Yahweh will break out against them." ²³ Moses said to Yahweh, "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for You warned us, saying, 'Set bounds about the mountain and consecrate it.'" ²⁴ Then Yahweh said to him, "Go down and come up again, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to Yahweh, or He will break forth upon them." ²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and told them.

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{20:1} Then God spoke all these words, saying, ² "I am Yahweh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³ "You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵ "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, Yahweh your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. ⁷ "You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain, for Yahweh will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁸ "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ "Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath of Yahweh your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. ¹¹ "For in six days Yahweh made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore Yahweh blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. ¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which Yahweh your God gives you.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹³ "You shall not murder. ¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ "You shall not steal. ¹⁶ "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor." ¹⁸ All the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood at a distance. ¹⁹ Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." ²⁰ Moses said to the people,

"Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin."

Isaiah 61:1-10

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ The Spirit of Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; ² to proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, ³ to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that He may be glorified. ⁴ Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations; and they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. ⁵ Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. ⁶ **But you will be called the priests of Yahweh; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God.** You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast.

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁷ Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs. ⁸ For I, Yahweh, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; And I will faithfully give them their recompense And make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Then their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom Yahweh has blessed. ¹⁰ I will rejoice greatly in Yahweh, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

Hebrews 12:18-29

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁸ For you have not come to a mountain that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, ¹⁹ and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which sound was such that those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not bear the command, "If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned." ²¹ And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, "I am full of fear and trembling." ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, ²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Yeshua, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood, which speaks better than the blood of Abel.

*Reader 11** Amen. ²⁵ See to it that you do not refuse Him who is speaking. For if those did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape who turn away from Him who warns from heaven. ²⁶ And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth, but also the heaven." ²⁷ This expression, "Yet once more," denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. ²⁸ Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.

Commentary:

Today we say:

*"Blessed are You, Yahweh our God, King of the Universe,
Who has sanctified us by His Word, and instructed us to count the Omer:
Today is (48) days of the Omer; it is (6) weeks and (6) days of the Omer."* (2005)

Whenever God makes some momentous action toward His people – such as the giving of the Torah or sending Messiah – He verifies it with miraculous signs that are indisputable to all. Today we see how that all of the people – millions – heard God speaking from a dark cloud, so that there would be no doubt about the veracity of the message forever.

This is in great contrast to many situations today. We hear third-hand testimonies about some miracle being performed on some unknown person somewhere distant, for the sole purpose of verifying the spirituality of some respected teacher. We see "healing meetings" where healings are based only upon doubtful testimonies, and the

obviously sick are not reached. We see people trying to look spiritual by “speaking in tongues” of jibberish and they are often followed by others trying to look spiritual by making “interpretations” that are linguistic nonsense.

Certainly God can perform miracles anywhere and anytime He pleases. That idea does not justify nonsense to make someone look spiritual or prove some pet doctrine.

While I do not accept the Jewish idea of Israel being more worthy than other nations, the following is an interesting characterization: “*Esau’s offspring (Amelekites) would not tolerate a law that prohibited murder; Ishmael’s could not live with a law that banned thievery; and Lot’s (Moabites) would not accept a ban on adultery. Now it was Israel’s turn.*” Today’s falsely-so-called Palestinians are Esau’s offspring – known for murder.

Now we should note that the Israel of the Exodus included people from many nations – traditionally from each of the seventy nations. Natural descendents of Abraham might even have been a minority. The Torah was heard direct from God by millions of people from many nations. We need to see the error of the idea that the Torah is “just for Jews” – even if that is intended to mean all Hebrews.

Review:

Sivan 1 (a *Sunday* at the Sinai and Jerusalem events) – (v.19:1-6) ¹ *In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.* ² *When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.* ³ *Moses went up to God, and Yahweh called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:* ⁴ *'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.'* ⁵ *Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine;* ⁶ *and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.'*

Today we will look at some technical considerations, while on Shavuot we will look at the spiritual aspects. Let us consider the days of the week as they were at the time that the Israelites were at Mt. Sinai, and at the time of Pentecost following the Crucifixion (these both being the same as in many of our years such as AD 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, and 2006).

Sivan 3 (a *Tuesday* at the Sinai and Jerusalem events *) – (v.9) *Yahweh said to Moses, "Behold! I come to you in the thickness of the cloud, so that the people will hear as I speak to you, and they will also believe in you forever."*

Sivan 4 (a *Wednesday* at the Sinai and Jerusalem events *) – *Moses related the words of the people to Yahweh. The people had said, (v.8) "Everything that Yahweh has spoken we shall do."*

Sivan 6 (a *Friday* at the Sinai and Jerusalem events *) – (v.10) A three-day period of purification preceded the giving of the commandments. The people were to sanctify themselves and be baptized (enter the mikvah). This period culminated on Sivan 6, the Day of the Firstfruits – the fiftieth day of Counting the Omer (Pentecost).

Thus Shavuot is seen as the betrothal date – when Israel was betrothed to Messiah – with the Betrothal Contract (the Commandments) being presented the following day.

Sivan 7 * (a *Sabbath* at the Sinai and Jerusalem events) – (v.16) With lightning and thunder, fire and smoke, and shofar blasts, God descended upon Mt. Sinai, and millions of people heard from heaven, “Anuchiy Yahweh Eloheycha” – “*I am Yahweh your God.*” Remember here, that we are all to consider ourselves as having been redeemed from slavery in Egypt. They heard God say from the cloud, “*I am Yahweh your God, Who has taken you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. . .*” They heard these first two Commandments directly from God, and the remainder through Moses.

* It may be noted that there are two viewpoints of the timing of events: this Sabbath was either Sivan 6 or Sivan 7, the day of or the day after Pentecost, according to the ancients; but the Commandments were given on the Sabbath. The difference is in how one interprets the three days of verses ten through sixteen. Neither viewpoint fits the modern Roman idea that Pentecost was a Sunday. The accepted viewpoint, as indicated above, fits with Passover Preparation on Wednesday, and fifty days of counting from Friday Nisan 16 to Friday Sivan 6.

➤ See table of Commandments below.

We may note that the first five Commandments, which were written on the first tablet, each contain the Name Yahweh, but the last five do not. The first five teach us how we are to love God. The last five show us how we are to love our neighbor.

Although the First Commandment is stated as a fact rather than an instruction, it is a positive commandment to recognize Yahweh as our God, though others may have different gods. (Yahweh is a proper name that only applies to our God; Elohim is a title that is not uniquely applied to Yahweh.) Our God, Yahweh, is the creator of all, Who holds all power and authority for eternity. He has redeemed us from slavery to sin.

The Second Commandment is a negative commandment prohibiting idolatry. It forbids even making images for worshipping false gods, such as to bow before or bring offerings to.

The Third Commandment forbids vain oaths. It is forbidden to show contempt for our God by using His Name for no valid purpose. That is the basis for the teaching that, when a blessing is said for something, which is pronouncing God's Name over it, then we should use that thing before doing anything else – so as not to be using the Name without validating our purpose. Obviously, we should not make any reference to God's Holy Name for dishonest or disgraceful purposes, even if the Name per se is not spoken. Yeshua taught us such in Matthew 23: *“Whoever swears by the Temple, swears by both the Temple and Him Who dwells in it”* (v.21).

The Fourth Commandment concerns our remembrance and worship of our Creator by honoring the Sabbath. Many believers do not seem to know that there is a commandment to take part in a public worship service on the Sabbath (Leviticus 23:3), even though the apostle Paul reminds us (Hebrews 10:25). We also are not to perform work that would reduce the sanctity of the day.

The Fifth Commandment, to honor our parents, means that we are to respect the authority which emanates from our God. This is a direct way of honoring our God. It implies honoring all authority that is from God. Thus this last commandment of the first tablet, and the last one of the ten including Yahweh's Name, is seen as teaching us how we are to love Yahweh our God.

The Sixth Commandment prohibits murder. This first commandment of the second tablet – which contains instructions on how to love our neighbor – parallels the first commandment of the first tablet: one who believes that God is the creator and sustainer of life will not commit murder. While murder was seen as evil long before this commandment, this elevates it to a higher position. Many things in Torah are seen as tantamount to murder, such as causing significant embarrassment, failing to provide food for the needy, allowing dangerous conditions, and causing the loss of livelihood.

The Seventh Commandment, prohibiting adultery, is seen as parallel to the Second Commandment, which forbids idolatry. One who betrays the marital relationship can be expected to betray God. This commandment covers lust, this being an ancient understanding that Yeshua also promoted in Matthew 5:28. It is also an umbrella over commandments against homosexuality and bestiality.

The Eighth Commandment prohibits kidnapping – forcing someone into servitude, or selling someone into slavery. (The commandment against ordinary theft is found in Leviticus 19:11.)

The Ninth Commandment forbids bearing false witness. This literally refers to testimony in a court, and it includes the prohibition of bearing witness to something believed but not actually seen. It also prohibits gossip and slander. This commandment is seen as parallel to the Fourth Commandment, which is a testimony that God created the earth in six days.

The Tenth Commandment prohibits covetousness. What is the point in forbidding something like jealousy or desiring possessions of others? This commandment raises the bar. God demands that people purify their thoughts

and attitudes. While a pauper might easily covet his neighbor's property, he would not be as likely to covet the king's property that would be so inaccessible. If one has proper faith in God, he will realize that, by this commandment, his neighbor's property is as inaccessible as the Great King's property. This commandment is seen as parallel to the Fifth Commandment: a covetous person will have children who dishonor him, because a covetous person puts his selfish desires above decent conduct.

Four related levels of holiness to be seen at Mt. Sinai and at the Holy Temple. The Temple is the ultimate "Sinai" experience.

- (a) The bottom of Mt. Sinai, where the people stood, relates to the gate of the Temple courtyard.
- (b) The mountain relates to the interior of the courtyard.
- (c) The cloud, where Moses stood, relates to the interior of the Temple.
- (d) The "thickness of the cloud" relates to the Holy of Holies, the seat of God's presence.

The writer of Hebrews seems to have this in mind, saying that we have not come to Mt. Sinai, but Mt. Zion – Jerusalem. And the spiritual implication is stated as the heavenly Jerusalem, which is to come to earth.

Hebrews 12:28-29 – Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; for our God is a consuming fire.

Once Israel dwelt in the Promised Land, the three Feasts had required ordinances at the Temple. Therefore, fifty-one days after Yeshua's crucifixion, it was necessary that the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) would have its ordinances displayed at Jerusalem.

Yeshua said: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" – Matt 22:40.

"Yahweh your God is one, and you shall . . . (Deut 6:4)

"Love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might."

How to love Yahweh your God:

- 1** Have Yahweh as only God.
 - +1 Believe in God
 - +5 Worship God
 - +20 Build sanctuary for God
- 2** Have no other gods, for I, Yahweh, am jealous; make no graven images.
 - 31 No divination
 - 38 No necromancy
- 3** Take not the name of Yahweh your God in vain.
 - +9 Sanctify God's Name
 - 61 No violation of oaths
- 4** Remember the Sabbath Day, Yahweh made it separate.
 - +154 Assemble to worship
 - 320 Do no servile work
- 5** Honor your father and mother, to prolong your days in the land Yahweh is giving you.
 - 318 No cursing parents
 - 319 No striking parents

"Love your neighbor as yourself."

How to love your neighbor:

- 6** Do no murder.
 - +184 Remove dangers
 - 302 No hating brother
- 7** Do no adultery.
 - 350 No homosexual acts
 - 355 No sex without marriage
- 8** Do no stealing (kidnapping).
 - +200 Pay wages timely
 - 230 Charge no usury
 - 246 No altering land lines
- 9** Bear no false witness.
 - +177 Treat litigants equally
 - 274 Accept no bribes
 - 299 No misleading advice
- 10** Do no coveting.
 - 47 Do not follow heart

V'elleh haMishpatim / These are the judgments

Exodus 21:1 – 22:24 Isaiah 56:1-7 Psalm 55 Matthew 5:38-42, 7:1-5

Commentary Y2-10

Sivan 7, 5762 / May 18, 2002

Sivan 11, 5765 / June 18, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ "Now **these are the judgments** which you are to set before them: ² "If you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve for six years; but on the seventh he shall go out as a free man without payment. ³ "If he comes alone, he shall go out alone; if he is the husband of a wife, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ "If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall belong to her master, and he shall go out alone. ⁵ "But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife and my children; I will not go out as a free man,' ⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, then he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall pierce his ear with an awl; and he shall serve him permanently. ⁷ "If a man sells his daughter as a female slave, she is not to go free as the male slaves do. ⁸ "If she is displeasing in the eyes of her master who designated her for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He does not have authority to sell her to a foreign people because of his unfairness to her. ⁹ "If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her according to the custom of daughters. ¹⁰ "If he takes to himself another woman, he may not reduce her food, her clothing, or her conjugal rights. ¹¹ "If he will not do these three things for her, then she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

*Reader 2** Amen. ¹² "He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death. ¹³ "But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴ "If, however, a man acts presumptuously toward his neighbor, so as to kill him craftily, you are to take him even from My altar, that he may die. ¹⁵ "He who strikes his father or his mother shall surely be put to death. ¹⁶ "He who kidnaps a man, whether he sells him or he is found in his possession, shall surely be put to death. ¹⁷ "He who curses his father or his mother shall surely be put to death.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁸ "If men have a quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist, and he does not die but remains in bed, ¹⁹ if he gets up and walks around outside on his staff, then he who struck him shall go unpunished; he shall only pay for his loss of time, and shall take care of him until he is completely healed. ²⁰ "If a man strikes his male or female slave with a rod and he dies at his hand, he shall be punished. ²¹ "If, however, he survives a day or two, no vengeance shall be taken; for he is his property. ²² "If men struggle with each other and strike a woman with child so that she gives birth prematurely, yet there is no injury, he shall surely be fined as the woman's husband may demand of him, and he shall pay as the judges decide. ²³ "But if there is any further injury, then you shall appoint as a penalty life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise. ²⁶ "If a man strikes the eye of his male or female slave, and destroys it, he shall let him go free on account of his eye. ²⁷ "And if he knocks out a tooth of his male or female slave, he shall let him go free on account of his tooth.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²⁸ "If an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall surely be stoned and its flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall go unpunished. ²⁹ "If, however, an ox was previously in the habit of goring and its owner has been warned, yet he does not confine it and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰ "If a ransom is demanded of him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is demanded of him. ³¹ "Whether it gores a son or a daughter, it shall be done to him according to the same rule. ³² "If the ox gores a male or female slave, the owner shall give his or her master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned. ³³ "If a man opens a pit, or digs a pit and does not cover it over, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make restitution; he shall give money to its owner, and the dead animal shall become his. ³⁵ "If one man's ox hurts another's so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and divide its price equally; and also they shall divide the dead ox. ³⁶ "Or if it is known that the ox was previously in the habit of goring, yet its owner has not confined it, he shall surely pay ox for ox, and the dead animal shall become his.

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{22:1} "If a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he shall pay five oxen for the ox and four sheep for the sheep. ² "If the thief is caught while breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there will be no bloodguiltiness on his account. ³ "But if the sun has risen on him, there will be bloodguiltiness on his account. He shall surely make restitution; if he owns nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. ⁴ "If what he stole is actually found alive in his possession, whether an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double. ⁵ "If a man lets a field or vineyard be grazed bare and lets his animal loose so that it grazes in another man's field, he shall make restitution from the best of his own field and the best of his own vineyard. ⁶ "If a fire breaks out and spreads to thorn bushes, so that stacked grain or the standing grain or the field itself is consumed, he who started the fire shall surely make restitution. ⁷ "If a man gives his neighbor money or goods to keep for him and it is stolen from the man's house, if the thief is caught, he shall pay double. ⁸ "If the thief is not caught, then the owner of the house shall appear before the judges, to determine whether he laid his hands on his neighbor's property. ⁹ "For every breach of trust, whether it is for ox, for donkey, for sheep, for clothing, or for any lost thing about which one says, 'This is it,' the case of both parties shall come before the judges; he whom the judges condemn shall pay double to his neighbor.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁰ "If a man gives his neighbor a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any animal to keep for him, and it dies or is hurt or is driven away while no one is looking, ¹¹ an oath before Yahweh shall be made by the two of them that he has not laid hands on his neighbor's property; and its owner shall accept it, and he shall not make restitution. ¹² "But if it is actually stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. ¹³ "If it is all torn to pieces, let him bring it as evidence; he shall not make restitution for what has been torn to pieces. ¹⁴ "If a man borrows anything from his neighbor, and it is injured or dies while its owner is not with it, he shall make full restitution. ¹⁵ "If its owner is with it, he shall not make restitution; if it is hired, it came for its hire.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁶ "If a man seduces a virgin who is not engaged, and lies with her, he must pay a dowry for her to be his wife. ¹⁷ "If her father absolutely refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the dowry for virgins. ¹⁸ "You shall not allow a sorceress to live. ¹⁹ "Whoever lies with an animal shall surely be put to death. ²⁰ "He who sacrifices to any god, other than to Yahweh alone, shall be utterly destroyed. ²¹ "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. ²² "You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. ²³ "If you afflict him at all, and if he does cry out to Me, I will surely hear his cry; ²⁴ and My anger will be kindled, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

Isaiah 56:1-7

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ Thus says Yahweh, "Preserve justice and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness to be revealed. ² "How blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who takes hold of it; who keeps from profaning the Sabbath, and keeps his hand from doing any evil." ³ Let not the foreigner who has joined himself to Yahweh say, "Yahweh will surely separate me from His people." Nor let the eunuch say, "Behold, I am a dry tree." ⁴ For thus says Yahweh, "To the eunuchs who keep My Sabbaths, and choose what pleases Me, and hold fast My covenant, ⁵ to them I will give in My house and within My walls a memorial, and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which will not be cut off. ⁶ "Also the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath and holds fast My covenant; ⁷ even those I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be acceptable on My altar; for My house will be called a house of prayer for all the peoples."

Psalms 55 (To be sung.) For the choir director; on stringed instruments. A Maskil of David.

¹ Give ear to my prayer, O God; and do not hide Yourself from my supplication. ² Give heed to me and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and am surely distracted, ³ because of the voice of the enemy, because of the pressure of the wicked; for they bring down trouble upon me and in anger they bear a grudge against me. ⁴ My heart is in anguish within me, and the terrors of death have fallen upon me. ⁵ Fear and trembling come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me. ⁶ I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. ⁷ "Behold, I would wander far away, I would lodge in the wilderness. Selah. ⁸ "I would hasten to my place of refuge from the stormy wind and tempest." ⁹ Confuse, O Lord, divide their tongues, for I have seen violence and strife in the city. ¹⁰ Day and night they go around her upon her walls, and iniquity and mischief are in her midst. ¹¹ Destruction is in her midst; oppression and deceit do not depart from her streets. ¹² For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, then I could bear it; nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, then I could hide myself from him. ¹³ But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; ¹⁴ we who had sweet fellowship together walked in the house of God in the throng. ¹⁵ Let death come deceitfully upon them; let them go down alive to Sheol, for evil is in their dwelling, in their midst. ¹⁶ As for me, I shall call upon God, and Yahweh will save me. ¹⁷ Evening and morning and at noon, I will complain and murmur, and He will hear my voice. ¹⁸ He will redeem my soul in peace from the battle which is against me, for they are many who strive with me. ¹⁹ God will hear and answer them-- even the one who sits enthroned from of old-- Selah. With whom there is no change, and who do not fear God. ²⁰ He has put forth his hands against those who were at peace with him; he has violated his covenant. ²¹ His speech was smoother than butter, but his heart was war; his words were softer than oil, yet they were drawn swords. ²² Cast your burden upon Yahweh and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be shaken. ²³ But You, O God, will bring them down to the pit of destruction; men of bloodshed and deceit will not live out half their days. But I will trust in You.

Matthew 5:38-42

*Reader 9** Amen. ³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.' ³⁹ But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also. ⁴⁰ If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also. ⁴¹ Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two. ⁴² Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you."

Matthew 7:1-5

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹ “Do not judge so that you will not be judged. ² For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. ³ Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? ⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' and behold, the log is in your own eye? ⁵ You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

Commentary:

Righteous Judgment

There are several Hebrew and Greek words translated “judge” in our Bibles.

The Hebrew word “*pali*” means to judge or distinguish the difference between things. As to the difference between gods, we read in Deuteronomy 32:31, “*Indeed our Rock is not like their rock, even our enemies themselves judge this.*”

The Hebrew word “*din*” is about Yahweh – the God of grace and mercy – defending His people. We may recognize it from the term “*Beit Din*,” the house of *halachic* judgment. Halachic judgment is about elected judges making determinations of how we are to walk to fulfill Torah – this is not an individual’s right to decide. “*Din*” is the root of the name “*Dan*,” the tribe whose name means judge. The word “*din*” is used in 1 Samuel 2:10, “*Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth*”, and in Psalm 135:14, “*Yahweh will judge His people and have compassion on His servants*”.

The Hebrew word “*shaphat*” refers to judging sin. In Genesis 18:25 we see Abraham, talking about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, saying that Elohim is “*Judge of all the earth.*” In Deuteronomy 1:16, God instructs judges to “*judge righteously,*” and in verse 17:12, the man who will not listen to the judge “*shall die.*”

The Hebrew word “*mishpat*” is from the previous word “*shaphat.*” In Habakkuk, we see that Yahweh appointed the Chaldeans to judge – to bring destruction on nations for their sin.

Now we come to the word “*mishpatim*” – the plural of “*mishpat*”. The *mishpatim* / judgments are the moral laws by which God will judge the world that does not walk with Him.

(V.1) “These are the judgments” – the moral and ethical laws, the first of three categories of commandments.

The three Biblical Categories of Commandments:

1) Mishpatim - Judgments . . . moral and ethical laws.

That the moral and ethical laws apply to today’s followers of Yeshua is seldom questioned. Yeshua himself stressed that hating a brother is sin under the commandment against murder, and lust is covered by the commandment against adultery (Matthew 5).

2) Edos - Ordinances or Witnesses . . . rituals and festivals showing religious truths.

While baptism was taught by John the baptizer and the apostles, it is seldom seen today as the ordinance of the Torah concerning ritual immersions in the mikvah. A detailed explanation is given in the page Mikvah/Baptism.

Yeshua and the apostles also taught concerning the application of festive ordinances to us - even gentiles. For examples, the applicability and messianic nature of Sabbath and Festivals are shown in those pages.

3) Hukim - Statutes or Decrees . . . commandments bonding God and man, having no obvious reason. The statutes include kosher diet (which cannot all be explained by health reasons), and circumcision.

(V. 22) “He shall pay as the judges decide.” These are rules for the judges to use in making fair resolutions. They were never intended as rules for taking personal retribution.

Several words of different meanings are translated “judge” in various Scriptures. The “Do not judge” in Matthew 7 means “Do not condemn”, as in “do not place yourself in the position reserved for the elected judges.” However, we are required to make personal judgments of the type where we determine what the actions of another might require of us.

For an extreme example: If I see someone trying to violently take another’s life, I should immediately “judge” whose side to take, and what kind of response I should make. If the perpetrator is successful, it is not my right to take personal vengeance (I am not excluding a right of defense – to use deadly force to stop a murder); however, it is my duty to be a witness to the judges. If the judges find the perpetrator guilty, then they are to require life for life. In the Biblical setting, following a guilty verdict for a capital offense, witnesses normally cast the first stones.

[From the discussion:] One who was himself guilty of a certain crime could not be an acceptable witness against another for that type of crime. In the case of the adulteress brought to Yeshua, a case was being sought against Yeshua as an unqualified judge. Firstly, He properly “judged”/discerned the sin; secondly, He properly “judged”/decided the appropriate response; thirdly, He did not “judge”/condemn the woman, because He was not currently in the position of a judge. Additionally, He caused the witnesses to be convicted, because they were too guilty to be appropriate witnesses.

Matthew 5:

Fair judgment (an eye for an eye) means that a proportionate judgment is to be meted for the loss that was caused. For the loss of an eye, the injured party should be awarded an amount to make up for his loss, including wages and suffering: the defendant’s eye is not put out in retribution. So, we see that Yeshua was correcting a misuse of Torah (“You have heard that it was said”, concerning personal retribution); He was not changing Torah. We are still required to give witness before judges after being an eye-witness to criminal behavior.

There are priorities in the commandments: some take precedence over others. On one hand, saving a life takes precedence over most other commandments. I went to a store and made a purchase on a Sabbath for my mother when she was dying, while considering how easily my motives might be misjudged if certain people would see me. On the other hand, “precedence” may be misused as an excuse for violating God’s instruction, in order to please oneself.

Matthew 7:

Before we try to force correction upon a brother for a perceived wrong perspective, we should consider the propriety of our own perspective. This often applies to judging / condemning another’s motives. It applies to having a critical attitude. We are not forbidden – we are required – to judge / make decisions about who is best suited for various positions in our lives; but we are not to be prejudiced, which means judging before we have a proper basis for making a decision.

Isaiah concludes (*haftarah*) today’s Torah portion, speaking of just judgment, and walking in Torah: “*Thus says Yahweh, ‘Preserve justice and do righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness to be revealed.’*” Then he speaks of gentiles: “*Also the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to Him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be His servants, every one who keeps from profaning the Sabbath and holds fast My covenant; even those I will bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of prayer.*”

The Psalmist writes prophetically concerning a wrong judgment of Yeshua, and the condemnation / judgment of His betrayer: “*For it is not an enemy who reproaches me, then I could bear it; nor is it one who hates me who has exalted himself against me, then I could hide myself from him. But it is you, a man my equal, My companion and my familiar friend; we who had sweet fellowship together walked in the house of God in the throng. Let death come deceitfully upon them; let them go down alive to Sheol, for evil is in their dwelling, in their midst. As for me, I shall call upon God, and Yahweh will save me.*”

Colossians 2:16-17 does not say that we should “*let no man decide for us which days to set aside for worship,*” thereby making Sunday acceptable. It does not say – except as inserted in certain versions – that we should “*let no man condemn us for not keeping the Sabbath Holy.*” It does say, “*Let no man condemn you . . . for keeping Sabbaths,*” etcetera, and both Jews and gentiles like to condemn us for just that reason, often misusing this very verse to do so. And the next verse says that the reason for observing these things is because they are prophetic shadow-pictures of Messiah Himself.

Judge righteous judgment, because God is going to judge in defense of those who walk with Him, and in condemnation of the world.

Im-kesef Talveh / When You Lend

Exodus 22:25 – 24:18 Isaiah 48:10, 49:3; 60:17 – 61:19; 1 Kings 6:11-13 Psalm 56
Heb 22:24

Commentary Y2-11

Matthew 5:1-48
Sivan 14, 5762 / May 25, 2002
Sivan 18, 5765 / June 25, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ²⁵ "If you lend money to My people, to the poor among you, you are not to act as a creditor to him; you shall not charge him interest. ²⁶ "If you ever take your neighbor's cloak as a pledge, you are to return it to him before the sun sets, ²⁷ for that is his only covering; it is his cloak for his body. What else shall he sleep in? And it shall come about that when he cries out to Me, I will hear him, for I am gracious. ²⁸ "You shall not curse God, nor curse a ruler of your people. ²⁹ "You shall not delay the offering from your harvest and your vintage. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me. ³⁰ "You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep. It shall be with its mother seven days; on the eighth day you shall give it to Me. ³¹ "You shall be holy men to Me, therefore you shall not eat any flesh torn to pieces in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

*Reader 2** Amen. ^{23:1} "You shall not bear a false report; do not join your hand with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² "You shall not follow the masses in doing evil, nor shall you testify in a dispute so as to turn aside after a multitude in order to pervert justice; ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his dispute. ⁴ "If you meet your enemy's ox or his donkey wandering away, you shall surely return it to him. ⁵ "If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying helpless under its load, you shall refrain from leaving it to him, you shall surely release it with him. ⁶ "You shall not pervert the justice due to your needy brother in his dispute. ⁷ "Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent or the righteous, for I will not acquit the guilty. ⁸ "You shall not take a bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of the just. ⁹ "You shall not oppress a stranger, since you yourselves know the feelings of a stranger, for you also were strangers in the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ "You shall sow your land for six years and gather in its yield, ¹¹ but on the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, so that the needy of your people may eat; and whatever they leave the beast of the field may eat. You are to do the same with your vineyard and your olive grove.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹² "Six days you are to do your work, but on the seventh day you shall cease from labor so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and the son of your female slave, as well as your stranger, may refresh themselves. ¹³ "Now concerning everything which I have said to you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth. ¹⁴ "Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. ¹⁵ "You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Breads; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. ¹⁶ "Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. ¹⁷ "Three times a year all your males shall appear before Yahweh GOD. ¹⁸ "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread; nor is the fat of My feast to remain overnight until morning. ¹⁹ "You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of Yahweh your God. "You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²⁰ "Behold, I am going to send an angel before you to guard you along the way and to bring you into the place which I have prepared. ²¹ "Be on your guard before him and obey his voice; do not be rebellious toward him, for he will not pardon your transgression, since My name is in him. ²² "But if you truly obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. ²³ "For My angel will go before you and bring you in to the land of the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites; and I will completely destroy them. ²⁴ "You shall not worship their gods, nor serve them, nor do according to their deeds; but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their sacred pillars in pieces. ²⁵ "But you shall serve Yahweh your God, and He will bless your bread and your water; and I will remove sickness from your midst.

*Reader 5** Amen. ²⁶ "There shall be no one miscarrying or barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. ²⁷ "I will send My terror ahead of you, and throw into confusion all the people among whom you come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸ "I will send hornets ahead of you so that they will drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites before you. ²⁹ "I will not drive them out before you in a single year, that the land may not become desolate and the beasts of the field become too numerous for you. ³⁰ "I will drive them out before you little by little, until you become fruitful and take possession of the land. ³¹ "I will fix your boundary from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the River Euphrates; for I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you will drive them out before you. ³² "You shall make no covenant with them or with their gods. ³³ "They shall not live in your land, because they will make you sin against Me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you."

*Reader 6** Amen. ^{24:1} Then He said to Moses, "Come up to Yahweh, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel, and you shall worship at a distance. ² "Moses alone, however, shall come near to Yahweh, but they shall not come near, nor shall the people come up with him." ³ Then Moses came and recounted to the people all the words of Yahweh and all the ordinances; and all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which Yahweh has spoken we will do!" ⁴ Moses wrote down all the words of Yahweh. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel. ⁵ He sent young men of the sons of Israel, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as peace offerings to Yahweh. ⁶ Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and the other half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. ⁷ Then he took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that Yahweh has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!" ⁸ So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant, which Yahweh has made with you in accordance with all these words."
*Reader 7** Amen. ⁹ Then Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel, ¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself. ¹¹ Yet He did not stretch out His hand against the nobles of the sons of Israel; and they saw God, and they ate and drank. ¹² Now Yahweh said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and remain there, and I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment which I have written for their instruction." ¹³ So Moses arose with Joshua his servant, and Moses went up to the mountain of God. ¹⁴ But to the elders he said, "Wait here for us until we return to you. And behold, Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a legal matter, let him approach them." ¹⁵ Then Moses went up to the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. ¹⁶ The glory of Yahweh rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; and on the seventh day He called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. ¹⁷ And to the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of Yahweh was like a consuming fire on the mountain top. ¹⁸ Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

*Reader 8** Amen.

Isaiah 48:10 – "Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction."

Isaiah 49:3 – And He said to Me, "You are My Servant, Israel, In Whom I will show My glory."

Isaiah 60:17-61:11

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹⁷ "Instead of bronze I will bring gold, and instead of iron I will bring silver, and instead of wood, bronze, and instead of stones, iron. And I will make peace your administrators and righteousness your overseers. ¹⁸ "Violence will not be heard again in your land, nor devastation or destruction within your borders; but you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise. ¹⁹ "No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have Yahweh for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. ²⁰ "Your sun will no longer set, nor will your moon wane; for you will have Yahweh for an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be over. ²¹ "Then all your people will be righteous; they will possess the land forever, the branch of My planting, the work of My hands, that I may be glorified. ²² "The smallest one will become a clan, and the least one a mighty nation. I, Yahweh, will hasten it in its time."

*Reader 10** Amen. ^{61:1} The Spirit of Lord Yahweh is upon me, Because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; ² to proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, ³ to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that He may be glorified. ⁴ Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations; and they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. ⁵ Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers.

*Reader 11** Amen. ⁶ But you will be called the priests of Yahweh; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. ⁷ Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs. ⁸ For I, Yahweh, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; and I will faithfully give them their recompense and make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Then their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom Yahweh has blessed. ¹⁰ I will rejoice greatly in Yahweh, my soul will exult in my God; for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels. ¹¹ For as the earth brings forth its sprouts, and as a garden causes the things sown in it to spring up, so Lord Yahweh will cause righteousness and praise to spring up before all the nations.

1 Kings 6:11-13

*Reader 12** Amen. ¹¹ Now the word of Yahweh came to Solomon saying, ¹² "Concerning this house which you are building, if you will walk in My statutes and execute My ordinances and keep all My commandments by walking in them, then I will carry out My word with you which I spoke to David your father. ¹³ And I will dwell among the sons of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel."

Psalm 56 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; according to Jonath elem rehokim.*

A Mikhtam of David, when the Philistines seized him in Gath.

¹ Be gracious to me, O God, for man has trampled upon me; fighting all day long he oppresses me. ² My foes have trampled upon me all day long, for they are many who fight proudly against me. ³ When I am afraid, I will put my trust in You. ⁴ In God, whose word I praise, in God I have put my trust; I shall not be afraid. What can mere man do to me? ⁵ All day long they distort my words; all their thoughts are against me for evil. ⁶ They attack, they lurk, they watch my steps, as they have waited to take my life. ⁷ Because of wickedness, cast them forth, in anger put down the peoples, O God! ⁸ You have taken account of my wanderings; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in Your book? ⁹ Then my enemies will turn back in the day when I call; this I know, that God is for me. ¹⁰ In God, whose word I praise, in Yahweh, whose word I praise, ¹¹ In God I have put my trust, I shall not be afraid. What can man do to me? ¹² Your vows are binding upon me, O God; I will render thank offerings to You. ¹³ For You have delivered my soul from death, indeed my feet from stumbling, so that I may walk before God in the light of the living.

Matthew 5:1-48

*Reader 13** Amen. ¹ When Yeshua saw the crowds, He went up on the mountain; and after He sat down, His disciples came to Him. ² He opened His mouth and began to teach them, saying, ³ "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. ⁵ "Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. ⁶ "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. ⁷ "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. ⁸ "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. ⁹ "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. ¹⁰ "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ¹¹ "Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. ¹² "Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

*Reader 14** Amen. ¹³ "You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; ¹⁵ nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. ¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. ¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. ²⁰ "For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

*Reader 15** Amen. ²¹ "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' ²² "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell. ²³ "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, ²⁴ leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. ²⁵ "Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. ²⁶ "Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent.

*Reader 16** Amen. ²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY'; ²⁸ but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. ²⁹ "If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. ³⁰ "If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into

hell.³¹ "It was said, 'WHOEVER SENDS HIS WIFE AWAY, LET HIM GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE';³² but I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except for the reason of unchastity, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.³³ "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FALSE VOWS, BUT SHALL FULFILL YOUR VOWS TO YAHWEH.'³⁴ "But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God,³⁵ or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is THE CITY OF THE GREAT KING.³⁶ "Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black.³⁷ "But let your statement be, 'Yes, yes ' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of evil.

*Reader 17** Amen.³⁸ "You have heard that it was said, 'AN EYE FOR AN EYE, AND A TOOTH FOR A TOOTH.'³⁹ "But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also.⁴⁰ "If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.⁴¹ "Whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two.⁴² "Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'⁴⁴ "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,⁴⁵ so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.⁴⁶ "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?⁴⁷ "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?⁴⁸ "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

Matthew 26:26-30

*Reader 18** Amen.²⁶ While they were eating, Yeshua took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is My body."²⁷ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you;²⁸ for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.²⁹ "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."³⁰ After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

Commentary:

Today we will look at some various Judgments, and then some Statutes and Ordinances, these being the three Biblical divisions of the commandments.

(Exodus 22:25) A loan is a required form of charity, and one of the highest forms, because it allows a borrower to gain financial stability without the embarrassment of depending upon gifts. This is a judgment.

A lender was not allowed to charge interest from God's people. If a borrower did not repay his debt in the stipulated time, the lender could obtain a court judgment granting collateral; however, the lender could not keep items of collateral at times when the borrower needed them: the lender could not keep the borrowers bedding by night, nor his clothing by day.

"If there is a poor man with you, one of your brothers, in any of your towns in your land which Yahweh your God is giving you, you shall not harden your heart, nor close your hand from your poor brother; but you shall freely open your hand to him, and shall generously lend him sufficient for his need in whatever he lacks. Beware that there is no base thought in your heart, saying, 'The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,' and your eye is hostile toward your poor brother, and you give him nothing; then he may cry to Yahweh against you, and it will be a sin in you. You shall generously give to him, and your heart shall not be grieved when you give to him, because for this thing Yahweh your God will bless you in all your work and in all your undertakings. For the poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command you, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land' " – Deuteronomy 15:7-11.

"If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. If you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners in order to receive back the same amount. But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful"

– Luke 6:33-36.

(V.27) “*You shall not revile Elohim*” may refer to cursing God or cursing judges – or both. It is followed by “*You shall not curse a leader*”. While it is forbidden to curse anyone, this commandment makes the sin greater if the object is a judge or a leader of God’s people.

(V.28) The firstfruits (*bikkurim*) of crops (the seven species: wheat, barley, figs, grapes, pomegranates, olives, and dates) – the first to become ripe, which are normally the most treasured, are to be separated for God’s service. Also the tithes (*terumah*) of wine and oil are for this service. The firstborn of animals must be presented or redeemed. Presenting God’s portion is to be a priority for us, not to be delayed for mundane reasons. Firstborn sons belong to Yahweh, even though the Levites were taken for the sacred service; the firstborn carry a greater responsibility for family spiritual service.

(V. 30) An animal that was killed represents all forbidden foods. Eating forbidden foods keeps us from being “holy” – separated to God. This is in the category of Statutes, the reason being not obvious.

(V.23:1-3) It is forbidden for an individual to believe unverified gossip, and it is forbidden for a judge to hear uncorroborated testimony. It is forbidden to follow a majority to do evil, or to yield to a majority of witnesses to pervert judgment. It is forbidden to show favoritism in judgment to a person because he is destitute – or, as we see today, judging against some because they have “deep pockets.”

From Exodus 23:10 we have some ordinances. These are the “ordinances of the church”!

(V.10) “*You shall sow your land for six years*”; (v.12) “*Six days you are to do your work*”. First is the Sabbatical Year, and its relative, the weekly Sabbath. Ceasing from labor, “resting”, does not imply catching up on sleep from a too-busy work week. It means forsaking mundane activity in order to be refreshed by a day dedicated to the worship of God, and this includes the commandment to assemble for worship.

“*For six days work may be done; but the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, a sacred assembly*” –
Leviticus 23:3

(V.14) “*Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me.*” Note that there are three annual Feasts of Yahweh, with seven annual Holy Days / Yom Tovim, observed as Sabbaths. They are:

[The “Day Prior” is the Preparation of the Passover (Nisan 14).]

I. Feast of Unleavened Breads / Hag haMatzot – a seven day Feast.

(1) The first day is a Yom Tov when the Passover is eaten (Nisan 15).

[The second day is Waving Day, when we start counting the omer (Nisan 16).]

(2) The seventh day is a Yom Tov (Nisan 21).

II. Feast of Weeks of the Firstfruits / Hag Shavuot haBikkurim:

(3) It is a Yom Tov (Sivan 6).

III. Feast of Tabernacles / Hag Sukkot – a seven day Feast.

(4) Day of Trumpeting / Yom Teruah (two weeks prior) is a Yom Tov (Tishrei 1).

(5) Day of the Atonements / Yom HaKippurim (four days prior) is a Yom Tov (Tishrei 10).

(6) First day of Feast of Tabernacles is a Yom Tov (Tishrei 15).

(7) Eighth Day Assembly / Shemini Atzeret (following the Feast) is a Yom Tov (Tishrei 22).

The Feasts are related to the Temple, and therefore in Temple times men made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem for each of the three.

The Holy Temple existed for most of the fourth millennium. The Sadducees existed for about the last 200 years; they could not observe any of the above on different days than the Pharisees.

We have one Bible that begins with The First Things / Genesis and ends with the Revelation of Yeshua the Messiah. The divisions of “OT” and “NT”, which are commonly understood by dispensationalists to be “obsolete testament” and “replacement testament”, were added by Rome centuries after the apostles.

Likewise, Rome (Constantine) admits to “changing the Sabbath to Sunday” in the fifth century. The Bible indicates no change in the Sabbath, or the Fourth Commandment.

The Feasts and Holy Days are commonly spoken of as ancient Jewish rites; not for us, not for today, but fulfilled once and for all time. But we are familiar with the many Scriptures that are misused to support such ideas.

“Let no man condemn you (gentile Colossians) for observing Sabbaths, New Moons, and Festivals”
(Colossians 2:16) is explained as “Don’t let anyone tell you that you should observe them”.

Breaking bread on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) is explained as Sunday Communion, instead of the ancient Biblical Havdallah – an end-of-Sabbath service on Saturday night on which Paul preached until midnight. (Midnight of the first day of the Biblical week is about six hours after Saturday’s sunset, the end of Sabbath. Havdallah traditionally includes breaking of bread and teaching.)
Bringing in the tithes on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:2) is explained as Sunday observance, instead of the ancient practice of waiting until the Sabbath was over to deal with the tithe of the previous week’s increase.

Yeshua was the adopted son of a builder – a stone mason, not a carpenter. By Him all things were created, and He wrote the Torah in stone for Moses. The “Law of Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21) is the Torah, not a replacement.

(V.19) “*You are not to boil a young goat in the milk of its mother.*” This Biblically applies to all sheep and cattle (only rabbinically is it extended to all kosher meat and fowl). This statement is repeated three times in Torah (also Exodus 34:26 and Deuteronomy 14:21).

Some ancient suggestions of the reason:

Meat represents eating and milk represents reproduction – two things animals instinctively do. Man is to differentiate between these two and subjugate them to a higher calling. Its proximity to the laws of the Festivals and firstfruits implies its relationship to holiness.

Meat and milk represent death and life. These two are not to be mixed.

(V.24:6-8) At the Feast of Unleavened Breads – at the Passover seder – we took four cups of “*the blood of the Covenant*” (v.8). We have just celebrated Hag Shavuot – the betrothal feast, where we said, “*Everything that Yahweh has spoken, we will do and we will learn* (v.7).” Here we can see the origin of the words that we spoke. Now we are to show our love for Yahweh our God by doing what He says, and learning by our doing. First we must hear what He says.

V'yiqtu-li Terumah / Take For Me a Portion

Exodus 25:1 – 26:30 Isaiah 66:1-24 Psalm 57 Hebrews 9:1-28

Commentary Y2-12

Sivan 21, 5762 / June 1, 2002

Sivan 25, 5765 / July 2, 2005

[The ordinances for construction of the Tabernacle]

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² "Speak the sons of Israel and **let them take for Me a portion; from every man whose heart motivates him** you shall raise My contribution. ³ This is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze, ⁴ blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goat hair, ⁵ rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, ⁶ oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, ⁷ onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece. ⁸ **Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them.** ⁹ **According to all that I am going to show you,** as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it.

*Reader 2** Amen. ¹⁰ "They shall construct an **ark** of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. ¹¹ You shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and you shall make a gold molding around it. ¹² You shall cast four gold rings for it and fasten them on its four feet, and two rings shall be on one side of it and two rings on the other side of it. ¹³ You shall make poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. ¹⁴ You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry the ark with them. ¹⁵ The poles shall remain in the rings of the ark; they shall not be removed from it. ¹⁶ "You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. ¹⁷ You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. ¹⁸ You shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. ¹⁹ Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. ²⁰ The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. ²¹ You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. ²² There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.

*Reader 3** Amen. ²³ "You shall make a **table** of acacia wood, two cubits long and one cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. ²⁴ "You shall overlay it with pure gold and make a gold border around it. ²⁵ "You shall make for it a rim of a handbreadth around it; and you shall make a gold border for the rim around it. ²⁶ "You shall make four gold rings for it and put rings on the four corners which are on its four feet. ²⁷ "The rings shall be close to the rim as holders for the poles to carry the table. ²⁸ "You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold, so that with them the table may be carried. ²⁹ "You shall make its dishes and its pans and its jars and its bowls with which to pour drink offerings; you shall make them of pure gold. ³⁰ "You shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before Me at all times.

*Reader 4** Amen. ³¹ "Then you shall make a **lampstand** of pure gold. The lampstand and its base and its shaft are to be made of hammered work; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers shall be of one piece with it. ³² "Six branches shall go out from its sides; three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its other side. ³³ "Three cups shall be shaped like almond blossoms in the one branch, a bulb and a flower, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms in the other branch, a bulb and a flower-- so for six branches going out from the lampstand; ³⁴ and in the lampstand four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers. ³⁵ "A bulb shall be under the first pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the second pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the third pair of branches coming out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. ³⁶ "Their bulbs and their branches shall be of one piece with it; all of it shall be one piece of hammered work of pure gold. ³⁷ "Then you shall make its lamps seven in number; and they shall mount its lamps so as to shed light on the space in front of it. ³⁸ "Its snuffers and their trays shall be of pure gold. ³⁹ "It shall be made from a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. ⁴⁰ "See that you make them after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain.

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{26:1} "Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with **ten curtains** of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet material; you shall make them with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. ² "The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurements. ³ "Five curtains shall be joined to one another, and the other five curtains shall be joined to one another. ⁴ "You shall make loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set, and likewise you shall make them on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. ⁵ "You shall make fifty loops in the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite each other. ⁶ "You shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps so that the tabernacle will be a unit. ⁷ "Then you shall make curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; you shall make eleven curtains in all. ⁸ "The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits;

the eleven curtains shall have the same measurements. ⁹ "You shall join five curtains by themselves and the other six curtains by themselves, and you shall double over the sixth curtain at the front of the tent. ¹⁰ "You shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the first set, and fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is outermost in the second set. ¹¹ "You shall make fifty clasps of bronze, and you shall put the clasps into the loops and join the tent together so that it will be a unit. ¹² "The overlapping part that is left over in the curtains of the tent, the half curtain that is left over, shall lap over the back of the tabernacle. ¹³ "The cubit on one side and the cubit on the other, of what is left over in the length of the curtains of the tent, shall lap over the sides of the tabernacle on one side and on the other, to cover it.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁴ "You shall make a **covering** for the tent of rams' skins dyed red and a covering of porpoise skins above. ¹⁵ "Then you shall make the **boards** for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright. ¹⁶ "Ten cubits shall be the length of each board and one and a half cubits the width of each board. ¹⁷ "There shall be two tenons for each board, fitted to one another; thus you shall do for all the boards of the tabernacle. ¹⁸ "You shall make the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side. ¹⁹ "You shall make **forty sockets** of silver under the twenty boards, two sockets under one board for its two tenons and two sockets under another board for its two tenons; ²⁰ and for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, twenty boards, ²¹ and their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board. ²² "For the rear of the tabernacle, to the west, you shall make six boards. ²³ "You shall make two boards for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. ²⁴ "They shall be double beneath, and together they shall be complete to its top to the first ring; thus it shall be with both of them: they shall form the two corners. ²⁵ "There shall be eight boards with their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board. ²⁶ "Then you shall make bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of one side of the tabernacle, ²⁷ and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the side of the tabernacle for the rear side to the west. ²⁸ "The middle bar in the center of the boards shall pass through from end to end. ²⁹ "You shall overlay the boards with gold and make their rings of gold as holders for the bars; and you shall overlay the bars with gold. ³⁰ "Then you shall erect the tabernacle according to its plan which you have been shown in the mountain.

*Reader 7** Amen. ³¹ "You shall make a **veil** of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. ³² "You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver. ³³ "You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies. ³⁴ "You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies. ³⁵ "You shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side. ³⁶ "You shall make a **screen** for the doorway of the tent of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver. ³⁷ "You shall make five pillars of acacia for the screen and overlay them with gold, their hooks also being of gold; and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

Isaiah 66:1-24

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ Thus says Yahweh, "Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? ² For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being," declares Yahweh. "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.

*Reader 9** Amen. ³ But he who kills an ox is like one who slays a man; he who sacrifices a lamb is like the one who breaks a dog's neck; he who offers a grain offering is like one who offers swine's blood; he who burns incense is like the one who blesses an idol. As they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations, ⁴ so I will choose their punishments and will bring on them what they dread. Because I called, but no one answered; I spoke, but they did not listen. And they did evil in My sight and chose that in which I did not delight." ⁵ Hear the word of Yahweh, you who tremble at His word: Your brothers who hate you, who exclude you for My name's sake, have said, 'Let Yahweh be glorified, that we may see your joy.' But they will be put to shame.

*Reader 10** Amen. ⁶ A voice of uproar from the city, a voice from the temple, the voice of Yahweh who is rendering recompense to His enemies. ⁷ Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy. ⁸ Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons. ⁹ "Shall I bring to the point of birth and not give delivery?" says Yahweh. "Or shall I who gives delivery shut the womb?" says your God. ¹⁰ "Be joyful with Jerusalem and rejoice for her, all you who love her; be exceedingly glad with her, all you who mourn over her, ¹¹ that you may nurse and be satisfied with her comforting breasts, that you may suck and be delighted with her bountiful bosom." ¹² For thus says Yahweh, "Behold, I extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the nations like an overflowing stream; and you will be nursed, you will be carried on the hip and fondled on the knees.

¹³ As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; and you will be comforted in Jerusalem. ¹⁴ Then you will see this, and your heart will be glad, and your bones will flourish like the new grass; and the hand of Yahweh will be made known to His servants, but He will be indignant toward His enemies. *Reader 11** Amen. ¹⁵ For behold, Yahweh will come in fire and His chariots like the whirlwind, to render His anger with fury, and His rebuke with flames of fire. ¹⁶ For Yahweh will execute judgment by fire and by His sword on all flesh, and those slain by Yahweh will be many. ¹⁷ Those who sanctify and purify themselves to go to the gardens, following one in the center, who eat swine's flesh, detestable things and mice, will come to an end altogether," declares Yahweh. ¹⁸ "For I know their works and their thoughts; the time is coming to gather all nations and tongues. And they shall come and see My glory. *Reader 12** Amen. ¹⁹ "I will set a sign among them and will send survivors from them to the nations: Tarshish, Put, Lud, Meshech, Rosh, Tubal and Javan, to the distant coastlands that have neither heard My fame nor seen My glory. And they will declare My glory among the nations. ²⁰ Then they shall bring all your brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to Yahweh, on horses, in chariots, in litters, on mules and on camels, to My holy mountain Jerusalem," says Yahweh, "just as the sons of Israel bring their grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of Yahweh. ²¹ I will also take some of them for priests and for Levites," says Yahweh. ²² "For just as the new heavens and the new earth which I make will endure before Me," declares Yahweh, "So your offspring and your name will endure. ²³ And it shall be from Head-of-the-month to Head-of-the-month and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me," says Yahweh. ²⁴ "Then they will go forth and look on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched; and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind."

Psalms 57 *(To be sung) For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth.*

A Mikhtam of David, when he fled from Saul, in the cave.

¹ Be gracious to me, O God, be gracious to me, for my soul takes refuge in You; and in the shadow of Your wings I will take refuge until destruction passes by. ² I will cry to God Most High, to God who accomplishes all things for me. ³ He will send from heaven and save me; He reproaches him who tramples upon me. Selah. God will send forth His lovingkindness and His truth. ⁴ My soul is among lions; I must lie among those who breathe forth fire, even the sons of men, whose teeth are spears and arrows and their tongue a sharp sword. ⁵ Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth. ⁶ They have prepared a net for my steps; my soul is bowed down; they dug a pit before me; they themselves have fallen into the midst of it. Selah. ⁷ My heart is steadfast, O God, my heart is steadfast; I will sing, yes, I will sing praises! ⁸ Awake, my glory! Awake, harp and lyre! I will awaken the dawn. ⁹ I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing praises to You among the nations. ¹⁰ For Your lovingkindness is great to the heavens and Your truth to the clouds. ¹¹ Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth.

Hebrews 9:1-28

*Reader 13** Amen. ¹ Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the earthly sanctuary. ² For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this is called the holy place. ³ Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle which is called the Holy of Holies, ⁴ having a golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the tables of the covenant; ⁵ and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in detail. ⁶ Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship, ⁷ but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the people committed in ignorance.

*Reader 14** Amen. ⁸ The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer tabernacle is still standing, ⁹ which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, ¹⁰ since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation. ¹¹ But when Messiah appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; ¹² and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, ¹⁴ how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? ¹⁵ For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

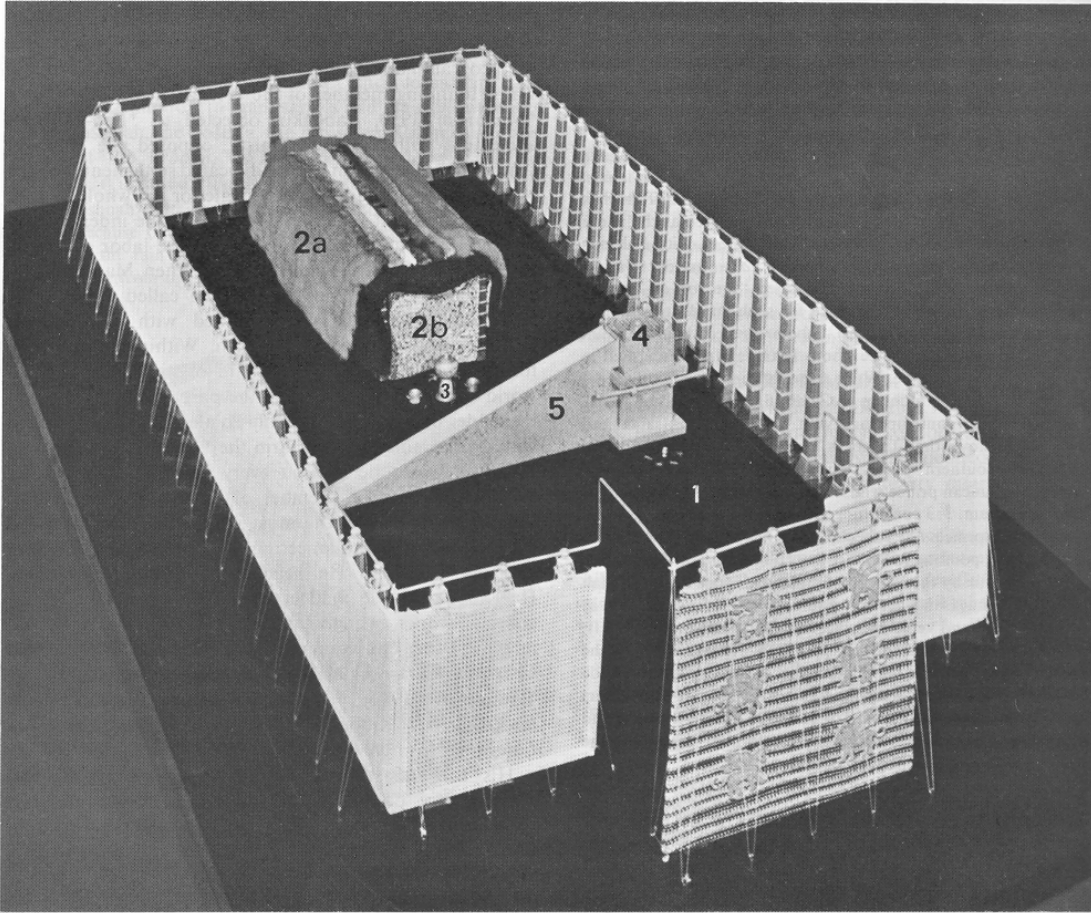
*Reader 15** Amen. ¹⁶ For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. ¹⁷ For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. ¹⁸ Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood. ¹⁹ For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, ²⁰ saying, "THIS IS THE BLOOD OF THE COVENANT WHICH GOD COMMANDED YOU." ²¹ And in the same way he sprinkled both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry with the blood. ²² And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. ²³ Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. ²⁴ For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; ²⁵ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. ²⁶ Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. ²⁷ And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, ²⁸ so Messiah also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Commentary:

Following the three categories of commandments, which included instructions for the judges, we now see the place where the judges will sit, and the priests will minister: the center for the dissemination of God's instruction to all peoples, and the focal point for the worship of those whose hearts are toward their creator. The Tabernacle was a representation of Yeshua.

(V.2) *"Let them take for Me a set-aside-portion, from every man whose heart motivates him"*. This was not a tax, but a collection by the leaders from those whose heart was moved to glorify God's Name by providing Him a dwellingplace. The Tabernacle, its vessels, and the priestly garments were made from thirteen raw materials, all given voluntarily (except two required silver half-shekel donations). The thirteen materials were: (v.3) gold, silver, copper, (v.4) wool in three colors (including *techeilet* blue as used in *tzitzit* / tassels), linen, goat hair, (v.5) ram skins, *tachash* skins (a beautiful ancient animal), acacia wood, (v.6) olive oil, spices for the anointing oil, aromatic incense, and (v.7) precious stones.

(V.8) *"Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. ⁹ According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it."* God appointed specific people to be in charge of fashioning these raw materials into the finished products. The Holy Spirit was given them for artistry. This was not a crude desert structure as some portray.



Model of the Tabernacle showing: 1. Court, 2. sanctuary (a. ram skin covering, b. screen), 3. laver, 4. bronze altar (for burnt offering), 5. sloped ramp. From M. Levine, *Mlechet Hamishkan*, Tel Aviv, 1968.

Picture from Jerusalem Encyclopaedia Judaica

(V.10) The central feature of the Tabernacle (and the Temple) was the Ark of the Covenant. It contained the two stone tablets with the five commandments showing us how to love Yahweh our God, and the five parallel commandments showing us how to love our neighbor. Yeshua said that all of the Torah and the Prophets hang on these two “tablets” – loving God and loving our neighbor.

The wooden Ark was covered inside and outside with gold. This may be seen to symbolize Yeshua, as well as our humanity – our inward (private) ways and outward (public) ways should be consistent and pure.

(V.17) The cover – the mercy seat – was made with solid gold, and had two cherubim which were hammered from the same single piece of gold. It is said to represent the soul of man made in the image of God. The cherubim had bird-wings spread upwards, and one had the face of a boy child, the other the face of a girl-child, looking downwards each other and the Ark, the only true source of wisdom (*Sforno*).

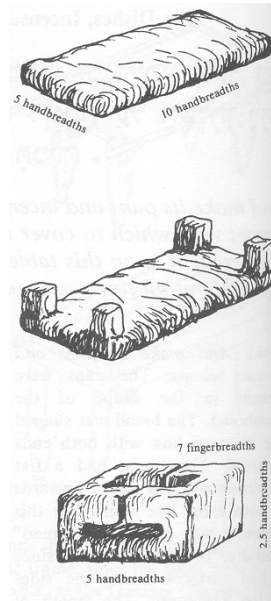
(V.22) When God spoke to Moses from heaven, the voice was heard from between the cherubim, above the mercy seat.

(V.23) The Table for Bread of Presence had twelve specially baked loaves of “show-bread” above it at all times, in two columns of six each. The loaves were baked on the sixth day, and placed above the table on the Sabbath. The previous loaves, of which it is recorded that they were still as fresh baked, were given to the priests. It is said to represent God as Israel’s defender and provider for all twelve tribes (*Sforno*).

The golden table had racks for the show-bread. The bread was shaped in an unusual manner.



Table for the twelve loaves of the Bread of the Presence



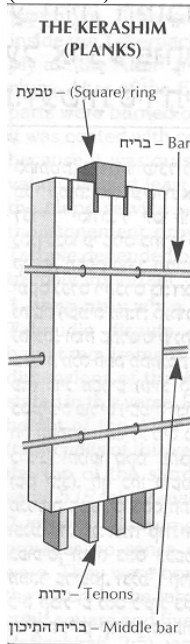
2-omer unleavened Loaf – final shape at bottom

(V.31) The Menorah was made of one piece (one talent, approximately 150 pounds) of hammered gold, with seven separate lamps on its top. Three lamps on either side faced toward the center column, while the center lamp faced forward. These golden lamps resembled tea-pots with hinged lids, each having a spout with a wick.



Photo taken by author at Jerusalem

(V.26:15) Wall Planks for the Holy Place



Isaiah 66

“¹ Thus says Yahweh, ‘Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest? ² For My hand made all these things, thus all these things came into being,’ declares Yahweh. ‘But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.’ ” From Isaiah we learn that God’s dwellingplace is with those who are of contrite spirit. The Tabernacle was, in the same sense, for those with a heart towards God.

In this Haftarah portion we see that God’s judgment is upon those who bring animal offerings, but are not pure on the inside. Slaying an ox to offer is as if they killed a man (v.3); God takes no pleasure in such offerings. Though they say, “Let Yahweh be glorified,” yet they will be put to shame (v.5).

But the time is approaching when all seventy nations – all seventy languages from Babel – will see God’s glory (v.18). Missionaries will be sent throughout all the earth to gather God’s elect from the four winds (v.19, Mark 13:27).

Then Isaiah tells us of the renewed heavens and earth, where in pure heart we will remember Sabbaths and Head-of-the-months (v.23). We will be as gold both inwardly and outwardly, consistent and pure in all of our ways; though we will have a “wood” core of flesh, we will be incorruptible (1 Corinthians 15:22).

Psalm 57

While Isaiah writes, ⁴ *Thus says Yahweh, ‘Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool’*, David says twice, ^{5 & 11} *Be exalted above the heavens, O God; let Your glory be above all the earth.* This entire Psalm may be seen as fitting to be spoken by Yeshua when He was on earth to be crucified: His heart is steadfast, He will sing praises, He will give thanks (v.7-8). And like the symbol of the Ark which pictured God and man, this is also how we should be. We should take refuge in the shadow of God’s wings (v.1), from where His lovingkindness and truth shall come to us (v.3).

Are our hearts pure before God? And are our outward actions pure before God? Are they in accordance with God’s instruction on how we are to love Yahweh our God, and love our neighbor as ourselves? We have a Savior who delivers from sin. We have a source for correction and instruction in righteousness – the Holy Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:16). We can even have a fulfilling life here, making up for what we have lost in the past –

“to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that He might be glorified” – Isaiah 61:3.

[Hebrews commentary not transcribed.]

V'ashita Parochet / You Shall Make a Partition

Exodus 26:31 – 27:19 Ezekiel 16:10-19 Psalm 58 Matthew 23:1-28

Commentary Y2-13

Sivan 28, 5762 / June 8, 2002
Tammuz 2, 5765 / July 9, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ³¹ "You shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. ³² "You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver. ³³ "You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies. ³⁴ "You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies.

*Reader 2** Amen. ³⁵ "You shall set the table outside the veil, and the lampstand opposite the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the south; and you shall put the table on the north side. ³⁶ "You shall make a screen for the doorway of the tent of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver. ³⁷ "You shall make five pillars of acacia for the screen and overlay them with gold, their hooks also being of gold; and you shall cast five sockets of bronze for them.

*Reader 3** Amen. ^{27:1} "And you shall make the altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide; the altar shall be square, and its height shall be three cubits. ² "You shall make its horns on its four corners; its horns shall be of one piece with it, and you shall overlay it with bronze. ³ "You shall make its pails for removing its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze.

*Reader 4** Amen. ⁴ "You shall make for it a grating of network of bronze, and on the net you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners. ⁵ "You shall put it beneath, under the ledge of the altar, so that the net will reach halfway up the altar. ⁶ "You shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze. ⁷ "Its poles shall be inserted into the rings, so that the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. ⁸ "You shall make it hollow with planks; as it was shown to you in the mountain, so they shall make it.

*Reader 5** Amen. ⁹ "You shall make the court of the tabernacle. On the south side there shall be hangings for the court of fine twisted linen one hundred cubits long for one side; ¹⁰ and its pillars shall be twenty, with their twenty sockets of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver. ¹¹ "Likewise for the north side in length there shall be hangings one hundred cubits long, and its twenty pillars with their twenty sockets of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands shall be of silver.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹² "For the width of the court on the west side shall be hangings of fifty cubits with their ten pillars and their ten sockets. ¹³ "The width of the court on the east side shall be fifty cubits. ¹⁴ "The hangings for the one side of the gate shall be fifteen cubits with their three pillars and their three sockets. ¹⁵ "And for the other side shall be hangings of fifteen cubits with their three pillars and their three sockets.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁶ "For the gate of the court there shall be a screen of twenty cubits, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver, with their four pillars and their four sockets. ¹⁷ "All the pillars around the court shall be furnished with silver bands with their hooks of silver and their sockets of bronze. ¹⁸ "The length of the court shall be one hundred cubits, and the width fifty throughout, and the height five cubits of fine twisted linen, and their sockets of bronze. ¹⁹ "All the utensils of the tabernacle used in all its service, and all its pegs, and all the pegs of the court, shall be of bronze.

Ezekiel 16:10-19

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹⁰ "I also clothed you with embroidered cloth and put sandals of porpoise skin on your feet; and I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk. ¹¹ "I adorned you with ornaments, put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck. ¹² "I also put a ring in your nostril, earrings in your ears and a beautiful crown on your head. ¹³ "Thus you were adorned with gold and silver, and your dress was of fine linen, silk and embroidered cloth. You ate fine flour, honey and oil; so you were exceedingly beautiful and advanced to royalty. ¹⁴ "Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you," declares Lord Yahweh.

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹⁵ "But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing. ¹⁶ "You took some of your clothes, made for yourself high places of various colors and played the harlot on them, which should never come about nor happen. ¹⁷ "You also took your beautiful jewels made of My gold and of My silver, which I had given you, and made for yourself male images that you might play the harlot with them. ¹⁸ "Then you took your embroidered cloth and covered them, and offered My oil and My incense before them. ¹⁹ "Also My bread which I gave you, fine flour, oil and honey with which I fed you, you would offer before them for a soothing aroma; so it happened," declares Lord Yahweh.

Psalm 58 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth. A Mikhtam of David.*

¹ Do you indeed speak righteousness, O gods? Do you judge uprightly, O sons of men? ² No, in heart you work unrighteousness; on earth you weigh out the violence of your hands. ³ The wicked are estranged from the womb; these who speak lies go astray from birth. ⁴ They have venom like the venom of a serpent; like a deaf cobra that stops up its ear, ⁵ so that it does not hear the voice of charmers, or a skillful caster of spells. ⁶ O God, shatter their teeth in their mouth; break out the fangs of the young lions, O Yahweh. ⁷ Let them flow away like water that runs off; when he aims his arrows, let them be as headless shafts. ⁸ Let them be as a snail which melts away as it goes along, like the miscarriages of a woman which never see the sun. ⁹ Before your pots can feel the fire of thorns He will sweep them away with a whirlwind, the green and the burning alike. ¹⁰ The righteous will rejoice when he sees the vengeance; He will wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. ¹¹ And men will say, "Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely there is a God who judges on earth!"

Matthew 23:1-28

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹ Then Yeshua spoke to the crowds and to His disciples, ² saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; ³ therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them. ⁴ "They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with so much as a finger. ⁵ "But they do all their deeds to be noticed by men; for they broaden their phylacteries and lengthen the tassels of their garments. ⁶ "They love the place of honor at banquets and the chief seats in the synagogues, ⁷ and respectful greetings in the market places, and being called Rabbi by men. ⁸ "But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. ⁹ "Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven. ¹⁰ "Do not be called leaders (**masters**); for One is your Leader, that is, Christ. ¹¹ "But the greatest among you shall be your servant. ¹² "Whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹³ "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from people; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in. ¹⁴ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you devour widows' houses, and for a pretense you make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation. ¹⁵ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel around on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves. ¹⁶ "Woe to you, blind guides, who say, 'Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple is obligated.' ¹⁷ "You fools and blind men! Which is more important, the gold or the temple that sanctified the gold? ¹⁸ "And, 'Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering on it, he is obligated.' ¹⁹ "You blind men, which is more important, the offering, or the altar that sanctifies the offering? ²⁰ "Therefore, whoever swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it. ²¹ "And whoever swears by the temple, swears both by the temple and by Him who dwells within it. ²² "And whoever swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.

*Reader 12** Amen. ²³ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. ²⁴ "You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! ²⁵ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the dish, but inside they are full of robbery and self-indulgence. ²⁶ "You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the dish, so that the outside of it may become clean also. ²⁷ "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ "So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

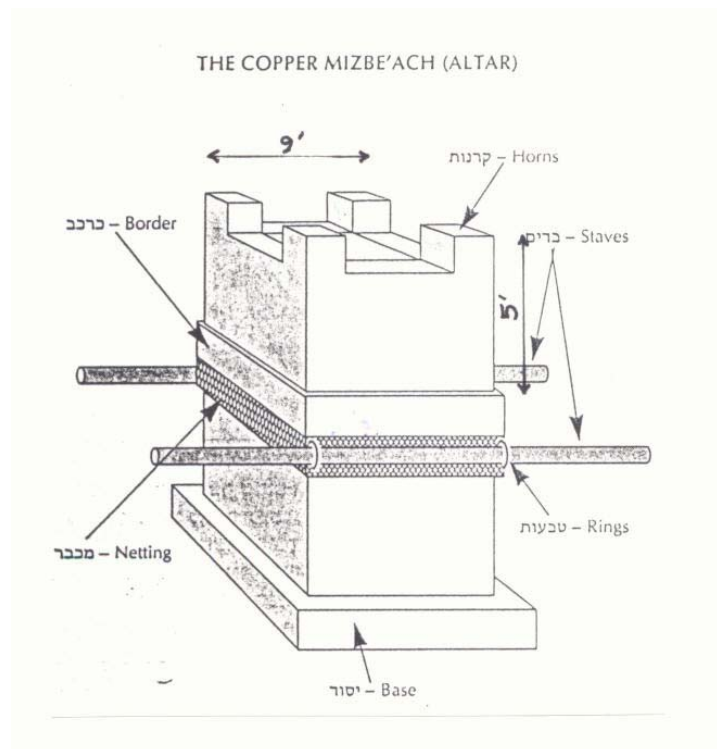
Commentary:

(V.31) "*You shall make a partition.*" A curtain was to be made to separate / distinguish the Most Holy Place (the Holy of Holies) from the Holy Place.

The Tabernacle was a house for God's Name (2 Samuel 7:13). Yahweh's Name is to be sanctified – distinguished from other names, used only for holy purposes (Isaiah 29:23). Only the High Priest – Aaron and his descendents, wearing a head-piece that said "Holy to Yahweh" (Exodus 28:36), were allowed to enter the Most Holy Place.

“Aaron was set apart to sanctify (distinguish) Him as most holy, he and his sons forever, to burn incense before Yahweh, to minister to Him and to bless in His Name forever” – 1 Chronicles 23:13.

(V27:1) The Altar described here was called the Brazen Altar (because it was covered with copper), the Outer Altar (because it was located in the courtyard), or the Altar of the Elevation-offering (because no animal offering was valid unless at least its blood was brought to this Altar).



Drawing from Artscroll Stone Edition of The Chumash

We have *moedim* / appointments with God. There are appointed times: Sabbaths and Holy Days. There are appointed places: the Tabernacle (in time past), the Temple (when standing), and synagogues.

Psalm 58

In the title to this Psalm, *Al Tashcheit* means “do not destroy.” This is the second of three Psalms (57, 58, & 59) called *Al Tashcheit*, concerning how David disallowed his men to kill Saul (1 Samuel 24). A *Michtam* is a crown, and here is seen representing David’s noble conduct in dealing with Saul.

(V.2) (Artscroll translation) *“Is it true that you are silent? You should speak justice!”* When the innocent are unjustly persecuted, the judges should stand up for them. (V.4-5) But the judges were corrupt beginning with all their thoughts; even evil thoughts of the heart require an elevation-offering to be brought!

“Surely there is a reward for the righteous; surely there is a God who judges on earth!” – Ps 58:11

There were misuses of the Tabernacle, and its successor the Temple, and the offices thereof. The judges sat in the courtyard, to make *halachic* decisions (how to walk in fulfillment of Torah), and to judge between litigants. Both in Saul’s time, and in Yeshua’s time, there were corrupt judges.

*“Woe to you, blind guides, who say,
‘Whoever swears by the temple, that is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.’
You fools and blind men; which is more important, the gold, or the temple that sanctified the gold?
And, ‘Whoever swears by the altar, that is nothing, but whoever swears by the offering upon it, he is obligated.’*

You blind men, which is more important, the offering or the altar that sanctifies the offering? Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears both by the altar and by everything on it. And he who swears by the temple, swears both by the Temple and by Him who dwells within it. And he who swears by heaven, swears both by the throne of God and by Him who sits upon it.” – Matt 23:16-22.

The Tabernacle and Temple were the places where God met with man. They were holy – dedicated to God for worship only. To falsely swear, “as the Temple stands ...”, is to swear by God who dwelt there, since that was its sole significance; otherwise, if no significance is acknowledged, why not just swear, “as the out house stands ...”? And what is the significance of the gold of the Temple, beyond any other gold, except that it is part of the Temple? So, we must consider the significance of the terms we use.

These “blind guides” would normally carry out logic from Torah passages to great lengths, but for themselves they forsook logic and used excuses. So what’s new? Do not we do the same? We need to ask God to show us what is in our hearts, and repent.

Matt 23:5-12

They do all their deeds to be noticed by men;

- (1) for they broaden their phylacteries, and lengthen the tassels of their garments.
- (2) And they love the place of honor at banquets, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
- (3) and respectful greetings in the market places,
- (4) and being called by men, Rabbi.

Do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers.

(*Rabbim* – a teacher of *talmidim* / disciples.)

The Talmudic Rabbi was an interpreter and expounder of Torah and Talmud, and had a separate occupation to derive his livelihood. The title “Rabbi” was originally honorary, the principle being that Torah must be taught free of charge. The fourteenth century shows the first evidence of salaried Rabbis, when the justification was to offset one’s loss of time (*Jerusalem Encyclopaedia Judaica vol 13 pg 1445-6*). Today’s offices of (Jewish) Rabbi and (Christian) Pastor are generally more contrary to Biblical ethics than even those offices to which Yeshua referred.

In Orthodox Jewish circles, the title “Rabbi” is now given to those who have certain education and training. However, in “Messianic” circles, it is common for a self-made leader, with little knowledge of Hebrew or Torah, to take to himself the title. This practice is making a laughingstock of “Messianics” in general before the Jewish community that they claim to be seeking to reach. (Often assumed names are taken as well as a title, such as “Rabbi Moshe ...ski”, and “... Hilel ben David”.)

Do not call anyone on earth “Father”; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.

(*Av* – Father.)

This is not the term of familiarity, “*abba*” (daddy), but the formal term “*Av*” (Father), that is used for spiritual progenitors, such as Abraham, but also for contemporary leaders who establish doctrine.

Do not be called masters / spiritual leaders; for One is your Leader, that is, Christ.

(*Ravnim*, pl. of *Rav* – great.)

Moses was a forerunner of Messiah (“a prophet like me”), and the Bible indicates no such earthly office today. The ancient synagogue offices have no hierarchy, but a division of responsibilities among elected officers. (This term may have been used for members of the Great Assembly – the Sanhedrin. The warning could then apply to those who “seat themselves in Moses’ seat”.)

“But the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whoever exalts himself shall be humbled; and whoever humbles himself shall be exalted.”

And today we have “Rev.”

(*Yarei* – Reverend / Awesome; Webster: worthy of respect and awe and affection.)

The Bible says, “Holy and Reverend is His Name” (Psalm 111:9).

Now, many make excuses for using these titles. But the message here is not against only certain high titles: the base admonition of Yeshua is, we are “all brothers”, and should not seek to be “noticed by men” by our distinguishing garments or love distinguishing titles; rather we are to humble ourselves.

Also, teaching Torah or singing Psalms as a way to earn a livelihood is referred to as “using the Torah as a shovel”, which is forbidden by ancient rules of ethics. This is contrary neither to the Levitical tithe, nor to Paul’s statement in 1 Timothy 5 about the laborer being worthy of his hire. The distinction, in part, is similar to the idea of humbling oneself and being exalted by others, or exalting oneself and misusing Scriptures as an excuse.

*Reader 1** Amen. ²⁰ "You shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually. ²¹ "In the tent of meeting, outside the veil which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall keep it in order from evening to morning before Yahweh; it shall be a perpetual statute throughout their generations for the sons of Israel.

^{28:1} "Then bring near to yourself Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the sons of Israel, to minister as priest to Me-- Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons. ² "You shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. ³ "You shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron's garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me. ⁴ "These are the garments which they shall make: a breastpiece and an ephod and a robe and a tunic of checkered work, a turban and a sash, and they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister as priest to Me. ⁵ "They shall take the gold and the blue and the purple and the scarlet material and the fine linen.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁶ "They shall also make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and finetwisted linen, the work of the skillful workman. ⁷ "It shall have two shoulder pieces joined to its two ends, that it may be joined. ⁸ "The skillfully woven band, which is on it, shall be like its workmanship, of the same material: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. ⁹ "You shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six of their names on the one stone and the names of the remaining six on the other stone, according to their birth. ¹¹ "As a jeweler engraves a signet, you shall engrave the two stones according to the names of the sons of Israel; you shall set them in filigree settings of gold. ¹² "You shall put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as stones of memorial for the sons of Israel, and Aaron shall bear their names before Yahweh on his two shoulders for a memorial. ¹³ "You shall make filigree settings of gold, ¹⁴ and two chains of pure gold; you shall make them of twisted cordage work, and you shall put the corded chains on the filigree settings.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁵ "You shall make a breastpiece of judgment, the work of a skillful workman; like the work of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen you shall make it. ¹⁶ "It shall be square and folded double, a span in length and a span in width. ¹⁷ "You shall mount on it four rows of stones; the first row shall be a row of ruby, topaz and emerald; ¹⁸ and the second row a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond; ¹⁹ and the third row a jacinth, an agate and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row a beryl and an onyx and a jasper; they shall be set in gold filigree. ²¹ "The stones shall be according to the names of the sons of Israel: twelve, according to their names; they shall be like the engravings of a seal, each according to his name for the twelve tribes. ²² "You shall make on the breastpiece chains of twisted cordage work in pure gold.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²³ "You shall make on the breastpiece two rings of gold, and shall put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. ²⁴ "You shall put the two cords of gold on the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. ²⁵ "You shall put the other two ends of the two cords on the two filigree settings, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, at the front of it. ²⁶ "You shall make two rings of gold and shall place them on the two ends of the breastpiece, on the edge of it, which is toward the inner side of the ephod. ²⁷ "You shall make two rings of gold and put them on the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the front of it close to the place where it is joined, above the skillfully woven band of the ephod. ²⁸ "They shall bind the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it will be on the skillfully woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece will not come loose from the ephod. ²⁹ "Aaron shall carry the names of the sons of Israel in the breastpiece of judgment over his heart when he enters the holy place, for a memorial before Yahweh continually. ³⁰ "You shall put in the breastpiece of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron's heart when he goes in before Yahweh; and Aaron shall carry the judgment of the sons of Israel over his heart before Yahweh continually.

*Reader 5** Amen. ³¹ "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. ³² "There shall be an opening at its top in the middle of it; around its opening there shall be a binding of woven work, like the opening of a coat of mail, so that it will not be torn. ³³ "You shall make on its hem pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material, all around on its hem, and bells of gold between them all around: ³⁴ a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, all around on the hem of the robe. ³⁵ "It shall be on Aaron when he ministers; and its tinkling shall be heard when he enters and leaves the holy place before Yahweh, so that he will not die.

*Reader 6** Amen. ³⁶ "You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, 'Holy to Yahweh.' ³⁷ "You shall fasten it on a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban. ³⁸ "It shall be on Aaron's forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the holy things which the sons

of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy gifts; and it shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before Yahweh.

*Reader 7** Amen. ³⁹ "You shall weave the tunic of checkered work of fine linen, and shall make a turban of fine linen, and you shall make a sash, the work of a weaver. ⁴⁰ "For Aaron's sons you shall make tunics; you shall also make sashes for them, and you shall make caps for them, for glory and for beauty. ⁴¹ "You shall put them on Aaron your brother and on his sons with him; and you shall anoint them and ordain them and consecrate them, that they may serve Me as priests. ⁴² "You shall make for them linen breeches to cover their bare flesh; they shall reach from the loins even to the thighs. ⁴³ "They shall be on Aaron and on his sons when they enter the tent of meeting, or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they do not incur guilt and die. It shall be a statute forever to him and to his descendants after him.

Ezekiel 43:10-12

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹⁰ "As for you, son of man, describe the Temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan. ¹¹ "If they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the House, its structure, its exits, its entrances, all its designs, all its statutes, and all its laws. And write it in their sight, so that they may observe its whole design and all its statutes and do them. ¹² "This is the law of the House: its entire area on the top of the mountain all around shall be most holy. Behold, this is the law of the House.

Ezekiel 3:10-27

¹⁰ So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they came to life and stood on their feet, an exceedingly great army. ¹¹ Then He said to me, "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, 'Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.' ¹² "Therefore prophesy and say to them, 'Thus says Lord Yahweh, "Behold, I will open your graves and cause you to come up out of your graves, My people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. ¹³ "Then you will know that I am Yahweh, when I have opened your graves and caused you to come up out of your graves, My people. ¹⁴ "I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life, and I will place you on your own land. Then you will know that I, Yahweh, have spoken and done it," declares Yahweh.'" ¹⁵ The word of Yahweh came again to me saying, ¹⁶ "And you, son of man, take for yourself one stick and write on it, 'For Judah and for the sons of Israel, his companions'; then take another stick and write on it, 'For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim and all the house of Israel, his companions.' ¹⁷ "Then join them for yourself one to another into one stick, that they may become one in your hand. ¹⁸ "When the sons of your people speak to you saying, 'Will you not declare to us what you mean by these?' ¹⁹ say to them, 'Thus says Lord Yahweh, "Behold, I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will put them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand.'" ²⁰ "The sticks on which you write will be in your hand before their eyes. ²¹ "Say to them, 'Thus says Lord Yahweh, "Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; ²² and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations and no longer be divided into two kingdoms. ²³ "They will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. ²⁴ "My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances and keep My statutes and observe them. ²⁵ "They will live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons and their sons' sons, forever; and David My servant will be their prince forever. ²⁶ "I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. ²⁷ "My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people.

Jeremiah 11:1-23

¹ The word which came to Jeremiah from Yahweh, saying, ² "Hear the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem; ³ and say to them, 'Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, "Cursed is the man who does not heed the words of this covenant ⁴ which I commanded your forefathers in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, from the iron furnace, saying, 'Listen to My voice, and do according to all which I command you; so you shall be My people, and I will be your God,' ⁵ in order to confirm the oath which I swore to your forefathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as it is this day.'" Then I said, "Amen, O Yahweh." ⁶ And Yahweh said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, saying, 'Hear the words of this covenant and do them. ⁷ 'For I solemnly warned your fathers in the day that I brought

them up from the land of Egypt, even to this day, warning persistently, saying, "Listen to My voice."⁸ "Yet they did not obey or incline their ear, but walked, each one, in the stubbornness of his evil heart; therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they did not."⁹ Then Yahweh said to me, "A conspiracy has been found among the men of Judah and among the inhabitants of Jerusalem."¹⁰ "They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to hear My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers."¹¹ Therefore thus says Yahweh, "Behold I am bringing disaster on them which they will not be able to escape; though they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them."¹² "Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they burn incense, but they surely will not save them in the time of their disaster."¹³ "For your gods are as many as your cities, O Judah; and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to the shameful thing, altars to burn incense to Baal."¹⁴ "Therefore do not pray for this people, nor lift up a cry or prayer for them; for I will not listen when they call to Me because of their disaster."¹⁵ "What right has My beloved in My house When she has done many vile deeds? Can the sacrificial flesh take away from you your disaster, So that you can rejoice?"¹⁶ Yahweh called your name, "A green olive tree, beautiful in fruit and form"; with the noise of a great tumult He has kindled fire on it, And its branches are worthless.¹⁷ Yahweh of hosts, who planted you, has pronounced evil against you because of the evil of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me by offering up sacrifices to Baal.¹⁸ Moreover, Yahweh made it known to me and I knew it; Then You showed me their deeds.¹⁹ But I was like a gentle lamb led to the slaughter; and I did not know that they had devised plots against me, saying, "Let us destroy the tree with its fruit, And let us cut him off from the land of the living, That his name be remembered no more."²⁰ But, O Yahweh of hosts, who judges righteously, who tries the feelings and the heart, let me see Your vengeance on them, for to You have I committed my cause.²¹ Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the men of Anathoth, who seek your life, saying, "Do not prophesy in the name of Yahweh, so that you will not die at our hand";²² therefore, thus says Yahweh of hosts, "Behold, I am about to punish them! The young men will die by the sword, their sons and daughters will die by famine;²³ and a remnant will not be left to them, for I will bring disaster on the men of Anathoth-- the year of their punishment."

Psalm 59 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; set to Al-tashheth.*

A Mikhtam of David, when Saul sent men, and they watched the house in order to kill him.

¹ Deliver me from my enemies, O my God; set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me.² Deliver me from those who do iniquity and save me from men of bloodshed.³ For behold, they have set an ambush for my life; fierce men launch an attack against me, not for my transgression nor for my sin, O Yahweh,⁴ For no guilt of mine, they run and set themselves against me. Arouse Yourself to help me, and see!⁵ You, O Yahweh God of hosts, the God of Israel, awake to punish all the nations; do not be gracious to any who are treacherous in iniquity. Selah.⁶ They return at evening, they howl like a dog, and go around the city.⁷ Behold, they belch forth with their mouth; swords are in their lips, for, they say, "Who hears?"⁸ But You, O Yahweh, laugh at them; You scoff at all the nations.⁹ Because of his strength I will watch for You, for God is my stronghold.¹⁰ My God in His lovingkindness will meet me; God will let me look triumphantly upon my foes.¹¹ Do not slay them, or my people will forget; scatter them by Your power, and bring them down, O Lord, our shield.¹² On account of the sin of their mouth and the words of their lips, let them even be caught in their pride, and on account of curses and lies which they utter.¹³ Destroy them in wrath, destroy them that they may be no more; that men may know that God rules in Jacob to the ends of the earth. Selah.¹⁴ They return at evening, they howl like a dog, and go around the city.¹⁵ They wander about for food and growl if they are not satisfied.¹⁶ But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, for You have been my stronghold and a refuge in the day of my distress.¹⁷ O my strength, I will sing praises to You; for God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness.

Hebrews 3:1-19

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹ Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider Yeshua, the Apostle and High Priest of our confession; ² He was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also was in all His house. ³ For He has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, by just so much as the builder of the house has more honor than the house. ⁴ For every house is built by someone, but the builder of all things is God. ⁵ Now Moses was faithful in all His house as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken later; ⁶ but Messiah was faithful as a Son over His house-- whose house we are, if we hold fast our confidence and the boast of our hope firm until the end.

*Reader 10** Amen. ⁷ Therefore, just as the Holy Spirit says, "Today if you hear His voice,⁸ do not harden your hearts as when they provoked Me, as in the day of trial in the wilderness,⁹ where your fathers tried Me by testing Me, and saw My works for forty years.¹⁰ Therefore I was angry with this generation, and said, 'They always go

astray in their heart; and they did not know My ways';¹¹ as I swore in My wrath, 'They shall not enter My rest.'"¹² Take care, brethren, that there not be in any one of you an evil, unbelieving heart that falls away from the living God.

*Reader II** Amen.¹³ But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.¹⁴ For we have become partakers of Messiah, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end,¹⁵ while it is said, "Today if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as when they provoked Me."¹⁶ For who provoked Him when they had heard? Indeed, did not all those who came out of Egypt led by Moses?¹⁷ And with whom was He angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness?¹⁸ And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who were disobedient?¹⁹ So we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

Commentary:

The commandments concerning the Tabernacle being finished, we now look at commandments concerning the priests. The priests must remain pure and separated to God, and may not allow unauthorized people to take part in the service.

Moses had previously given instructions to those who were creating the components for the Tabernacle, but now he was to personally take part in the preparations. He was told to take part in preparing the oil, designating the priests, and selecting those who would make the garments and construct the Tabernacle.

(V.27:20 The Lamp Oil

The oil for the menorah was extra-virgin olive oil – from the first pressing of unheated olives. The wording indicates that it had to be pure from the beginning, not purified by filtering; it was taken from only the first drop of each pressed olive. This indicates the purity of Spirit of God, which, as in this text, presents the purity to be pictured in the priesthood.

(V.21) The Menorah had to remain lit from evening until morning, every night; this is called “continual” (in the same sense the morning and evening offerings were called “continual”).

(V.28:1) The Sanctifying Garments

The High Priest, while performing services, usually wore *Sh'moneh B'gadot* / Eight Vestments. During certain parts of the Yom haKippurim service he only wore four – the *Bigdey Lavan* / White Vestments. Other priests wore these four white vestments, though there were some differences in the material.

(V.4) Six of the vestments noted here are a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a tunic of checkered work, a turban, and a sash. The knit *kesonet* / tunic (v.39), similar to a long-sleeved dress, was worn next to the skin. The *me'il* / robe (v.31) was a four-cornered garment with a hole for one's neck, and was worn over the tunic. The ephod was like an apron, worn over the robe, extending from one's waist to the ground: it had shoulder straps and was tied in front with a belt. The breastplate was attached to the shoulder straps. The turban was worn far enough back on the head to allow space for the *tefillin* (leather box with Scriptures inside) on the forehead. Two other items are the breeches (v.42), which were worn underneath for modesty, and the *tzitz* / headplate (v.36) with the words *Kadosh l'Yahweh* / Holy to Yahweh, which was worn in front of the turban.

(V.6) The Ephod / Skirt

The ephod and belt were woven as one piece of material, and the shoulder straps were sewn on. The ephod was woven from ornate yarn, such that each side had a different pattern. The yarn consisted of the following: six strands of turquoise wool and one of gold were twisted together, then six strands of purple wool and one of gold, then six strands of scarlet wool and one of gold, then six strands of linen and one of gold, then these four seven-strand threads were twisted together to make a twenty-eight strand thick yarn. On the tops of the shoulder straps were precious stones set in gold, with the names of the twelve tribes engraved.

(V.15) The Hoshen / Breastplate of Judgment

The Breastplate of Judgment was a pocket made from the same kind of material as the ephod. On the face of this breastplate were twelve stones, each in its own setting, and having the names of the twelve tribes engraved on them. The pocket contained a parchment bearing the Name of Yahweh – this was called the *Urim v'Tumim* / Urim and

Tumim; it was called Urim / Lights, because it would cause letters on the breastplate stones to light up, and it was called Tumim / Completeness, because the letters would spell answers to the answers of national importance that the High Priest would ask of God.

The garments were made by artisans from materials supplied only by the congregation. The priests were not acting on their own behalf in self-aggrandizement. They were appointed to the serious and solemn duty of representing God to the whole congregation, and their appearance was to indicate this.

Those who serve God know that there are difficulties and rewards. It is neither to be done light-heartedly nor for profit. It is serious business that brings both peace and sorrow, both support and rejection. But it is not done for oneself.

The idea of special clothing to perform services is seen to generally extend to our own service; we should dress with dignity and respect when we come before our God for communal prayer and spiritual service. The way one dresses and approaches a task also influences the way in which he performs it.

A striking concept here is that God promotes beauty! I think of flowers and rainbows and waterfalls – the many things that God has created to appear beautiful to us. Adam was told to care for the beautiful Garden of Eden. Now man is told to provide for this structure with its utensils and vestments of great beauty – the place where God would accept offerings and send forth His Word.

From the haftarah we learn of the future Holy Temple.

“You, son of Adam, tell the family of Israel about the Temple, and let them be ashamed of their sins, and measure the design. And if they are ashamed, make known to them the form of the House and its design, its exits and entrances and all of its appearance, its laws, all its decoration, and all its regulations; write it down before their eyes, that they may remember its form and its decrees and perform them. This is the teaching of the House; the mountain, its entire boundary all around, is most holy” – Ezekiel 43:10-12.

This passage is taken (according to *Radak*) to show that, for those who are ashamed of their sin, and study the decrees, the resurrection from the dead will take place!

As we saw last week in the study of the Tabernacle, we now may see in the priests' garments the idea of holiness. This is where we learn of the atonements for sin, and where we learn of God's ways. This is where we learn that our creator loves us enough to give us life, provide for us, and show us the way of life. This is where we learn of the high road of peace with God. This is where we may see a picture of a grand future that awaits overcomers. This is where we may see Yeshua giving His life for us, and where we may see Him as our patient teacher, and where we may see Him in all of His glory – our priest, prophet, and king.

In lovingkindness, God promotes holiness and beauty and order. And He has provided Yeshua – our Salvation, to redeem us and lead us into His glorious kingdom. We are given the deepest insights in the simplest terms.

David said, *“O my God; set me securely on high away from those who rise up against me” – Psalm 59:1.* We can see this applying to David when Saul was after him. We can see it applying to Yeshua when unholy leaders were after Him. We may also see this applying to us when the world wants to capture us. David closes with (v.16-17), *“But as for me, I shall sing of Your strength; Yes, I shall joyfully sing of Your lovingkindness in the morning, for You have been my stronghold and a refuge in the day of my distress. O my strength, I will sing praises to You; for God is my stronghold, the God who shows me lovingkindness”.*

THE KOHEN GADOL WEARING HIS EIGHT VESTMENTS

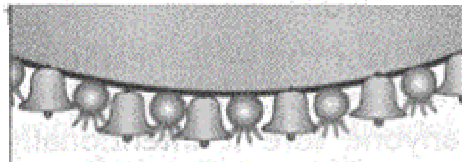
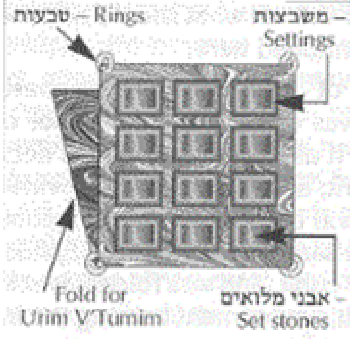


THE TZITZ (HEAD-PLATE)

פתילי תכלת - Turquoise cords



THE CHOSHEN (BREASTPLATE)



THE EPHOD

כתפות - Shoulder straps

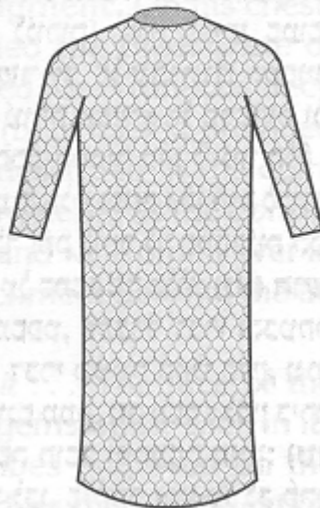


אבני שוהם - Shoham stones

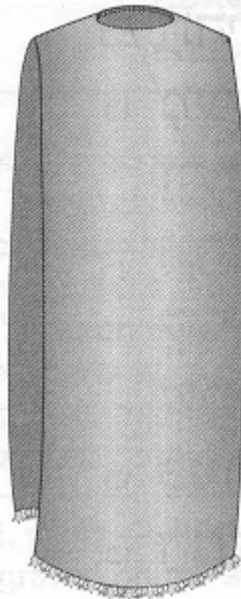
אפוד - Ephod

חשב - Belt

THE KESONES (TUNIC) WITH BOXLIKE KNIT



THE ME'IL (ROBE)



*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ "Now this is what you shall do to them to consecrate them to minister as priests to Me: take one young bull and two rams without blemish, ² and unleavened bread and unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers spread with oil; you shall make them of fine wheat flour. ³ "You shall put them in one basket, and present them in the basket along with the bull and the two rams. ⁴ "Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. ⁵ "You shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the tunic and the robe of the ephod and the ephod and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod; ⁶ and you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban. ⁷ "Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁸ "You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them. ⁹ "You shall gird them with sashes, Aaron and his sons, and bind caps on them, and they shall have the priesthood by a perpetual statute. So you shall ordain Aaron and his sons. ¹⁰ "Then you shall bring the bull before the tent of meeting, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the bull. ¹¹ "You shall slaughter the bull before Yahweh at the doorway of the tent of meeting. ¹² "You shall take some of the blood of the bull and put it on the horns of the altar with your finger; and you shall pour out all the blood at the base of the altar. ¹³ "You shall take all the fat that covers the entrails and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them, and offer them up in smoke on the altar. ¹⁴ "But the flesh of the bull and its hide and its refuse, you shall burn with fire outside the camp; it is a sin offering.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁵ "You shall also take the one ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram; ¹⁶ and you shall slaughter the ram and shall take its blood and sprinkle it around on the altar. ¹⁷ "Then you shall cut the ram into its pieces, and wash its entrails and its legs, and put them with its pieces and its head. ¹⁸ "You shall offer up in smoke the whole ram on the altar; it is a burnt offering to Yahweh: it is a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to Yahweh. ¹⁹ "Then you shall take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands on the head of the ram. ²⁰ "You shall slaughter the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear and on the lobes of his sons' right ears and on the thumbs of their right hands and on the big toes of their right feet, and sprinkle the rest of the blood around on the altar. ²¹ "Then you shall take some of the blood that is on the altar and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and on his garments and on his sons and on his sons' garments with him; so he and his garments shall be consecrated, as well as his sons and his sons' garments with him.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²² "You shall also take the fat from the ram and the fat tail, and the fat that covers the entrails and the lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys and the fat that is on them and the right thigh (for it is a ram of ordination), ²³ and one cake of bread and one cake of bread mixed with oil and one wafer from the basket of unleavened bread which is set before Yahweh; ²⁴ and you shall put all these in the hands of Aaron and in the hands of his sons, and shall wave them as a wave offering before Yahweh. ²⁵ "You shall take them from their hands, and offer them up in smoke on the altar on the burnt offering for a soothing aroma before Yahweh; it is an offering by fire to Yahweh. ²⁶ "Then you shall take the breast of Aaron's ram of ordination, and wave it as a wave offering before Yahweh; and it shall be your portion. ²⁷ "You shall consecrate the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the heave offering which was waved and which was offered from the ram of ordination, from the one which was for Aaron and from the one which was for his sons. ²⁸ "It shall be for Aaron and his sons as their portion forever from the sons of Israel, for it is a heave offering; and it shall be a heave offering from the sons of Israel from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, even their heave offering to Yahweh.

*Reader 5** Amen. ²⁹ "The holy garments of Aaron shall be for his sons after him, that in them they may be anointed and ordained. ³⁰ "For seven days the one of his sons who is priest in his stead shall put them on when he enters the tent of meeting to minister in the holy place. ³¹ "You shall take the ram of ordination and boil its flesh in a holy place. ³² "Aaron and his sons shall eat the flesh of the ram and the bread that is in the basket, at the doorway of the tent of meeting. ³³ "Thus they shall eat those things by which atonement was made at their ordination and consecration; but a layman shall not eat them, because they are holy. ³⁴ "If any of the flesh of ordination or any of the bread remains until morning, then you shall burn the remainder with fire; it shall not be eaten, because it is holy.

*Reader 6** Amen. ³⁵ "Thus you shall do to Aaron and to his sons, according to all that I have commanded you; you shall ordain them through seven days. ³⁶ "Each day you shall offer a bull as a sin offering for atonement, and you shall purify the altar when you make atonement for it, and you shall anoint it to consecrate it. ³⁷ "For seven days you shall make atonement for the altar and consecrate it; then the altar shall be most holy, and whatever touches the altar shall be holy. ³⁸ "Now this is what you shall offer on the altar: two one year old lambs each day, continuously. ³⁹ "The one lamb you shall offer in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; ⁴⁰ and there shall be one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with one-fourth of a hin of beaten oil, and one-fourth of a hin of wine for a

drink offering with one lamb. ⁴¹ "The other lamb you shall offer at twilight, and shall offer with it the same grain offering and the same drink offering as in the morning, for a soothing aroma, an offering by fire to Yahweh. ⁴² "It shall be a continual burnt offering throughout your generations at the doorway of the tent of meeting before Yahweh, where I will meet with you, to speak to you there.

*Reader 7** Amen. ⁴³ "I will meet there with the sons of Israel, and it shall be consecrated by My glory. ⁴⁴ "I will consecrate the tent of meeting and the altar; I will also consecrate Aaron and his sons to minister as priests to Me. ⁴⁵ "I will dwell among the sons of Israel and will be their God. ⁴⁶ "They shall know that I am Yahweh their God who brought them out of the land of Egypt, that I might dwell among them; I am Yahweh their God.

Isaiah 61:1-9

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ The Spirit of Lord Yahweh is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; ² to proclaim the favorable year of Yahweh and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, ³ to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of Yahweh, that He may be glorified.

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁴ Then they will rebuild the ancient ruins, they will raise up the former devastations; and they will repair the ruined cities, the desolations of many generations. ⁵ Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. ⁶ But you will be called the priests of Yahweh; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast. ⁷ Instead of your shame you will have a double portion, and instead of humiliation they will shout for joy over their portion. Therefore they will possess a double portion in their land, everlasting joy will be theirs. ⁸ For I, Yahweh, love justice, I hate robbery in the burnt offering; and I will faithfully give them their recompense and make an everlasting covenant with them. ⁹ Then their offspring will be known among the nations, and their descendants in the midst of the peoples. All who see them will recognize them because they are the offspring whom Yahweh has blessed.

Psalm 60 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; according to Shushan Eduth.*

A Mikhtam of David, to teach; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and Joab returned, and smote twelve thousand of Edom in the Valley of Salt.

¹ O God, You have rejected us. You have broken us; You have been angry; O, restore us. ² You have made the land quake, You have split it open; heal its breaches, for it totters. ³ You have made Your people experience hardship; You have given us wine to drink that makes us stagger. ⁴ You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah. ⁵ That Your beloved may be delivered, save with Your right hand, and answer us! ⁶ God has spoken in His holiness: "I will exult, I will portion out Shechem and measure out the valley of Succoth. ⁷ "Gilead is Mine, and Manasseh is Mine; Ephraim also is the helmet of My head; Judah is My scepter. ⁸ "Moab is My washbowl; over Edom I shall throw My shoe; shout loud, O Philistia, because of Me!" ⁹ Who will bring me into the besieged city? Who will lead me to Edom? ¹⁰ Have not You Yourself, O God, rejected us? And will You not go forth with our armies, O God? ¹¹ O give us help against the adversary, for deliverance by man is in vain. ¹² Through God we shall do valiantly, and it is He who will tread down our adversaries.

1 Peter 2:1-25

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹ Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, ² like newborn babies, long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation, ³ if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. ⁴ And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God, ⁵ you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. ⁶ For this is contained in Scripture: "Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed." ⁷ This precious value, then, is for you who believe; but for those who disbelieve, "The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone," ⁸ and, "a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed.

*Reader 11** Amen. ⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ for you once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. ¹¹ Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts which wage war against the soul. ¹² Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation. ¹³ Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in

authority,¹⁴ or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right.¹⁵ For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.¹⁶ Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God.¹⁷ Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king.

*Reader 12** Amen.¹⁸ Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable.¹⁹ For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience toward God a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly.²⁰ For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.²¹ For you have been called for this purpose, since Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps,²² Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth,²³ and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;²⁴ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.²⁵ For you were continually straying like sheep, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Guardian of your souls.

Commentary:

The apostle Peter (Acts 11) was instructed by God in a vision to take the Gospel to gentiles, though he would not previously have allowed himself contact with them.

¹ Now the apostles and the brethren who were throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God. ² And when Peter came up to Jerusalem, those who were circumcised took issue with him, ³ saying, "You went to uncircumcised men and ate with them." ⁴ But Peter began speaking and proceeded to explain to them in orderly sequence, saying, ⁵ "I was in the city of Joppa praying; and in a trance I saw a vision, an object coming down like a great sheet lowered by four corners from the sky; and it came right down to me, ⁶ and when I had fixed my gaze on it and was observing it I saw the four-footed animals of the earth and the wild beasts and the crawling creatures and the birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.' ⁸ But I said, 'By no means, Lord, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' ⁹ But a voice from heaven answered a second time, 'What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy.' ¹⁰ This happened three times, and everything was drawn back up into the sky. ¹¹ And behold, at that moment three men appeared at the house in which we were staying, having been sent to me from Caesarea. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them without misgivings. These six brethren also went with me and we entered the man's house. ¹³ And he reported to us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying, 'Send to Joppa and have Simon, who is also called Peter, brought here; ¹⁴ and he will speak words to you by which you will be saved, you and all your household.' ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ And I remembered the word of Yahweh, how He used to say, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' ¹⁷ Therefore if God gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in Yahweh Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?' ¹⁸ When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying, "Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life." – Acts 11.

Now, Peter is writing to some of these believing gentiles who are scattered throughout various countries.

"Peter, an apostle of Yeshua the Messiah, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, who are chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Yeshua the Messiah and be sprinkled with His blood: may grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. Blessed be Yahweh, the Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Yeshua the Messiah from the dead, to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" – 1 Peter 1:1-5.

In today's Apostolic portion (1 Peter 2), Peter tells these "aliens and strangers" (v.11) who "once were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy" (v.10), that "you

are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (v.9).

David said, “*You have given a banner to those who fear You, that it may be displayed because of the truth. Selah. That Your beloved may be delivered, save with Your right hand, and answer us! God has spoken in His holiness*” – Psalm 60:4-6.

“Priest” is not a title of exaltation; it’s a position of responsibility. As a “nation of believers” in this world, we are to reflect the holiness of the One who showed mercy to us. We are to be lights in this world, showing the way of holiness.

Now, with this perspective, let us go back to the beginning: Genesis.

God first established the priesthood of the firstborn to lead in the way of holiness: when a firstborn failed to perform, God replaced him with another. Cain was a firstborn, but because of his sin, the office was given to Seth. Reuben was a firstborn, but because of his sin, the office was given to Joseph.

In time God said, (Numbers 3:12) “*Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel **instead of every first-born** . . . So the Levites shall be Mine.*” In today’s portion (v.9), God further states, “*they shall have the priesthood by a **perpetual hukah / statute***” (third category commandment). This Levitical Priesthood had / will have its function in the Tabernacle in the Wilderness, and the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Isaiah says of the future, “*Strangers will stand and pasture your flocks, and foreigners will be your farmers and your vinedressers. But you will be called the priests of Yahweh; you will be spoken of as ministers of our God. You will eat the wealth of nations, and in their riches you will boast*” – Isaiah 61:5-6.

We know that Yeshua came as a Priest according to the original order of the firstborn – the *Malchi-tzedek* priesthood; He was of the Tribe of Judah, not Levi. He is the ultimate High-priest that the others typify. This does not automatically abolish the office of Levitical Priest in the Temple. Levitical Priests have a responsibility to portray Yeshua to the people (partly through animal offerings). When, over 1900 years ago, they had grossly failed in their duty, the Temple was destroyed: this was not the first time, and it was not forever. (Solomon’s Temple was destroyed and offerings ceased; Herod’s Temple was destroyed and offerings ceased: Ezekiel’s Temple will have animal offerings restored because that is appointed by God.)

In every family, there is to be a priest of the family – preferably the firstborn. This is not a Temple position, but a family position of responsibility. Peter tells us that this applies as well to believing gentiles.

As patriarch of the family (it’s still hard for me to feel that old), I have the primary responsibility to act as priest for the family; I take this as a grave responsibility, not something to show off how exalted I am. It doesn’t make me any more worthy than anyone else, and it’s no basis for a title.

(V. 1) A Levite, to be ordained as priest, must first show that his own atonements are through Yeshua. Laying their hands on the bull implies confession of sins and need of atonement – the bull representing Yeshua.

(V. 2) Three kinds of unleavened loaves were brought: unleavened breads were made with twice as much oil as unleavened loaves, and unleavened wafers were made without oil. This is seen to signify that the priests were to be satisfied with being servants of God, regardless of their degree of personal wealth. It should not be too hard to see how that this is not generally accepted today by those in “ministry”.

(V. 4) After confession and atonement, then the candidate must be “baptized” – immersed in a *mikvah*.

(V. 6) The High Priest’s Crown of Sanctity refers to the head-plate inscribed with *Kodesh l’Yahweh / Holy to Yahweh*.

(V. 7) Anointing was performed (making the candidate Messiah Priest) by pouring specially perfumed olive oil upon his head.

(V. 20) Blood was placed on the right ear, the right thumb, and the right big toe. Through the ear is hearing and understanding. Through the hands are actions of faith. Through the feet one follows God. Consider ourselves: do we have a right attitude about hearing what God says? Do we have a right attitude about doing what God says? Do we have a right attitude about going where God says? For one who is to lead others in right ways, these things are of even greater importance.

(V. 40) Every elevation offering, and every peace offering, is accompanied by unleavened wheat-oil bread. This bread is completely burned upon the Altar. Also, wine is poured onto the Altar. (Elevation offerings go up in smoke, making a pleasing aroma to God.)

Now, going to Matthew, we see that Yeshua went into the Jordan *mikvah*, and then He was anointed with the Holy Spirit. The order here is the same as in Exodus 29.

“Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. You shall take the garments, and put on Aaron the tunic and the robe of the ephod and the ephod and the breastpiece, and gird him with the skillfully woven band of the ephod; and you shall set the turban on his head and put the holy crown on the turban. Then you shall take the anointing oil and pour it on his head and anoint him.” – Exodus 29:4-7.

“After being baptized, Yeshua came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and lighting on Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens said, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.’” – Matthew 3:16-17.

[Side issue: see Kippah]

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ "Moreover, you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. ² "Its length shall be a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height shall be two cubits; its horns shall be of one piece with it. ³ "You shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it. ⁴ "You shall make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make them on its two side walls – on opposite sides – and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. ⁵ "You shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁶ "You shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you. ⁷ "Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. ⁸ "When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be perpetual incense before Yahweh throughout your generations. ⁹ "You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out a drink offering on it. ¹⁰ "Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with the blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to Yahweh."

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹¹ Yahweh also spoke to Moses, saying, ¹² "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to Yahweh, when you number them, so that there will be no plague among them when you number them. ¹³ "This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to Yahweh. ¹⁴ "Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to Yahweh. ¹⁵ "The rich shall not pay more and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to Yahweh to make atonement for yourselves. ¹⁶ "You shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before Yahweh, to make atonement for yourselves."

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹⁷ Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁸ "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. ¹⁹ "Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; ²⁰ when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, so that they will not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to Yahweh. ²¹ "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, so that they will not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

*Reader 5** Amen. ²² Moreover, Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ²³ "Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty, ²⁴ and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin. ²⁵ "You shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil. ²⁶ "With it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, ²⁷ and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, ²⁸ and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the laver and its stand. ²⁹ "You shall also consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

*Reader 6** Amen. ³⁰ "You shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister as priests to Me. ³¹ "You shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations. ³² 'It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make any like it in the same proportions; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you. ³³ 'Whoever shall mix any like it or whoever puts any of it on a layman shall be cut off from his people.'"

*Reader 7** Amen. ³⁴ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. ³⁵ "With it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy. ³⁶ "You shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting where I will meet with you; it shall be most holy to you. ³⁷ "The incense which you shall make, you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for Yahweh. ³⁸ "Whoever shall make any like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people."

Malachi 1:11 - 2:7

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹¹ "For from the rising of the sun even to its setting, My name will be great among the nations, and in every place incense is going to be offered to My name, and a grain offering that is pure; for My name will be

great among the nations," says Yahweh of hosts. ¹² "But you are profaning it, in that you say, 'The table of Yahweh is defiled, and as for its fruit, its food is to be despised.' ¹³ "You also say, 'My, how tiresome it is!' And you disdainfully sniff at it," says Yahweh of hosts, "and you bring what was taken by robbery and what is lame or sick; so you bring the offering! Should I receive that from your hand?" says Yahweh. ¹⁴ "But cursed be the swindler who has a male in his flock and vows it, but sacrifices a blemished animal to Yahweh, for I am a great King," says Yahweh of hosts, "and My name is feared among the nations."

*Reader 9** Amen. ^{2:1} "And now this commandment is for you, O priests. ² "If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says Yahweh of hosts, "then I will send the curse upon you and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart. ³ "Behold, I am going to rebuke your offspring, and I will spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your feasts; and you will be taken away with it. ⁴ "Then you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant may continue with Levi," says Yahweh of hosts. ⁵ "My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me and stood in awe of My name. ⁶ "True instruction was in his mouth and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity. ⁷ "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of Yahweh of hosts.

Psalm 61:1 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; on a stringed instrument. A Psalm of David.*

Hear my cry, O God; give heed to my prayer. ² From the end of the earth I call to You when my heart is faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I. ³ For You have been a refuge for me, a tower of strength against the enemy. ⁴ Let me dwell in Your tent forever; let me take refuge in the shelter of Your wings. Selah. ⁵ For You have heard my vows, O God; You have given me the inheritance of those who fear Your name. ⁶ You will prolong the king's life; his years will be as many generations. ⁷ He will abide before God forever; appoint lovingkindness and truth that they may preserve him. ⁸ So I will sing praise to Your name forever, that I may pay my vows day by day.

Psalm 62 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

I My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. ² He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken. ³ How long will you assail a man, that you may murder him, all of you, like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? ⁴ They have counseled only to thrust him down from his high position; they delight in falsehood; they bless with their mouth, but inwardly they curse. Selah. ⁵ My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him. ⁶ He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. ⁷ On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. ⁸ Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah. ⁹ Men of low degree are only vanity and men of rank are a lie; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than breath. ¹⁰ Do not trust in oppression and do not vainly hope in robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them. ¹¹ Once God has spoken; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God; ¹² and lovingkindness is Yours, O Lord, for You recompense a man according to his work.

Luke 1:5-25

*Reader 10** Amen. ⁵ In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. ⁸ Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, ⁹ according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering.

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹¹ And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. ¹² Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear gripped him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. ¹⁴ "You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵ "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. ¹⁶ "And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸ Zacharias said to the angel, "How will I know this for certain? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years." ¹⁹ The angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you

and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ "And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time." *Reader 12** Amen. ²¹ The people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²² But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute. ²³ When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home. ²⁴ After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, ²⁵ "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked with favor upon me, to take away my disgrace among men."

Revelation 8:3-4, 14:11

*Reader 13** Amen. ³ Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to the prayers of all the saints on the golden altar which was before the throne. ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand. ¹¹ "And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name."

Commentary:

(V.1 & 10) *"And you shall make an altar to burn incense upon: . . . it is most holy to Yahweh"*

This altar is called the Golden Altar, the Incense Altar, and the Inner Altar (in contrast to the Brazen Altar for sacrifice in the outer court). It was located in the Holy Place, in front of the center of the veil, where the poles of the Ark of the Covenant protruded from the other side. It was about 20" (1 cubit) square and 40" (2 cubits) tall, with four extensions on its upper corners and two carrying poles through support rings.

Incense was to be burned on this Golden Altar every morning when ashes of the wicks were cleaned from the menorah, and every evening when flames were made to ascend from the menorah. Perpetual or continual means every day regularly, but not all day.

The incense required a special formula, which was not to be made for any other purpose. Incense of any other formula, or for any other purpose (such as freewill offering), was called "strange fire."

Each year on the Day of the Atonements (Yom haKippurim), blood from the Goat for Yahweh (the elevation offering burned on the Outer Altar) was to be sprinkled on this Inner Altar. The High Priest walked to the right of the Incense Altar to enter the Holy of Holies once a year.

"For from the rising of the sun even to the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered to My Name, and a pure offering: for My Name shall be great among the heathen, says Yahweh of hosts" – Malachi 1:11.

From this prophet we learn that incense offerings to Yahweh relate to the world beyond Israel.

"Hear my cry, O God; attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry to You, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For You have been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in Your tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of Your wings" – Psalm 61:1-4.

From Psalm 61 being tied to this week's Torah portion, we find that prayer is related to the Incense Altar. We also find them relating to defense against sin and dwelling forever in God's tabernacle. Praising the Name of Yahweh forever (v.8) is a part of praying without ceasing (I Thessalonians 5:17).

"There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zachariah, of the course of Abia: . . . And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the Temple of Yahweh. And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of Yahweh standing on the right side of the altar of

incense. And when Zachariah saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zachariah: for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elisabeth shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name John” – Luke 1:5-13.

Being of the course of Abia shows that Zachariah was serving the week following the Feast of the Firstfruits (Pentecost), the tenth week of the Festival Year (the eight courses of I Chronicles 24:1-10 begin with the first Sabbath of Nisan, and two weeks are added for festivals when all priests served).

Even if Zachariah did not recognize the man as an Angel, he might be fearful of seeing someone at the (right side of the Altar) entrance to the Holy of Holies – where entering would bring a man immediate death. And only a properly prepared priest could enter even the Holy Place where Zachariah was. If he did recognize the man as an Angel, why would he be so doubtful of an Angel's words?

Note that the multitude outside was praying while Zachariah was at the Incense Altar.

“And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand” – Revelation 8:3-4.

In seeking the symbolism of offering incense on the Golden Altar, it may be clearly seen from these passages that it is related to the prayers of God's people. The word for "perpetual" or "continual" incense offerings is the same as the word for prayer "without ceasing," which means to pray at all the appointed times – evening, morning, and noon (Psalm 55:17 and Daniel 6:13-16; remember that the Biblical day begins with evening).

Two types of elevation offerings are noted. Animal sacrifices are burned at the Brasen Altar in the Outer Court: their aroma ascends to the heavens. Incense offerings are burned on the Golden Altar in the enclosed Inner Court: their sweet aroma also ascends to the heavens. The former is the aroma of the sin sacrifice, representing Yeshua's crucifixion, without which one's own torment will be as smoke ascending forever. The latter is the sweet aroma of prayers of those who bear His Name – His saints.

"*And you shall make an altar to burn incense upon*" is seen as instruction to establish a place for regular prayer – every day at the appointed times in the appointed manner – no strange fire. (The Shemoneh Esrei and the Disciples Prayer of Matthew 6:9-13 teach the appointed manner.)

And as usual, we see that the spiritual (prayer) and the physical (incense) counterparts are seen together – not one or the other, not one without the other – both are commanded, both were done together at the Tabernacle in the wilderness and in the Holy Temple at Jerusalem.

We often consider the Commandments of God: how we are to love Yahweh with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength; and love our neighbor as our self. But Yeshua gave us a “new” commandment – a concept bringing the second commandment to a new level: from loving our neighbor as our self, to loving one another as He loved us!

Consider: we might pray for physical prosperity for our neighbor, as we would like for our self. But we should pray for spiritual prosperity for one another, as Yeshua prayed for us. It often seem easier to desire natural things, than to desire spiritual growth – which can mean we have to change our habits, to repent.

What if every time we realized that we had sought our own will instead of God's, we had to bring an animal offering? We are supposed to do what that represents – confess to God and change our habits!

Shemot (Names): Ki Tissa (*When you take a census*), commonly called **Exodus 30:11-38**

The Census

1 Amen* 11 Yahweh also spoke to Moses, saying, 12 "When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to Yahweh, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them. 13 "This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to Yahweh. 14 "Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to Yahweh.

2 Amen* 15 "The rich shall not pay more, and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to Yahweh to make atonement for yourselves. 16 "And you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel, and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before Yahweh, to make atonement for yourselves."

The Laver

3 Amen* 17 And Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 18 "You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base of bronze, for washing; and you shall put it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and you shall put water in it. 19 "And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it; 20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they may not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to Yahweh. 21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they may not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations."

Anointing oil

4 Amen* 22 Moreover, Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, 23 "Take also for yourself the finest of spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred shekels, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred and fifty, and of fragrant cane two hundred and fifty, 24 and of cassia five hundred, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and of olive oil a hin. 25 "And you shall make of these a holy anointing oil, a perfume mixture, the work of a perfumer; it shall be a holy anointing oil.

5 Amen* 26 "And with it you shall anoint the tent of meeting and the ark of the testimony, 27 and the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, 28 and the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the laver and its stand. 29 "You shall also consecrate them, that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy.

6 Amen* 30 "And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them, that they may minister as priests to Me. 31 "And you shall speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'This shall be a holy anointing oil to Me throughout your generations. 32 'It shall not be poured on anyone's body, nor shall you make any like it, in the same proportions; it is holy, and it shall be holy to you. 33 'Whoever shall mix any like it, or whoever puts any of it on a layman, shall be cut off from his people.'"

Incense

7 Amen* 34 Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Take for yourself spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each. 35 "And with it you shall make incense, a perfume, the work of a perfumer, salted, pure, and holy. 36 "And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put part of it before the testimony in the tent of meeting, where I shall meet with you; it shall be most holy to you. 37 "And the incense which you shall make, you shall not make in the same proportions for yourselves; it shall be holy to you for Yahweh. 38 "Whoever shall make any like it, to use as perfume, shall be cut off from his people."

2 Kings 12:4-8

⁴ Then Jehoash said to the priests, "All the money of the sacred things which is brought into the house of Yahweh, in current money, both the money of each man's assessment and all the money which any man's heart prompts him to bring into the house of Yahweh, ⁵ let the priests take it for themselves, each from his acquaintance; and they shall repair the damages of the house wherever any damage may be found." ⁶ But it came about that in the twenty-third year of King Jehoash the priests had not repaired the damages of the house. ⁷ Then King Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and for the other priests and said to them, "Why do you not repair the damages of the house? Now therefore take no more money from your acquaintances, but pay it for the damages of the house." ⁸ So the priests agreed that they would take no more money from the people, nor repair the damages of the house.

Psalm 62 *For the choir director; according to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David.*

1 My soul waits in silence for God only; from Him is my salvation. 2 He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be greatly shaken. 3 How long will you assail a man, that you may murder him, all of you, like a leaning wall, like a tottering fence? 4 They have counseled only to thrust him down from his high position; they delight in falsehood; they bless with their mouth, but inwardly they curse. Selah. 5 My soul, wait in silence for God only, for my hope is from Him. 6 He only is my rock and my salvation, my stronghold; I shall not be shaken. 7 On God my salvation and my glory rest; the rock of my strength, my refuge is in God. 8 Trust in Him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah. 9 Men of low degree are only vanity, and men of rank are a lie; in the balances they go up; they are together lighter than breath. 10 Do not trust in oppression, and do not vainly hope in robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart upon them. 11 Once God has spoken; twice I have heard this: that power belongs to God; 12 and lovingkindness is Thine, O Lord, for Thou dost recompense a man according to his work.

(Note: This Psalm uses only Elohim and Adonai.)

Romans 5:1-21

¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, ² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God. ³ And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; ⁵ and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us. ⁶ For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Messiah died for us. ⁹ Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. ¹¹ And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, through whom we have now received the reconciliation. ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned – ¹³ for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law. ¹⁴ Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come. ¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Yeshua the Messiah, abound to the many. ¹⁶ The gift is not like that which came through the one who sinned; for on the one hand the judgment arose from one transgression resulting in condemnation, but on the other hand the free gift arose from many transgressions resulting in justification. ¹⁷ For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Yeshua the Messiah. ¹⁸ So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. ¹⁹ For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ The Law came in so that the transgression would increase; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace would reign through righteousness to eternal life through Messiah Yeshua our Lord.

Commentary:

The Census

Three portions (*terumot*):

(V.13) This they shall give – a half shekel as a portion to Yahweh.

(V.14) Everyone . . . shall give the portion of Yahweh.

(V.15) . . . give the portion of Yahweh.

(V.11) [Pass around half-shekel for everyone to see.]

Census taking was allowed only by counting the required offering, not by head-count. Thus, only the faithful (over twenty years old) were counted – those who contributed their portion.

Everyone was to have an equal part in providing for the Tabernacle / Holy Temple. The rich and poor were to give the same “portion”. This may have a spiritual significance: we all are under the same requirement to provide place in our hearts for God – and time dedicated for worship and devotion.

The Laver

(V.17) [Hold up picture from Temple Institute of Brass Laver.]

Washing at the bronze laver was for sanctity, not physical cleanliness. Picture this: because of the Hebrew wording, that the hands were to be washed together with the feet, the priests would wash the right hand and right foot together, then the left hand and left foot together. They were required to portray holiness in their walk and actions in dealing with holy things, and they were required to portray holiness in their walk and actions when dealing with evil. This is a picture of Messiah Yeshua, and we should follow in holiness.

The laver is the basis for the rabbinic institution of washing the hands before prayer: we should have sin confessed and be dedicated to God to properly pray (James 5:16, 1 John 1:9).

“20 when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they may not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to Yahweh.”

If it were said that they would “die if they did not wash”, that would imply immediate death; but “washing so that they do not die” implies eventual death for the cause.

Anointing oil

(V.22) [Hold up bottle with hin of olive oil.]

For anointing, more than a gallon of olive oil was prepared by Moses, with the addition of myrrh and cinnamon and other fragrant spices.

This is called the oil of holy anointment. Olive oil does not mix with other liquids: it symbolizes separation – being holy / separated unto God.

It was to be used to consecrate the vessels of the Tabernacle / Temple. These vessels were of such a degree of sanctity that whatever touched them became holy. This does not refer to things that should not be placed in the vessels and could not attain holiness, but to their normal contents, such as oil or flour for offerings. Thus we are instructed to respect things that are consecrated for God’s service – things that God has instituted, not idolatrous things.

The anointing oil was used to consecrate the sons of Aaron, Kings of Israel, and High Priests. It is taught (in Orthodox circles) that Moses made the only batch, and that its remainder will be found only when Messiah comes.

Incense

(V.34) [Hold up pictures of golden censor and golden incense altar.]

[Pass around frankincense for everyone to smell.]

The previous Torah lesson dealt with prayer and the incense altar.

2 Kings

Joash was anointed with the special oil (2 Kings 11:12). He became King of Israel at seven years of age, and did what was pleasing in Yahweh’s sight (2 Kings 11:21-12:1). He had the “portions” brought in to repair the Temple.

Psalm 62 teaches against setting our hearts upon money; doing so is causative of dishonesty and oppression. (As James expounds, the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.) We are to rely completely upon Elohim (the Judge of creation), Who will recompense every man according to his actions. We are to seek holiness, not riches. With this attitude, we will gladly provide the required portions (*terumot*) and freewill offerings for building and maintaining God’s sanctuary.

Money is like fire: either can be beneficial or destructive, depending upon how it is used. Ultimately, either can be beneficial or destructive to our eternal reward.

Romans 5

Perceiving ourselves as recipients of Yeshua’s righteousness.

Exodus 30:16 says “to make atonement for yourselves.” Romans 5:11 says that through Yeshua “we have now received the atonement.” Paul makes a well-thought-out explanation.

We have been justified by Yeshua through faith.

Through Adam, we all became subject to death – death for sin, even those who don’t commit the same sin as Adam, even those who had no law to instruct them otherwise. This is not teaching “Adamic sin – sin that is imputed to us from Adam, it is teaching that we all have inherited a sinful nature, and act contrary to glorifying God: we miss the mark.

Though Adam is a forerunner to Messiah Yeshua, there is a difference. Through Yeshua’s righteousness, we are accounted as righteous – that is the second atonement, the first being our sin accounted to Yeshua, who suffered for it.

Now, we are to grow in grace, and live in holiness.

It may be difficult for us, knowing that we are sinful beyond even our understanding, to view ourselves as righteous. But we should understand that God calls us the righteous, and we should live accordingly, displaying holiness, even as the priests were to do by cleansing at the laver.

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Now Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² "See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³ "I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, ⁴ to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, ⁵ and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁶ "And behold, I Myself have appointed with him Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill, that they may make all that I have commanded you: ⁷ the tent of meeting, and the ark of testimony, and the mercy seat upon it, and all the furniture of the tent, ⁸ the table also and its utensils, and the pure gold lampstand with all its utensils, and the altar of incense, ⁹ the altar of burnt offering also with all its utensils, and the laver and its stand, ¹⁰ the woven garments as well, and the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, with which to carry on their priesthood; ¹¹ the anointing oil also, and the fragrant incense for the holy place, they are to make them according to all that I have commanded you."

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹² Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ¹³ "But as for you, speak to the sons of Israel, saying, 'You shall surely observe My Sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am Yahweh who sanctifies you. ¹⁴ "Therefore you are to observe the Sabbath, for it is holy to you.

*Reader 4** Amen. Everyone who profanes it shall surely be put to death; for whoever does any work on it, that person shall be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to Yahweh; whoever does any work on the Sabbath day shall surely be put to death.

¹⁶ 'So the sons of Israel shall observe the Sabbath, to celebrate the Sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.' ¹⁷ "It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days Yahweh made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed."

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹⁸ When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God. ^{32:1} Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." ² Aaron said to them, "Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." ³ Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought them to Aaron. ⁴ He took this from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, "This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁵ Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow shall be a feast to Yahweh." ⁶ So the next day they rose early and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play. ⁷ Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, ⁸ "Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. ⁹ "They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it and have sacrificed to it and said, 'This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!'" ¹⁰ Yahweh said to Moses, "I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people. ¹¹ "Now then let Me alone, that My anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation."

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹¹ Then Moses entreated Yahweh his God, and said, "O Yahweh, why does Your anger burn against Your people whom You have brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² "Why should the Egyptians speak, saying, 'With evil intent He brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your burning anger and change Your mind about doing harm to Your people. ¹³ "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants to whom You swore by Yourself, and said to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and all this land of which I have spoken I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" ¹⁴ So Yahweh changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people.

Isaiah 43:1-28

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹ But now, thus says Yahweh, your Creator, O Jacob, and He who formed you, O Israel, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! ² "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you. ³ "For I am Yahweh your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior; I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place. ⁴ "Since you are precious in My sight, since you are honored and I love you, I will give other men in your place and other peoples in exchange for your life. ⁵ "Do not

fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and gather you from the west. ⁶ "I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar and My daughters from the ends of the earth, ⁷ Everyone who is called by My name, and whom I have created for My glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made."

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁸ Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes, and the deaf, even though they have ears. ⁹ All the nations have gathered together so that the peoples may be assembled. Who among them can declare this and proclaim to us the former things? Let them present their witnesses that they may be justified, or let them hear and say, "It is true." ¹⁰ "You are My witnesses," declares Yahweh, "and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. ¹¹ "I, even I, am Yahweh, and there is no savior besides Me. ¹² "It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed, and there was no strange god among you; so you are My witnesses," declares Yahweh, "and I am God. ¹³ "Even from eternity I am He, and there is none who can deliver out of My hand; I act and who can reverse it?" ¹⁴ Thus says Yahweh your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, "For your sake I have sent to Babylon, and will bring them all down as fugitives, even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice. ¹⁵ "I am Yahweh, your Holy One, the Creator of Israel, your King."

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁶ Thus says Yahweh, Who makes a way through the sea and a path through the mighty waters, ¹⁷ Who brings forth the chariot and the horse, the army and the mighty man (They will lie down together and not rise again; they have been quenched and extinguished like a wick): ¹⁸ "Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. ¹⁹ "Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. ²⁰ "The beasts of the field will glorify Me, the jackals and the ostriches, because I have given waters in the wilderness and rivers in the desert, to give drink to My chosen people.

*Reader 11** Amen. ²¹ "The people whom I formed for Myself will declare My praise. ²² "Yet you have not called on Me, O Jacob; but you have become weary of Me, O Israel. ²³ "You have not brought to Me the sheep of your burnt offerings, nor have you honored Me with your sacrifices. I have not burdened you with offerings, nor wearied you with incense. ²⁴ "You have bought Me not sweet cane with money, nor have you filled Me with the fat of your sacrifices; rather you have burdened Me with your sins, you have wearied Me with your iniquities. ²⁵ "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins. ²⁶ "Put Me in remembrance, let us argue our case together; state your cause, that you may be proved right. ²⁷ "Your first forefather sinned, and your spokesmen have transgressed against Me. ²⁸ "So I will pollute the princes of the sanctuary, and I will consign Jacob to the ban and Israel to revilement.

Psalm 63 *(To be sung.) A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah.*

¹ O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly; my soul thirsts for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water. ² Thus I have seen You in the sanctuary, to see Your power and Your glory. ³ Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, my lips will praise You. ⁴ So I will bless You as long as I live; I will lift up my hands in Your name. ⁵ My soul is satisfied as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth offers praises with joyful lips. ⁶ When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches, ⁷ For You have been my help, and in the shadow of Your wings I sing for joy. ⁸ My soul clings to You; Your right hand upholds me. ⁹ But those who seek my life to destroy it, will go into the depths of the earth. ¹⁰ They will be delivered over to the power of the sword; they will be a prey for foxes. ¹¹ But the king will rejoice in God; everyone who swears by Him will glory, for the mouths of those who speak lies will be stopped.

2 Timothy 1:1-18

*Reader 12** Amen. ¹ Paul, an apostle of Messiah Yeshua by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Messiah Yeshua, ² To Timothy, my beloved son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Messiah Yeshua our Lord. ³ I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day, ⁴ longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵ For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well. ⁶ For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷ For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

*Reader 13** Amen. ⁸ Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, ⁹ who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Messiah Yeshua from all eternity, ¹⁰ but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Messiah Yeshua, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, ¹¹ for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle

and a teacher. ¹² For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day.

*Reader 14** Amen. ¹³ Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Messiah Yeshua. ¹⁴ **Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.** ¹⁵ You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes. ¹⁶ The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; ¹⁷ but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me-- ¹⁸ the Lord grant to him to find mercy from the Lord on that day-- and you know very well what services he rendered at Ephesus.

Commentary:

The Tabernacle was the universe in microcosm, and its components symbolized the major elements of creation (as shown by Ramban and others).

Bezalel means “In the shadow” – protection. Uri means “Fiery”. They were from the tribe of Praise. Oholiab means “Father’s tent”. Ahisamach means “To fill in” – workmanship. They were from the tribe of the Judge.

(V.31:3) Yahweh “filled (Bezalel) with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, to make artistic designs for work in gold” for the Tabernacle.

In contrast, Aaron “took (the peoples gold) from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, and made it into a molten calf” (V.32:4).

“³⁰ Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, “See, Yahweh has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³¹ And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship; ³² to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze, ³³ and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. ³⁴ He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵ He has filled them with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs”

– Exodus 35:30-35.

There is a basic difference between being “filled” (which is on the inside) and being “anointed” (which is on the outside).

Men were anointed – oil poured over their heads – to consecrate them for the offices of King of Israel, Priest of the Most High God, or Prophet of Jerusalem. Also certain articles were consecrated for use in the Tabernacle or Temple by being anointed. Yeshua was anointed, by the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, to be consecrated as King, Priest, and Prophet. This is an outward portrayal, for display to others.

People may be “filled with the Holy Spirit” to enable them to perform certain functions – they are “filled with skill” – Exodus 35:35. This is inward enablement to perform tasks. In today’s Torah portion, the filling is for artistry to fulfill God’s ordinances concerning the Tabernacle. Joshua was “filled with the spirit of wisdom” – Deuteronomy 34:9. Elizabeth (John the baptizer’s mother) was “filled with the Holy Spirit” and prophesied – Luke 1:41; Zacharias (John’s father) did likewise – Luke 1:67. Paul instructed believers to “not get drunk with wine, but be filled with the Spirit” – Ephesians 5:18: so we see that being a believer does not mean that we are therefore filled with the Holy Spirit.

If the Spirit of God is enabling someone to perform musically or to expound God’s Word, that does not make him an “anointed musician” or an “anointed teacher.” Using terminology too loosely detracts from understanding God’s pictures of Messiah – since Messiah (or Christ) means Anointed One.

It may be noted that being “baptized with the Holy Spirit” always refers to a group of people; no individual is ever said to be baptized with the Holy Spirit – see Mark 1:8, Acts 1:5, and Acts 11:16. It is always a situation where a group of people are in a setting where each one is filled with some skill by the Holy Spirit, as though

a believer would be filled by virtue of being in that setting. The settings were always to certify the veracity of some significant message from God, such as when the apostles were empowered (Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, Acts 10:45) to give the Gospel to the Jews, and later to gentiles.

(V.2 & 6) God took leaders for the craftsmen from the tribes of Judah and Dan – the tribes that would remain after the exile of ten tribes of Israel.

(V.10) The “vestments of uniqueness” were worn by only one man in each generation.

(V.12-17) The Sabbath commandment is repeated here to show that the construction of the Tabernacle, despite its importance, does not override the Sabbath. (A partial comparison is that we do not even carry money in on the Sabbath for building God’s house).

(V.18) The two tablets represent the required two witnesses.

(V.32:11) This was a test for Moses, not a literal change of God’s mind.

Vayifan Vayered Moshe / Moses turned and went down

Commentary Y2-19

Exodus 32:15 – 34:26 2 Samuel 22:10-51 Psalm 64 Romans 9:1-33

Av 11, 5762 / July 20, 2002

Av 8, 5765 / Aug 13, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹⁵ Then Moses turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand, tablets which were written on both sides; they were written on one side and the other. ¹⁶ The tablets were God's work, and the writing was God's writing engraved on the tablets. ¹⁷ Now when Joshua heard the sound of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "There is a sound of war in the camp." ¹⁸ But he said, "It is not the sound of the cry of triumph, nor is it the sound of the cry of defeat; But the sound of singing I hear." ¹⁹ It came about, as soon as Moses came near the camp, that he saw the calf and the dancing; and Moses' anger burned, and he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ He took the calf which they had made and burned it with fire, and ground it to powder, and scattered it over the surface of the water and made the sons of Israel drink it. ²¹ Then Moses said to Aaron, "What did this people do to you, that you have brought such great sin upon them?" ²² Aaron said, "Do not let the anger of my lord burn; you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil. ²³ "For they said to me, 'Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' ²⁴ "I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.' So they gave it to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf."

*Reader 2** Amen. ²⁵ Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control-- for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies-- ²⁶ then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "Whoever is for Yahweh, come to me!" And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him. ²⁷ He said to them, "Thus says Yahweh, the God of Israel, 'Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.'" ²⁸ So the sons of Levi did as Moses instructed, and about three thousand men of the people fell that day. ²⁹ Then Moses said, "Dedicate yourselves today to Yahweh-- for every man has been against his son and against his brother-- in order that He may bestow a blessing upon you today." ³⁰ On the next day Moses said to the people, "You yourselves have committed a great sin; and now I am going up to Yahweh, perhaps I can make atonement for your sin." ³¹ Then Moses returned to Yahweh, and said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. ³² "But now, if You will, forgive their sin – and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" ³³ Yahweh said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. ³⁴ "But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin." ³⁵ Then Yahweh smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made.

*Reader 3** Amen. ^{33:1} Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, "Depart, go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'To your descendants I will give it.' ² "I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. ³ "Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, and I might destroy you on the way." ⁴ When the people heard this sad word, they went into mourning, and none of them put on his ornaments. ⁵ For Yahweh had said to Moses, "Say to the sons of Israel, 'You are an obstinate people; should I go up in your midst for one moment, I would destroy you. Now therefore, put off your ornaments from you, that I may know what I shall do with you.'" ⁶ So the sons of Israel stripped themselves of their ornaments, from Mount Horeb onward. ⁷ Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, a good distance from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought Yahweh would go out to the tent of meeting which was outside the camp. ⁸ And it came about, whenever Moses went out to the tent, that all the people would arise and stand, each at the entrance of his tent, and gaze after Moses until he entered the tent. ⁹ Whenever Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent; and Yahweh would speak with Moses. ¹⁰ When all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would arise and worship, each at the entrance of his tent. ¹¹ Thus Yahweh used to speak to Moses face to face, just as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses returned to the camp, his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹² Then Moses said to Yahweh, "See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' ¹³ "Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people." ¹⁴ And He said, "My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest." ¹⁵ Then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. ¹⁶ "For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?" ¹⁷ Yahweh said to Moses, "I will also do this thing of which

you have spoken; for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name." ¹⁸ Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" ¹⁹ And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of Yahweh before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." ²⁰ But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" ²¹ Then Yahweh said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; ²² and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. ²³ "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{34:1} Now Yahweh said to Moses, "Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. ² "So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. ³ "No man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain." ⁴ So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as Yahweh had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand. ⁵ Yahweh descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of Yahweh. ⁶ Then Yahweh passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "Yahweh, Yahweh God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; ⁷ who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations." ⁸ Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁹ He said, "If now I have found favor in Your sight, O Lord, I pray, let Yahweh go along in our midst, even though the people are so obstinate, and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us as Your own possession." ¹⁰ Then God said, "Behold, I am going to make a covenant. Before all your people I will perform miracles which have not been produced in all the earth nor among any of the nations; and all the people among whom you live will see the working of Yahweh, for it is a fearful thing that I am going to perform with you. ¹¹ "Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. ¹² "Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst. ¹³ "But rather, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim ¹⁴ -- for you shall not worship any other god, for Yahweh, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God-- ¹⁵ otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, ¹⁶ and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons also to play the harlot with their gods. ¹⁷ "You shall make for yourself no molten gods.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁸ "You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. ¹⁹ "The first offspring from every womb belongs to Me, and all your male livestock, the first offspring from cattle and sheep. ²⁰ "You shall redeem with a lamb the first offspring from a donkey; and if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. You shall redeem all the firstborn of your sons. None shall appear before Me empty-handed. ²¹ "You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during plowing time and harvest you shall rest. ²² "You shall celebrate the Feast of Weeks, that is, the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year. ²³ "Three times a year all your males are to appear before Yahweh GOD, the God of Israel. ²⁴ "For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before Yahweh your God. ²⁵ "You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover to be left over until morning. ²⁶ "You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of Yahweh your God. "You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk."

2 Samuel 22:10-51

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹⁰ "He bowed the heavens also, and came down with thick darkness under His feet. ¹¹ "And He rode on a cherub and flew; and He appeared on the wings of the wind. ¹² "And He made darkness canopies around Him, a mass of waters, thick clouds of the sky. ¹³ "From the brightness before Him coals of fire were kindled. ¹⁴ "Yahweh thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice. ¹⁵ "And He sent out arrows, and scattered them, lightning, and routed them. ¹⁶ "Then the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were laid bare by the rebuke of Yahweh, at the blast of the breath of His nostrils. ¹⁷ "He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. ¹⁸ "He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me. ¹⁹ "They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but Yahweh was my support. ²⁰ "He also brought me

forth into a broad place; He rescued me, because He delighted in me. ²¹ "Yahweh has rewarded me according to my righteousness; according to the cleanness of my hands He has recompensed me. ²² "For I have kept the ways of Yahweh, and have not acted wickedly against my God. ²³ "For all His ordinances were before me, and as for His statutes, I did not depart from them. ²⁴ "I was also blameless toward Him, and I kept myself from my iniquity. ²⁵ "Therefore Yahweh has recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to my cleanness before His eyes. *Reader 9** Amen. ²⁶ "With the kind You show Yourself kind, with the blameless You show Yourself blameless; ²⁷ with the pure You show Yourself pure, and with the perverted You show Yourself astute. ²⁸ "And You save an afflicted people; but Your eyes are on the haughty whom You abase. ²⁹ "For You are my lamp, O LORD; and Yahweh illumines my darkness. ³⁰ "For by You I can run upon a troop; by my God I can leap over a wall. ³¹ "As for God, His way is blameless; the word of Yahweh is tested; He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him. ³² "For who is God, besides Yahweh? And who is a rock, besides our God? ³³ "God is my strong fortress; and He sets the blameless in His way. ³⁴ "He makes my feet like hinds' feet, and sets me on my high places. ³⁵ "He trains my hands for battle, so that my arms can bend a bow of bronze. ³⁶ "You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, and Your help makes me great. ³⁷ "You enlarge my steps under me, and my feet have not slipped. *Reader 10** Amen. ³⁸ "I pursued my enemies and destroyed them, and I did not turn back until they were consumed. ³⁹ "And I have devoured them and shattered them, so that they did not rise; and they fell under my feet. ⁴⁰ "For You have girded me with strength for battle; You have subdued under me those who rose up against me. ⁴¹ "You have also made my enemies turn their backs to me, and I destroyed those who hated me. ⁴² "They looked, but there was none to save; even to Yahweh, but He did not answer them. ⁴³ "Then I pulverized them as the dust of the earth; I crushed and stamped them as the mire of the streets. ⁴⁴ "You have also delivered me from the contentions of my people; You have kept me as head of the nations; a people whom I have not known serve me. ⁴⁵ "Foreigners pretend obedience to me; as soon as they hear, they obey me. ⁴⁶ "Foreigners lose heart, and come trembling out of their fortresses. ⁴⁷ "Yahweh lives, and blessed be my rock; and exalted be God, the rock of my salvation, ⁴⁸ The God who executes vengeance for me, and brings down peoples under me, ⁴⁹ who also brings me out from my enemies; You even lift me above those who rise up against me; You rescue me from the violent man. ⁵⁰ "Therefore I will give thanks to You, O LORD, among the nations, and I will sing praises to Your name. ⁵¹ "He is a tower of deliverance to His king, and shows lovingkindness to His anointed, to David and his descendants forever."

Psalm 64 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Psalm of David.*

¹ Hear my voice, O God, in my complaint; Preserve my life from dread of the enemy. ² Hide me from the secret counsel of evildoers, From the tumult of those who do iniquity, ³ Who have sharpened their tongue like a sword. They aimed bitter speech as their arrow, ⁴ To shoot from concealment at the blameless; Suddenly they shoot at him, and do not fear. ⁵ They hold fast to themselves an evil purpose; They talk of laying snares secretly; They say, "Who can see them?" ⁶ They devise injustices, saying, "We are ready with a well-conceived plot"; For the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. ⁷ But God will shoot at them with an arrow; Suddenly they will be wounded. ⁸ So they will make him stumble; Their own tongue is against them; All who see them will shake the head. ⁹ Then all men will fear, And they will declare the work of God, And will consider what He has done. ¹⁰ The righteous man will be glad in Yahweh and will take refuge in Him; And all the upright in heart will glory.

Romans 9:1-33

*Reader 11** Amen. ¹ I am telling the truth in Messiah, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, ² that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Messiah for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Messiah according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. ⁶ But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; ⁷ nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." ⁸ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. ⁹ For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." ¹⁰ And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; ¹¹ for though the twins were not yet born and had not done anything good or bad, so that God's purpose according to His choice would stand, not because of works but because of Him who calls, ¹² it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³ Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." *Reader 12** Amen. ¹⁴ What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! ¹⁵ For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." ¹⁶ So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. ¹⁷ For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and

that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." ¹⁸ So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. ¹⁹ You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" ²⁰ On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? ²¹ Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use? ²² What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? *Reader 13** Amen. ²³ And He did so to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, ²⁴ even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles. ²⁵ As He says also in Hosea, "I will call those who were not My people, 'My people,' And her who was not beloved, 'beloved.'" ²⁶ And it shall be that in the place where it was said to them, 'you are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God." ²⁷ Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; ²⁸ for Yahweh will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly." ²⁹ And just as Isaiah foretold, "Unless Yahweh of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, We would have become as Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah." ³⁰ What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; ³¹ but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. ³² Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, ³³ just as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."

Commentary:

True Freedom

(V.16) *Chet-Resh-Vav-Tav*, the Hebrew word pronounced *charut* – engraved, can also be pronounced *cherut* – freedom: the only true path to freedom is the one engraved on the tablets (ancient teaching). Those who live in sin are in bondage to sin. The only real freedom is to be freed by Yeshua, to live as God designed in creation – to produce the fruit of righteousness through faith.

1 John 3:4-5 *Everyone, who practices sin, also practices lawlessness, for sin is lawlessness. And you know that (Yeshua) appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin.*

Romans 7:14 *We know that the Law is spiritual; but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin.*

John 8:34 *Yeshua answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin."*

John 8:36 *"If the Son shall set you free, then you shall be free indeed"*

1 Peter 2:21-24 *For you have been called for this purpose, since Messiah also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps, who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in His mouth; . . . and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.*

Ephesians 5:6-10 *Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them; for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in Yahweh; walk as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), trying to learn what is pleasing to Yahweh.*

Philippians 1:9-11 *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the Day of Messiah; having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Messiah Yeshua, to the glory and praise of God.*

Colossians 1:9-12 *For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.*

Hebrews 12:6-11 *For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, and He scourges every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.*

[Salvation is not by our works, but by grace (the unmerited favor of God) through a faith that produces fruit – good works. It might be noted here, that the word “lawlessness” is used (with the practice being condemned) throughout Scripture, but the word “legalism” is never used (except in certain non-literal translations).]

Qualification of Nation of Priests

(V.19) When Moses saw the people dancing before the golden calf, breaking the entirety of God’s instruction for their freedom, then he threw down the stone tablets, breaking the written instructions that were prepared for their dissemination; atonement would be required before a people could be called “the light of the world,” entrusted with taking God’s written Word to the world.

Judgment

[The following uses the rule of interpreting narration by specific instructions.]

Those who had been warned and yet served the idol were liable to earthly judgment of death, and were killed by the sword (v.27-28). Those who had not been warned, but served the idol intentionally before witnesses, died in the plague (v.35). The suspected unfaithfulness of the others was similar to that of a suspected unfaithful wife (Numbers 5:16-28), so Moses imposed punishment accordingly: the golden calf was ground up and spread on the water, and the people were required to drink of it; only those who had worshipped it died. [Note that Scripture commonly relates adultery to idolatry (Hosea 1:2, Revelation 2:22); and the Second Commandment (against idolatry) of the first tablet – which is the second of five commandments showing us how to love God, parallels the Seventh Commandment (against adultery) – which is the second commandment of the second tablet’s five commandments showing us how to love our neighbor.]

(V.34:1) God then writes, for Moses, a second set of stone tablets.

(V.34:7) At the end of the portion, God instructs us to observe His Sabbaths and three annual Feasts.

2 Samuel 22:10 *"He bowed the heavens also, and came down with thick darkness under His feet. . . . 14 "Yahweh thundered from heaven, and the Most High uttered His voice.* God’s instruction is not to be taken lightly, nor to be subjected to our own feelings of what is right.

Psalm 64:9-10 *Then all men will fear, and will declare the work of God, and will consider what He has done. The righteous man will be glad in Yahweh, and will take refuge in Him; and all the upright in heart will glory.*

Romans 9:

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, "Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; 28 for Yahweh will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly." 29 And just as Isaiah foretold, "Except Yahweh of Sabaoth had left to us a posterity, we would have become as Sodom, and would have resembled Gomorrah." 30 What shall we say then? That Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, attained righteousness, even the righteousness which is by faith; 31 but Israel, pursuing a law of righteousness, did not arrive at that law. 32 Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as though it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone, 33 just as it is written, "Behold, I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed."

Second Commentary: Biblical Authority

Egypt was a cruel taskmaster for Israel.

Moses was raised in the Pharaoh’s house, and was fluent in Hebrew and Egyptian languages. After a false start in trying to deliver God’s people, he spent forty more years being prepared in the desert. He filled the offices of prophet and priest. He was sent in God’s time to the Pharaoh, and left a Messianic message for us that portrays, through the Passover lamb, Yeshua’s crucifixion.

Ninevah was the cruelest kind of enemy to Israel.

Jonah, like other Israelites, hated Ninevites. After fleeing from God’s direction, he spent time in the stomach of Ninevah’s fish-god until God finished preparing him. He took God’s Word to Ninevah faithfully.

Jonah was especially prepared by God to fill the office of a prophet. He was sent in God’s time to Ninevah, and left a Messianic message for us that portrays Yeshua’s crucifixion and resurrection in great detail.

Gentiles were considered “unclean” to Hebrews; they were idolaters.

Paul (*Sha-ul’ in Hebrew, Pa-ul’-os in Greek*) was of the highest order of the Hebrews¹; he was a judge in the highest court – the Sanhedrin². To be such, he was required to have mastery of Torah, and of Hebrew, Greek and other languages. He was most zealous in his religious cause, and persecuted followers of Yeshua as idolaters. When God finished preparing Paul, he was in a unique position to be able to take God’s Hebrew words to gentiles of Greek and other languages³. Paul was especially prepared by God to fill offices of prophet and apostle. He was sent in God’s time to the gentiles, and left a Messianic message for us that explains, more fully than any other, how the Torah pictures Yeshua, and how the Torah applies to us.

God sent twelve Hebrew apostles⁴ primarily to the twelve tribes of Israel, and one very-prepared Hebrew apostle specifically for the gentiles⁵.

1 Paul was “a Hebrew of the Hebrews” (Philippians 3:5). He received religious training under Gamaliel, a renowned Torah teacher (Acts 22:3).

2 Paul was apparently a judge at Yeshua’s trial (Acts 8:1), and carried out the Sanhedrin’s orders (Acts 8:3). He had access to the High Priest (Acts 9:1). He was present at the judgment of Stephen (Acts 7:58-59).

3 Paul said, “I thank God, I speak in more foreign languages than you all” (1 Corinthians 14:18). A judge of the Sanhedrin was required to be able to communicate in various languages with those seeking *halachic* rulings, and witnesses and defendants.

4 A *Sheliach Tzibbur* was a messenger sent out from the Temple of Holy One to the *Qahal* – the congregation / synagogue / church (This title is commonly translated “Messenger of the Synagogue” or “Angel of the Church” as in Revelation 2 & 3). He must be a Hebrew (Luke simply had a Hellenistic name). The Temple, “made after the pattern in heaven,” represented Yeshua – the apostles were messengers sent out by Yeshua to the churches.

5 “Gentiles” does not mean Ephraimites (of the tribe of Joseph), as some teach today. It means the world other than the twelve tribes.

There is no one on earth today that can come close to Paul’s understanding of Messiah, of Torah, or of Hebrew or Greek languages. While there is much room for discussion about translations and interpretations, it is at the height of hypocrisy for anyone today to think that he can sit as a judge over Paul’s writings. I would love to have a tenth of his understanding of Messiah and Torah.

When I first came to the faith, I had many questions.

Paul said (Galatians 2:16 KJV) “*a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*” But James said (James 2:24) “*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.*” There appears to be a contradiction here, but that is only due to interpretation. We cannot be justified by becoming good enough through the performance of deeds (“works”) of God’s instruction (“law”). We can only be justified through faith in Messiah Yeshua, Who took upon Himself the penalty for our sins and imputes / accounts His righteousness to us. But if that faith does not produce results – if our actions (“works”) do not reflect what we believe – then it is really not faith at all: it is a “dead” faith. While works that are the fruit of faith are also according to God’s instruction (“law”), we do not perform them in order to be justified, but they are a necessary result of a real faith. Such “works” are properly performed as love for our Savior and our neighbor. Paul and James thus give complementary statements that can greatly enhance our understanding.

Luke said of Paul (Acts 9:7 KJV) “*And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man.*” Paul recounted (Acts 22:9), “*And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me.*” There appears to be a contradiction here, but that is only due to translation. A more literal rendering of the end of the latter verse is (NAS) “*but did not understand the voice of the One who was speaking to me.*” Some seemingly hard problems have very simple explanations.

The more answers that I found, the more questions I discovered. Eventually I came to accept that there were answers to all of my questions, and it need not shake my faith that I did not see them all now. We need to look for understanding of the Biblical text, not cast doubt upon it. We need to help one another to increase faith, and not hinder others. Our present problem is that we do not have as much faith even as a grain of “*mustard seed*” (Matthew 17:20).

[*To be continued.*]

*Reader 1** Amen.²⁷ Then Yahweh said to Moses, "Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel."²⁸ So he was there with Yahweh forty days and forty nights; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.²⁹ It came about when Moses was coming down from Mount Sinai (and the two tablets of the testimony were in Moses' hand as he was coming down from the mountain), that Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because of his speaking with Him.³⁰ So when Aaron and all the sons of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.³¹ Then Moses called to them, and Aaron and all the rulers in the congregation returned to him; and Moses spoke to them.³² Afterward all the sons of Israel came near, and he commanded them to do everything that Yahweh had spoken to him on Mount Sinai.³³ When Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil over his face.³⁴ But whenever Moses went in before Yahweh to speak with Him, he would take off the veil until he came out; and whenever he came out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he had been commanded,³⁵ the sons of Israel would see the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone. So Moses would replace the veil over his face until he went in to speak with Him.

^{35:1} Then Moses assembled all the congregation of the sons of Israel, and said to them, "These are the things that Yahweh has commanded you to do: ² "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Holy Day, a Sabbath of complete rest to Yahweh; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. ³ "You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day."

*Reader 2** Amen.⁴ Moses spoke to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, "This is the thing which Yahweh has commanded, saying, ⁵ "Take from among you a contribution to Yahweh; whoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it as Yahweh'S contribution: gold, silver, and bronze, ⁶ and blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goats' hair, ⁷ and rams' skins dyed red, and porpoise skins, and acacia wood, ⁸ and oil for lighting, and spices for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense, ⁹ and onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece. ¹⁰ "Let every skillful man among you come, and make all that Yahweh has commanded: ¹¹ the tabernacle, its tent and its covering, its hooks and its boards, its bars, its pillars, and its sockets; ¹² the ark and its poles, the mercy seat, and the curtain of the screen; ¹³ the table and its poles, and all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; ¹⁴ the lampstand also for the light and its utensils and its lamps and the oil for the light; ¹⁵ and the altar of incense and its poles, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the screen for the doorway at the entrance of the tabernacle; ¹⁶ the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin and its stand; ¹⁷ the hangings of the court, its pillars and its sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court; ¹⁸ the pegs of the tabernacle and the pegs of the court and their cords; ¹⁹ the woven garments for ministering in the holy place, the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests."

*Reader 3** Amen.²⁰ Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel departed from Moses' presence.²¹ Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought Yahweh'S contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments.²² Then all whose hearts moved them, both men and women, came and brought brooches and earrings and signet rings and bracelets, all articles of gold; so did every man who presented an offering of gold to Yahweh.²³ Every man, who had in his possession blue and purple and scarlet material and fine linen and goats' hair and rams' skins dyed red and porpoise skins, brought them.²⁴ Everyone who could make a contribution of silver and bronze brought Yahweh's contribution; and every man who had in his possession acacia wood for any work of the service brought it.²⁵ All the skilled women spun with their hands, and brought what they had spun, in blue and purple and scarlet material and in fine linen.²⁶ All the women whose heart stirred with a skill spun the goats' hair.²⁷ The rulers brought the onyx stones and the stones for setting for the ephod and for the breastpiece; ²⁸ and the spice and the oil for the light and for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense.²⁹ The Israelites, all the men and women, whose heart moved them to bring material for all the work, which Yahweh had commanded through Moses to be done, brought a freewill offering to Yahweh.

*Reader 4** Amen.³⁰ Then Moses said to the sons of Israel, "See, Yahweh has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.³¹ "And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship; ³² to make designs for working in gold and in silver and in bronze, ³³ and in the cutting of stones for settings and in the carving of wood, so as to perform in every inventive work. ³⁴ "He also has put in his heart to teach, both he and Oholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan. ³⁵ "He has filled them

with skill to perform every work of an engraver and of a designer and of an embroiderer, in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and in fine linen, and of a weaver, as performers of every work and makers of designs.

^{36:1} "Now Bezalel and Oholiab, and every skillful person in whom Yahweh has put skill and understanding to know how to perform all the work in the construction of the sanctuary, shall perform in accordance with all that Yahweh has commanded." ² Then Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every skillful person in whom Yahweh had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him, to come to the work to perform it. ³ They received from Moses all the contributions which the sons of Israel had brought to perform the work in the construction of the sanctuary. And they still continued bringing to him freewill offerings every morning. ⁴ And all the skillful men who were performing all the work of the sanctuary came, each from the work which he was performing,

*Reader 5** Amen. ⁵ and they said to Moses, "The people are bringing much more than enough for the construction work which Yahweh commanded us to perform." ⁶ So Moses issued a command, and a proclamation was circulated throughout the camp, saying, "Let no man or woman any longer perform work for the contributions of the sanctuary." Thus the people were restrained from bringing any more. ⁷ For the material they had was sufficient and more than enough for all the work, to perform it. ⁸ All the skillful men among those who were performing the work made the tabernacle with ten curtains; of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet material, with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman, Bezalel made them. ⁹ The length of each curtain was twenty-eight cubits and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains had the same measurements. ¹⁰ He joined five curtains to one another and the other five curtains he joined to one another. ¹¹ He made loops of blue on the edge of the outermost curtain in the first set; he did likewise on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the second set. ¹² He made fifty loops in the one curtain and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was in the second set; the loops were opposite each other. ¹³ He made fifty clasps of gold and joined the curtains to one another with the clasps, so the tabernacle was a unit.

*Reader 6** Amen. ¹⁴ Then he made curtains of goats' hair for a tent over the tabernacle; he made eleven curtains in all. ¹⁵ The length of each curtain was thirty cubits and four cubits the width of each curtain; the eleven curtains had the same measurements. ¹⁶ He joined five curtains by themselves and the other six curtains by themselves. ¹⁷ Moreover, he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the first set, and he made fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that was outermost in the second set. ¹⁸ He made fifty clasps of bronze to join the tent together so that it would be a unit. ¹⁹ He made a covering for the tent of rams' skins dyed red, and a covering of porpoise skins above. ²⁰ Then he made the boards for the tabernacle of acacia wood, standing upright. ²¹ Ten cubits was the length of each board and one and a half cubits the width of each board. ²² There were two tenons for each board, fitted to one another; thus he did for all the boards of the tabernacle. ²³ He made the boards for the tabernacle: twenty boards for the south side; ²⁴ and he made forty sockets of silver under the twenty boards; two sockets under one board for its two tenons and two sockets under another board for its two tenons. ²⁵ Then for the second side of the tabernacle, on the north side, he made twenty boards, ²⁶ and their forty sockets of silver; two sockets under one board and two sockets under another board. ²⁷ For the rear of the tabernacle, to the west, he made six boards. ²⁸ He made two boards for the corners of the tabernacle at the rear. ²⁹ They were double beneath, and together they were complete to its top to the first ring; thus he did with both of them for the two corners. ³⁰ There were eight boards with their sockets of silver, sixteen sockets, two under every board.

*Reader 7** Amen. ³¹ Then he made bars of acacia wood, five for the boards of one side of the tabernacle, ³² and five bars for the boards of the other side of the tabernacle, and five bars for the boards of the tabernacle for the rear side to the west. ³³ He made the middle bar to pass through in the center of the boards from end to end. ³⁴ He overlaid the boards with gold and made their rings of gold as holders for the bars, and overlaid the bars with gold. ³⁵ Moreover, he made the veil of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine twisted linen; he made it with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. ³⁶ He made four pillars of acacia for it, and overlaid them with gold, with their hooks of gold; and he cast four sockets of silver for them. ³⁷ He made a screen for the doorway of the tent, of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine twisted linen, the work of a weaver; ³⁸ and he made its five pillars with their hooks, and he overlaid their tops and their bands with gold; but their five sockets were of bronze.

Jeremiah 31:31-40

*Reader 8** Amen. ³¹ "Behold, days are coming," declares Yahweh, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, ³² not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares Yahweh. ³³ "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares Yahweh, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they

shall be My people.³⁴ "They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares Yahweh, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

*Reader 9** Amen.³⁵ Thus says Yahweh, Who gives the sun for light by day and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; Yahweh of hosts is His name:³⁶ "If this fixed order departs from before Me," declares Yahweh, "then the offspring of Israel also will cease from being a nation before Me forever."³⁷ Thus says Yahweh, "If the heavens above can be measured and the foundations of the earth searched out below, then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel for all that they have done," declares Yahweh.³⁸ "Behold, days are coming," declares Yahweh, "when the city will be rebuilt for Yahweh from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate."³⁹ "The measuring line will go out farther straight ahead to the hill Gareb; then it will turn to Goah."⁴⁰ "And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the ashes, and all the fields as far as the brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, shall be holy to Yahweh; it will not be plucked up or overthrown anymore forever."

1 Kings 18:27-39

*Reader 10** Amen.²⁷ It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened."²⁸ So they cried with a loud voice and cut themselves according to their custom with swords and lances until the blood gushed out on them.²⁹ When midday was past, they raved until the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice; but there was no voice, no one answered, and no one paid attention.³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." So all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of Yahweh which had been torn down.³¹ Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of Yahweh had come, saying, "Israel shall be your name."³² So with the stones he built an altar in the name of Yahweh, and he made a trench around the altar, large enough to hold two measures of seed.³³ Then he arranged the wood and cut the ox in pieces and laid it on the wood.³⁴ And he said, "Fill four pitchers with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." And he said, "Do it a second time," and they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time," and they did it a third time.³⁵ The water flowed around the altar and he also filled the trench with water.

*Reader 11** Amen.³⁶ At the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, today let it be known that You are God in Israel and that I am Your servant and I have done all these things at Your word."³⁷ "Answer me, O Yahweh, answer me, that this people may know that You, O Yahweh, are God, and that You have turned their heart back again."³⁸ Then the fire of Yahweh fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.³⁹ When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "Yahweh, He is God; Yahweh, He is God."

Psalm 65 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Psalm of David. A Song.*

¹ There will be silence before You, and praise in Zion, O God, And to You the vow will be performed.² O You who hear prayer, To You all men come.³ Iniquities prevail against me; As for our transgressions, You forgive them.⁴ How blessed is the one whom You choose and bring near to You To dwell in Your courts. We will be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, Your holy temple.⁵ By awesome deeds You answer us in righteousness, O God of our salvation, You who are the trust of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest sea;⁶ Who establishes the mountains by His strength, Being girded with might;⁷ Who stills the roaring of the seas, The roaring of their waves, And the tumult of the peoples.⁸ They who dwell in the ends of the earth stand in awe of Your signs; You make the dawn and the sunset shout for joy.⁹ You visit the earth and cause it to overflow; You greatly enrich it; The stream of God is full of water; You prepare their grain, for thus You prepare the earth.¹⁰ You water its furrows abundantly, You settle its ridges, You soften it with showers, You bless its growth.¹¹ You have crowned the year with Your bounty, And Your paths drip with fatness.¹² The pastures of the wilderness drip, And the hills gird themselves with rejoicing.¹³ The meadows are clothed with flocks And the valleys are covered with grain; They shout for joy, yes, they sing.

2 Corinthians 3:1-18

*Reader 12** Amen.¹ Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Or do we need, as some, letters of commendation to you or from you?² You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men;³ being manifested that you are a letter of Messiah, cared for by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.⁴ Such confidence we have through Messiah toward God.⁵ Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God,

⁶ who also made us adequate as **servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit**; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. ⁷ But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, ⁸ how will the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? ⁹ For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. ¹⁰ For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory because of the glory that surpasses it. ¹¹ For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.

*Reader 13** Amen. ¹² Therefore having such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, ¹³ and are not like Moses, who used to put a veil over his face so that the sons of Israel would not look intently at the end of what was fading away. ¹⁴ But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in Messiah. ¹⁵ But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; ¹⁶ but whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷ Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. ¹⁸ But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Commentary:

The First Covenant, written in stone tablets carved out by God himself, had been broken. The people, who said: “Whatever Yahweh says, we will do, and we will learn” (Exodus 24:7), had promptly fallen into idolatry. Moses then threw down the tablets and they were broken.

(V.34:27) Moses, as instructed, carved out two new stone tablets, and God inscribed upon them the Ten Words of the Renewed Covenant (Exodus 34:1). The fact that Moses carved them is seen as representing the diminished position of the people. Now Moses spent forty days in the presence of God writing the Torah.

(V.34:29) Moses glowed after being in the presence of God, but the glow faded as he was in contact with the people, until he returned to the presence of God. He veiled his face when he was with the people, either to mask the glow, or to hide the fact that the glow diminished when he was with them. This veiling is seen to have been to save the people embarrassment, since they had been given the opportunity to have heard directly from God, and have Him in their midst.

Today Yeshua is veiled from us, but Revelation refers to a future unveiling – it is the “Unveiling of Yeshua the Messiah” (Revelation 1:1).

(V.35:3) The commandment prohibiting the lighting of fires on the Sabbath is the basis for lighting candles for Erev Shabbat and Havdallah – before and after Sabbath. This commandment gives us a specific way to distinguish – mark-out – the Sabbath. This may have been part of the oral instruction to Moses or David, as it is apparently prophetic of the Millennial Sabbath. While some say that it applies primarily to cooking, others see it as representing punishment or war – no non-defensive wars are to be started on Sabbath.

The “thirty-nine Sabbath prohibitions” are derived by the Sabbath work prohibition being stated here, immediately before the thirty-nine kinds of work required (Chapters 35-36) for making the Tabernacle.

Outline

1. The Abrahamic Covenant – Land, Seed, Blessings; unconditional, eternal, Gentiles grafted in.
2. The Mosaic Law and the Renewed Covenant – added to show the way, written on hearts.
3. The “New Testament (Brit Hadashah)” and the “Church”.

AM 2018: The Abrahamic Covenant – Land, Seed, and Blessings

Genesis 12:1-3 Now Yahweh said to Abram, “Go forth from your country, and from your relatives and from your father’s house, to the land which I will show you; and I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and so you shall be a blessing; and I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Exodus 2:24 *God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Israel).*

The three parts of this Covenant were amplified by the 'Palestinian' Covenant (land), the Davidic Covenant (seed), and the Renewed Covenant (blessings).

Genesis 17:1-8 *Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before Me, and be blameless. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you, and I will multiply you exceedingly." And Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I will make you the father of a multitude of nations. And I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come forth from you. And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your descendants after you. And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, **all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession**; and I will be their God."*

Jeremiah 33:25-26 *Thus says Yahweh, "If My covenant for day and night stand not, and the fixed patterns of heaven and earth I have not established, then would I reject the **descendants of Jacob and David My servant, not taking from his descendants rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.** But I will restore their fortunes and will have mercy on them."*

Jeremiah 31:31-36 *"Behold, days are coming," declares Yahweh, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares Yahweh. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares Yahweh, "**I will put My law (Torah) within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,**" declares Yahweh, "**for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.** Thus says Yahweh, Who gives the sun for light by day, and the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night, Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar; Yahweh of hosts is His name: if this fixed order departs from before Me," declares Yahweh, "then the offspring of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever."*

AM 2448: The Mosaic Law, which was added 430 years later because of sin, cannot annul the Abrahamic Covenant.

Deuteronomy 4:12 *"Then Yahweh spoke to you from the midst of the fire; you heard the sound of words, but you saw no form-- only a voice. 13 So He declared to you His covenant which He commanded you to perform, that is, the Ten Words (Commandments); and He wrote them on two tablets of stone. 14 And Yahweh commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that you might perform them in the land where you are going over to possess it. . . . 25 When you become the father of children and children's children and have remained long in the land, and act corruptly, and make an idol in the form of anything, and do that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh your God so as to provoke Him to anger, 26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you shall surely perish quickly from the land where you are going over the Jordan to possess it. You shall not live long on it, but shall be utterly destroyed. 27 And Yahweh will scatter you among the peoples, and you shall be left few in number among the nations, where Yahweh shall drive you. 28 And there you will serve gods, the work of man's hands, wood and stone, which neither see nor hear nor eat nor smell. 29 But from there you will seek Yahweh your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul. 30 When you are in distress and all these things have come upon you, in the latter days, you will return to Yahweh your God and listen to His voice. 31 For Yahweh your God is a compassionate God; He will not fail you nor destroy you nor forget the **covenant with your fathers** which He swore to them."*

Yeshua came in fulfillment of this Covenant.

Luke 1:68-79 *"Blessed be Yahweh God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant-- as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old – salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us; (72) to show mercy toward our fathers, **and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to Abraham our father**, to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before Yahweh to prepare His ways; to give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, to shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."*

Gentiles are grafted in.

Romans 11:5 *In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God's gracious choice. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace. 7 What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; 8 just as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes to see not and ears to hear not, down to this very day. 10 Let their eyes be darkened to see not, and bend their backs forever." 11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous. 12 Now if their transgression be riches for the world and their failure be riches for the Gentiles, how much more will their fulfillment be! 13 But I am speaking to you who are Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle of Gentiles, I magnify my ministry, 14 if somehow I might move to jealousy my fellow countrymen and save some of them. 15 For if their rejection be the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? 16 And if the first piece of dough be holy, the lump is also; and if the root be holy, the branches are too. 17 **But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became partaker with them of the rich root of the olive tree**, 18 do not be arrogant toward the branches; but if you are arrogant, remember that it is not you who supports the root, but the root supports you. 19 You will say then, "Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in." 20 Quite right, they were broken off for their unbelief, but you stand by your faith. Do not be conceited, but fear; 21 for if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will He spare you. 22 Behold then the kindness and severity of God; to those who fell, severity, but to you, God's kindness, if you continue in His kindness; otherwise you also will be cut off. 23 And they also, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in; for God is able to graft them in again. 24 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;*

The Torah is not understood by those who have not turned to Messiah.

2 Corinthians 3:4 *And such confidence we have through the Messiah toward God. 5 Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, 6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. 7 But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, 8 how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory? 9 For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. 10 For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it. 11 For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory. 12 Having therefore such a hope, we use great boldness in our speech, 13 and are not as Moses, who used to put a veil over his face that the sons of Israel might not look intently at the end of what was fading away. 14 But their minds were hardened; for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remains unlifted, because it is removed in the Messiah. 15 But to this day whenever Moses is read, a veil lies over their heart; 16 but whenever a man turns to Yahweh, the veil is taken away. 17 Now Yahweh is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of Yahweh is, there is liberty.*

The Mosaic Law does not nullify the Abrahamic Covenant, but shows the way.

Both Jew and Gentile are covered within the Abrahamic Covenant.

Galatians 3:16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to your seed," that is, Messiah. 17 What I am saying is this: **the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.** 18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. 19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. 20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. 21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. 22 But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Messiah Yeshua might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. 24 **Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to the Messiah, that we may be justified by faith.** 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Messiah Yeshua. 27 For all of you who were baptized into the Messiah have clothed yourselves with the Messiah. 28 **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yeshua.** 29 And if you belong to the Messiah, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

Romans 9:6-24 But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all **Israel** who are descended from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "through Isaac your descendants will be named." That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants. For this is a word of promise: "At this time I will come, and Sarah shall have a son." And not only this, but there was Rebekah also, when she had conceived twins by one man, our father Isaac; for though the twins were not yet born, and had not done anything good or bad, in order that God's purpose according to His choice might stand, not because of works, but because of Him who calls, it was said to her, "The older will serve the younger." Just as it is written, "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." What shall we say then? There is no injustice with God, is there? May it never be! For He says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I raised you up, to demonstrate My power in you, and that My name might be proclaimed throughout the whole earth." So then He has mercy on whom He desires, and He hardens whom He desires. You will say to me then, "Why does He still find fault? For who resists His will?" On the contrary, who are you, O man, who answers back to God? The thing molded will not say to the molder, "Why did you make me like this," will it? Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use, and another for common use? What if God, although willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction? (23) And He did so in order that **He might make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory, even us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.**

Romans 11:24-26 For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more shall these who are the natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree? (25) For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that **a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved;**

Ephesians 2:8-22 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Messiah Yeshua for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands— (12) remember that you were at that time separate from the Messiah, **excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in**

Messiah Yeshua you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of the Messiah. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Messiah Yeshua Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in Yahweh; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

Hebrews 8:8 For finding fault with them, He says, "Behold, days are coming", says Yahweh, "when I will effect a new covenant with the house of **Israel** and with the house of **Judah**; 9 not like **the covenant which I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt**; for they did not continue in My covenant, and I did not care for them, says Yahweh. 10 For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of **Israel** after those days," says Yahweh: "I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them upon their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 11 And they shall not teach everyone his fellow citizen, and everyone his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh,' for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest of them. 12 For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." 13 When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

The Law was "written on our hearts" from Adam, but we have devolved, and need it renewed.

Romans 2:12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law; . . . 14 For when **Gentiles who do not have the Law** do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, 15 in that they **show the work of the Law written in their hearts**, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing (self-condemnation) or else excusing them (rationalization), 16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Messiah Yeshua.

This refers, not to a "new covenant" state, but to a natural state of unbelievers.

AM 4000 +: The New Testament and the Church

The collection of sacred books, from the Gospels to the Revelation, is misnamed "New Testament." The term "*Brit Hadashah* / Renewed Covenant" is defined in Jeremiah 31, and is not represented by a set of books. It is the path of righteousness, written on Adam's heart but defiled, written on stone tablets in Moses' day, and to be rewritten on our hearts at our final redemption – thus called renewed.

The term "New Testament" is first found to be applied to Scripture by Augustine in the early fifth century AD, and it referred to the whole of accepted canon – inclusive of the Tanach.

Israel and "the Church" are often mistakenly seen as two different groups with different destinies. The Church is not under a different covenant than Israel. The Church does not replace Israel: the Church always was Israel – since the wilderness journey (Acts 7:38); some Gentiles are grafted in. What is commonly seen by the world as "the Church" is much different than God's chosen people.

The Hebrew word "*Qahal*" is translated into Greek in the Septuagint as "*Synogugae*" and "*Ekklesia*", thence into English as "Synagogue" and "Church" (among other terms).

Notes:

AD 397: Synod of Hippo Regius in North Africa
First to adopt present form of "Apostolic Canon".

AD 692: Trullan Synod
Made above Canon official.

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Now Bezalel made the ark of acacia wood; its length was two and a half cubits, and its width one and a half cubits, and its height one and a half cubits; ² and he overlaid it with pure gold inside and out, and made a gold molding for it all around. ³ He cast four rings of gold for it on its four feet; even two rings on one side of it, and two rings on the other side of it. ⁴ He made poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. ⁵ He put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, to carry it. ⁶ He made a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide. ⁷ He made two cherubim of gold; he made them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat; ⁸ one cherub at the one end and one cherub at the other end; he made the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at the two ends. ⁹ The cherubim had their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings, with their faces toward each other; the faces of the cherubim were toward the mercy seat.

*Reader 2** Amen. ¹⁰ Then he made the table of acacia wood, two cubits long and a cubit wide and one and a half cubits high. ¹¹ He overlaid it with pure gold, and made a gold molding for it all around. ¹² He made a rim for it of a handbreadth all around, and made a gold molding for its rim all around. ¹³ He cast four gold rings for it and put the rings on the four corners that were on its four feet. ¹⁴ Close by the rim were the rings, the holders for the poles to carry the table. ¹⁵ He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold, to carry the table. ¹⁶ He made the utensils which were on the table, its dishes and its pans and its bowls and its jars, with which to pour out drink offerings, of pure gold.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁷ Then he made the lampstand of pure gold. He made the lampstand of hammered work, its base and its shaft; its cups, its bulbs and its flowers were of one piece with it. ¹⁸ There were six branches going out of its sides; three branches of the lampstand from the one side of it and three branches of the lampstand from the other side of it; ¹⁹ three cups shaped like almond blossoms, a bulb and a flower in one branch, and three cups shaped like almond blossoms, a bulb and a flower in the other branch-- so for the six branches going out of the lampstand. ²⁰ In the lampstand there were four cups shaped like almond blossoms, its bulbs and its flowers; ²¹ and a bulb was under the first pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the second pair of branches coming out of it, and a bulb under the third pair of branches coming out of it, for the six branches coming out of the lampstand. ²² Their bulbs and their branches were of one piece with it; the whole of it was a single hammered work of pure gold. ²³ He made its seven lamps with its snuffers and its trays of pure gold. ²⁴ He made it and all its utensils from a talent of pure gold.

*Reader 4** Amen. ²⁵ Then he made the altar of incense of acacia wood: a cubit long and a cubit wide, square, and two cubits high; its horns were of one piece with it. ²⁶ He overlaid it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around, and its horns; and he made a gold molding for it all around. ²⁷ He made two golden rings for it under its molding, on its two sides-- on opposite sides-- as holders for poles with which to carry it. ²⁸ He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. ²⁹ And he made the holy anointing oil and the pure, fragrant incense of spices, the work of a perfumer.

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{38:1} Then he made the altar of burnt offering of acacia wood, five cubits long, and five cubits wide, square, and three cubits high. ² He made its horns on its four corners, its horns being of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze. ³ He made all the utensils of the altar, the pails and the shovels and the basins, the flesh hooks and the firepans; he made all its utensils of bronze. ⁴ He made for the altar a grating of bronze network beneath, under its ledge, reaching halfway up. ⁵ He cast four rings on the four ends of the bronze grating as holders for the poles. ⁶ He made the poles of acacia wood and overlaid them with bronze. ⁷ He inserted the poles into the rings on the sides of the altar, with which to carry it. He made it hollow with planks.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁸ Moreover, he made the laver of bronze with its base of bronze, from the mirrors of the serving women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting. ⁹ Then he made the court: for the south side the hangings of the court were of fine twisted linen, one hundred cubits; ¹⁰ their twenty pillars, and their twenty sockets, made of bronze; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. ¹¹ For the north side there were one hundred cubits; their twenty pillars and their twenty sockets were of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. ¹² For the west side there were hangings of fifty cubits with their ten pillars and their ten sockets; the hooks of the pillars and their bands were of silver. ¹³ For the east side fifty cubits.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹⁴ The hangings for the one side of the gate were fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets, ¹⁵ and so for the other side. On both sides of the gate of the court were hangings of fifteen cubits, with their three pillars and their three sockets. ¹⁶ All the hangings of the court all around were of fine twisted linen. ¹⁷ The sockets for the pillars were of bronze, the hooks of the pillars and their bands, of silver; and the overlaying of their tops, of silver, and all the pillars of the court were furnished with silver bands. ¹⁸ The screen of the gate of the court was the work of the weaver, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. And the length was

twenty cubits and the height was five cubits, corresponding to the hangings of the court. ¹⁹ Their four pillars and their four sockets were of bronze; their hooks were of silver, and the overlaying of their tops and their bands were of silver. ²⁰ All the pegs of the tabernacle and of the court all around were of bronze.

1 Kings 8:8-45

*Reader 8** Amen. ⁸ But the poles were so long that the ends of the poles could be seen from the holy place before the inner sanctuary, but they could not be seen outside; they are there to this day. ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where Yahweh made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. ¹⁰ It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of Yahweh, ¹¹ so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh. ¹² Then Solomon said, "Yahweh has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud. ¹³ **"I have surely built You a lofty house, A place for Your dwelling forever."**

*Reader 9** Amen. ¹⁴ Then the king faced about and blessed all the assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. ¹⁵ He said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the God of Israel, who spoke with His mouth to my father David and has fulfilled it with His hand, saying, ¹⁶ 'Since the day that I brought My people Israel from Egypt, I did not choose a city out of all the tribes of Israel in which to build a house that My name might be there, but I chose David to be over My people Israel.' ¹⁷ Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ¹⁸ But Yahweh said to my father David, 'Because it was in your heart to build a house for My name, you did well that it was in your heart. ¹⁹ Nevertheless you shall not build the house, but your son who will be born to you, he will build the house for My name.' ²⁰ Now Yahweh has fulfilled His word which He spoke; for I have risen in place of my father David and sit on the throne of Israel, as Yahweh promised, and have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the God of Israel. ²¹ There I have set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of Yahweh, which He made with our fathers when He brought them from the land of Egypt."

*Reader 10** Amen. ²² Then Solomon stood before the altar of Yahweh in the presence of all the assembly of Israel and spread out his hands toward heaven. ²³ He said, "O Yahweh, the God of Israel, there is no God like You in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant and showing lovingkindness to Your servants who walk before You with all their heart, ²⁴ who have kept with Your servant, my father David, that which You have promised him; indeed, You have spoken with Your mouth and have fulfilled it with Your hand as it is this day. ²⁵ Now therefore, O Yahweh, the God of Israel, keep with Your servant David my father that which You have promised him, saying, 'You shall not lack a man to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons take heed to their way to walk before Me as you have walked.' ²⁶ Now therefore, O God of Israel, let Your word, I pray, be confirmed which You have spoken to Your servant, my father David. ²⁷ But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built! ²⁸ Yet have regard to the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, O Yahweh my God, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which Your servant prays before You today; ²⁹ that Your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, toward the place of which You have said, 'My name shall be there,' to **listen to the prayer which Your servant shall pray toward this place.**

*Reader 11** Amen. ³⁰ Listen to the supplication of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place; hear in heaven Your dwelling place; hear and forgive. ³¹ If a man sins against his neighbor and is made to take an oath, and he comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this house, ³² then hear in heaven and act and judge Your servants, condemning the wicked by bringing his way on his own head and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness. ³³ When Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy, because they have sinned against You, if they turn to You again and confess Your name and pray and make supplication to You in this house, ³⁴ then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to their fathers. ³⁵ When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain, because they have sinned against You, and they pray toward this place and confess Your name and turn from their sin when You afflict them, ³⁶ then hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, indeed, teach them the good way in which they should walk. And send rain on Your land, which You have given Your people for an inheritance. ³⁷ If there is famine in the land, if there is pestilence, if there is blight or mildew, locust or grasshopper, if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities, whatever plague, whatever sickness there is, ³⁸ whatever prayer or supplication is made by any man or by all Your people Israel, each knowing the affliction of his own heart, and spreading his hands toward this house; ³⁹ then hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive and act and render to each according to all his ways, whose heart You know, for You alone know the hearts of all the sons of men, ⁴⁰ that they may fear You all the days that they live in the land which You have given to our fathers.

*Reader 12** Amen. ⁴¹ "Also concerning the foreigner who is not of Your people Israel, when he comes from a far country for Your name's sake ⁴² (for they will hear of Your great name and Your mighty hand, and of Your outstretched arm); when he comes and prays toward this house, ⁴³ hear in heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, in order that all the peoples of the earth may know Your name,

to fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by Your name. ⁴⁴ When Your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way You shall send them, and they pray to Yahweh toward the city which You have chosen and the house which I have built for Your name, ⁴⁵ then hear in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

Psalm 66 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Song. A Psalm.*

¹ Shout joyfully to God, all the earth; ² sing the glory of His name; make His praise glorious. ³ Say to God, "How awesome are Your works! Because of the greatness of Your power Your enemies will give feigned obedience to You. ⁴ All the earth will worship You, and will sing praises to You; they will sing praises to Your name." Selah. ⁵ Come and see the works of God, Who is awesome in His deeds toward the sons of men. ⁶ He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot; there let us rejoice in Him! ⁷ He rules by His might forever; His eyes keep watch on the nations; let not the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah. ⁸ Bless our God, O peoples, and sound His praise abroad, ⁹ Who keeps us in life and does not allow our feet to slip. ¹⁰ For You have tried us, O God; You have refined us as silver is refined. ¹¹ You brought us into the net; You laid an oppressive burden upon our loins. ¹² You made men ride over our heads; we went through fire and through water, yet You brought us out into a place of abundance. ¹³ I shall come into Your house with burnt offerings; I shall pay You my vows, ¹⁴ which my lips uttered and my mouth spoke when I was in distress. ¹⁵ **I shall offer to You burnt offerings of fat beasts, with the smoke of rams; I shall make an offering of bulls with male goats. Selah.** ¹⁶ Come and hear, all who fear God, and I will tell of what He has done for my soul. ¹⁷ I cried to Him with my mouth, and He was extolled with my tongue. ¹⁸ If I regard wickedness in my heart, Yahweh will not hear; ¹⁹ but certainly God has heard; He has given heed to the voice of my prayer. ²⁰ Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer nor His lovingkindness from me.

1 John 1

*Reader 13** Amen. ¹ What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life – ² and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us – ³ what we have seen and heard we proclaim to you also, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Yeshua the Messiah. ⁴ These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete. ⁵ This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that **God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.** ⁶ If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; ⁷ but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Yeshua His Son cleanses us from all sin. ⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us.

Commentary:

Timeline: years are A.M. (Year of the World) – from creation.

2448 – Tabernacle completed. Ark of Covenant made.
480 years
2928 – Solomon’s Temple completed.
36 years
2964 – Kingdom split: Israel and Judah.
241 years
3205 – 10 tribes of Israel exiled.
133 years
3298 – Ark hidden after 850 years.
3338 – Babylonians destroy Temple; Judah and Benjamin exiled.
70 year exile
3408 – Second Temple completed.
420 years
3828 – (70 AD) Second Temple destroyed; exile under Edom (Rome).
Temple times – 900 years. Tabernacle-Temple times – 1380 years.

Tabernacle/Temple times are the times of animal offerings.

Timeline Graph * = Tabernacle / Temple times

| | | |
|----------|------------------------|---|
| 1 | Adam & Eve | |
| 1000 | | |
| | Flood | |
| 2000 | | |
| | Tabernacle | * |
| | | * |
| 3000 | 1 st Temple | * |
| | | * |
| | 2 nd Temple | * |
| | | * |
| 4000 | Yeshua | * |
| | | |
| 5000 | | |
| | Present | |
| 6000 | | |
| | 3 rd Temple | * |
| | | * |
| | Great Sabbath | * |
| | | * |
| 7000 | | * |
| Eternity | | |

For nine weeks we have been studying the meaning of the building of the Tabernacle in the Wilderness. On this tenth study week, the Tabernacle is completed. What is the significance to us?

This Tabernacle was a temporary structure, made of wood and cloth, as well as gold, silver, and brass. It would be moving around in the desert, ending up in Jerusalem, for 480 years.

Then the “eternal” Temple would be built, a structure of great stones, keeping the gold and silver and brass from the Tabernacle. The Temple would be stand for 900 years, save 70 years when it was destroyed and rebuilt. (As noted previously, Sadducees would only exist for its last 200 years, and when they finally tried to control Temple proceedings, were met with rioting.)

This is the place where the Creator-Judge (Elohim) and Merciful One (Yahweh) formally met with man, from where the Word of Yahweh would be sent to man. *“The Torah shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of Yahweh from Jerusalem”* (Isaiah 2:3). This is the place from where *“the Prophets of Jerusalem”* (Jeremiah 23:14) come to us, and the *“messengers of the synagogues / angels of the churches”* (Rev. 2 & 3).

This is the place men were commanded to meet with Yahweh three times a year, to rehearse redemption, betrothal, and marriage feasts (Unleavened Breads, Firstfruits, and Tabernacles – Exodus 23:14). Incidentally, the people going up to Jerusalem danced for joy on their way; but there was no dancing in Temple worship: their joy was in being able to go to the place where they could meet with God (Psalm 122:1)! People would run to the House of God (Psalm 119:32), but then had to go through a *mikvah*, and climb irregular stairs that promoted serious, purposeful consideration. In the Temple, the mood was standing in prayer, and sacrifice. (Psalm 134, Isaiah 56:7, 2 Chronicles 7:12).

This is the place we are to *“pray towards”* (1 Kings 8:29-30). This is the place where men would come before the Holy One to confess sin and find atonement – the place of animal offerings.

Part of God’s holiness (His distinction) is: He is Truth. And we are told to *“be holy, as He is holy”* (Leviticus 11:44, 1 Peter 1:16): He *“desires truth in our innermost being”* (Psalm 51:6).

We are to love God with all of our hearts, and all of our minds (*Sh’ma*). Yeshua said, *“But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth”* – John 4:23-24. Our spiritual worship must be based upon truth to be acceptable.

Too often our doctrine and practice is based upon feelings that are not based upon God’s Word. We must learn to make our feelings conform to truth, and overcome basing our doctrine upon feelings. *“The heart is deceitful above all things”* (Jeremiah 17:9), and we are told to not follow our hearts (Numbers 15:39); our feelings do not represent the Holy Spirit, but rather we are to make our feelings conform to the Holy Spirit. When we hear someone say, *“The Lord has shown me . . .”*, it is most often either mistakenly attributing his feelings to the Holy Spirit, or a display of vain *“spirituality.”*

Today, sin is taken lightly. *“White lies”* are acceptable, even taught as appropriate *“where the situation demands”*. Consider: what if, every time we realized that something we had said was untrue, we would have to buy an animal, take it to the Temple, confess our sin over it, and slit its throat while a priest held it. And only then could we expect God to accept our repentance as genuine. Would that not cause us to take truthfulness more seriously?

In a recent study in the news, the average person lied many times per hour. It is common in conversation to misrepresent parts of stories, and just make up stories, often for no identifiable reason. It is common to repeat gossip because of trust in the source. Doctrinally, people frequently assert ideas for which they have no basis, except that they believe such as *“truth”*. Unrepentant liars are going to have to account to God for their lies (Psalm 66:3)!

Yeshua said (Matthew 5:6), *“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied,”* and (Luke 11:9-13) *“And I say to you, ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?”*

Let us desire holiness; let us seek righteousness; let us uphold honesty, wholeheartedly.

Psalm 66 *“For the Conductor, a song with musical accompaniment.”*

This is the Psalm-of-the-Day for the sixth day of *“Passover”* (Unleavened Breads) – the celebration of redemption.

(Zephaniah 3:9) *“Then I will transform the nations to a pure language, that they may call upon the Name of Yahweh to serve Him with one consent.”* (V.4) *They will sing to Your Name. Selah.* The previous songs of redemption (Song

of Moses – *Mi Chamocha*) were short lived, interrupted by destruction and exile; but at our final redemption, they (the Song of Moses and the Lamb – *Mi Chamocha* – Rev.15:3) will continue eternally.

If you have ever seen God deliver you from a situation, by bringing calamity upon someone perpetrating a wrong against you, then you have an inkling of what David means (v.3): How awesome is the work of Elohim – the creator who judges His creation! The rebellious should fear to exalt themselves – think on that (v.7)!

(V.13-16) We are to enter God’s House with praise and prayer ascending to heaven. We are to fulfill what we say we will do, and confess our failings. We are to tell the world of His wondrous dealings with us.

(V.20) David ends with, “*Blessed be God, Who has not turned away my prayer, nor His lovingkindness from me.*”

*Reader 1** Amen. ²¹ This is the number of the things for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of the testimony, as they were numbered according to the command of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest. ²² Now Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that Yahweh had commanded Moses. ²³ With him was Oholiab the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan, an engraver and a skillful workman and a weaver in blue and in purple and in scarlet material, and fine linen.

*Reader 2** Amen. ²⁴ All the gold that was used for the work, in all the work of the sanctuary, even the gold of the wave offering, was 29 talents and 730 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary. ²⁵ The silver of those of the congregation who were numbered was 100 talents and 1,775 shekels, according to the shekel of the sanctuary; ²⁶ a beka a head (that is, half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary), for each one who passed over to those who were numbered, from twenty years old and upward, for 603,550 men.

*Reader 3** Amen. ²⁷ The hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the sanctuary and the sockets of the veil; one hundred sockets for the hundred talents, a talent for a socket. ²⁸ Of the 1,775 shekels, he made hooks for the pillars and overlaid their tops and made bands for them. ²⁹ The bronze of the wave offering was 70 talents and 2,400 shekels. ³⁰ With it he made the sockets to the doorway of the tent of meeting, and the bronze altar and its bronze grating, and all the utensils of the altar, ³¹ and the sockets of the court all around and the sockets of the gate of the court, and all the pegs of the tabernacle and all the pegs of the court all around.

Jeremiah 30:18-24

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹⁸ "Thus says Yahweh, 'Behold, I will restore the fortunes of the tents of Jacob And have compassion on his dwelling places; And the city will be rebuilt on its ruin, And the palace will stand on its rightful place. ¹⁹ From them will proceed thanksgiving And the voice of those who celebrate; And I will multiply them and they will not be diminished; I will also honor them and they will not be insignificant. ²⁰ Their children also will be as formerly, And their congregation shall be established before Me; And I will punish all their oppressors. ²¹ **Their leader shall be one of them, And their ruler shall come forth from their midst; And I will bring him near and he shall approach Me; For who would dare to risk his life to approach Me?' declares Yahweh. ²² You shall be My people, And I will be your God.**" ²³ Behold, the tempest of Yahweh! Wrath has gone forth, A sweeping tempest; It will burst on the head of the wicked. ²⁴ The fierce anger of Yahweh will not turn back Until He has performed and until He has accomplished The intent of His heart; In the latter days you will understand this.

Psalm 67 (To be sung.) For the choir director; with stringed instruments. A Psalm. A Song.

¹ God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us-- Selah. ² **That Your way may be known on the earth, Your salvation among all nations.** ³ Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. ⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy; for You will judge the peoples with uprightness and guide the nations on the earth. Selah. ⁵ Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. ⁶ The earth has yielded its produce; God, our God, blesses us. ⁷ God blesses us, that all the ends of the earth may fear Him.

2 Corinthians 4:1 – 5:19

*Reader 5** Amen. ¹ Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, ² but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. ³ And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴ in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Messiah, who is the image of God. ⁵ For we do not preach ourselves but Messiah Yeshua as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Yeshua's sake.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁶ For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Messiah. ⁷ But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; ⁸ we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; ⁹ persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; ¹⁰ always carrying about in the body the dying of Yeshua, so that the life of Yeshua also may be manifested in our body.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹¹ For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Yeshua's sake, so that the life of Yeshua also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. ¹² So death works in us, but life in you. ¹³ But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak, ¹⁴ knowing that He who raised the Lord Yeshua will raise us also with Yeshua and will present us with you. ¹⁵ For all things are for your sakes, so that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God. ¹⁶ Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, ¹⁸ while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

*Reader 8** Amen. ^{5:1} For we know that if the earthly tabernacle which is our house is torn down, we have a temple from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven, ³ inasmuch as we, having put it on, will not be found naked. ⁴ For indeed while we are in this tabernacle, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life. ⁵ Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge. ⁶ Therefore, being always of good courage, and knowing 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 of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.

*Reader 9** Amen. ⁹ Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. ¹⁰ For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Messiah, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. ¹¹ Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade men, but we are made manifest to God; and I hope that we are made manifest also in your consciences. ¹² We are not again commending ourselves to you but are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you will have an answer for those who take pride in appearance and not in heart. ¹³ For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you.

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹⁴ For the love of Messiah controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; ¹⁵ and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf. ¹⁶ Therefore from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh; even though we have known Messiah according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore if anyone is in Messiah, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. ¹⁸ Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Messiah and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ namely, that God was in Messiah reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Commentary:

King – Priest – Prophet

King: Yeshua, as King, leads us into spiritual prosperity, and rules all things for us in love. Messiah was to be of Israel, a leader and ruler from their midst:

“ ‘And their leader shall be one of them, and their ruler shall come forth from their midst’ . . . ” –
Jeremiah 30:21a.

“The book of the genealogy of Yeshua the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham” – Matthew 1:1.

Priest: Yeshua, as Priest, stands before Yahweh for us, making atonements. He would dare to approach Yahweh, as no other man would (though Moses, in a sense, did so as prophetic type).
(V.24) In the latter days, Israel will understand this.

“ ‘and I will bring him near, and he shall approach Me; for who would dare to risk his life to approach Me?’ declares Yahweh ’” – Jeremiah 30:21b.

“Now Yahweh said to Moses, ‘Cut out for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I will write on the tablets the words that were on the former tablets which you shattered. So be ready by morning, and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai, and present yourself there to Me on the top of the mountain. And no man is to come up with you, nor let any man be seen anywhere on the mountain; even the flocks and the herds may not graze in front of that mountain.’ So he cut out two stone tablets like the former ones, and Moses rose up early in the morning and went up to Mount Sinai, as Yahweh had commanded him, and he took two stone tablets in his hand. And Yahweh descended in the cloud and stood there with him as he called upon the name of Yahweh. Then Yahweh passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘Yahweh, Yahweh El, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin; yet He will by no means leave the guilty unpunished, visiting the iniquity of fathers on the children and on the grandchildren to the third and fourth generations.’ And Moses made haste to bow low toward the earth and worship” – Exodus 34:1-8.

Prophet: Yeshua, as Prophet, teaches us His way, that His salvation may be displayed to all the earth.

“That Thy way may be known on the earth, Thy salvation among all nations” – Psalm 67:2.

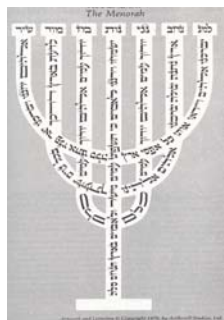
“An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, . . . you shall call His name Yeshua (Yahweh is Salvation), for it is He who will save His people from their sins’ ” – Matthew 1:20-21.

Psalm 67

It is interesting that Psalm 67, which we sing for *Rosh Hodesh* (Head-of-the-Month), is the Psalm for the first Sabbath of Elul (2002) / Sabbath of the Blessing for Elul (2005) of the second year of the Torah cycle.

(Psalm 67:title, 1-2) In the Temple, the Levitical orchestra played harps and flutes, and the Levitical choir sang, “God be gracious to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us-- *Selah*. *That Thy Way* (‘I am the Way’ – John 14:6) *may be known on the earth, Thy Salvation* (Heb. – Yeshua) *among all nations*”.

The Psalm has a title and seven lines (shown as eight verses). The seven lines make the seven lampstands of the menorah (traditionally the one on David’s shield). Note the symmetry: compare lines 1 & 7, 2 & 6; 3 & 5.



- 1 May Elohim favor us
- 2 Knowledge of Yahweh
- 3 All nations to acknowledge Elohim
- 4 Nations to be glad and sing of fair judgment
- 5 All nations to acknowledge Elohim
- 6 Fruit of Word of Yahweh
- 7 May Elohim bless us

1. *May Elohim favor us*, although we are undeserving (*Sforno*).

May He bless us – together, as His people.

May He display His luminous countenance upon us – being pleased to grant us His light/understanding, so that we know His will and reflect His glory in our actions.

2. *So that we display His Salvation to all peoples of the earth, making His way known.*
(Isaiah 11:9) *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea.*
3. *Then the people of all nations will acknowledge Elohim, the Creator and Judge.*
4. *The nations will be glad and sing, because Elohim will judge with fairness, and will guide them.*
5. *Then the people of all nations will acknowledge Elohim, the Creator and Judge.*
6. *The earth has yielded the fruit of the Word of God.*
(John 4:36) *The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike!*
(Matthew 3:10) *Even now the ax of God's judgment is poised, ready to sever your roots. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire.*
7. *May Elohim bless us, and may all the ends of the earth fear Him.*

2 Corinthians 4

The Apostolic portion parallels the Psalm.

“Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by making known the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God” - v.1-2.

For all things are for your sakes, that the grace which is spreading to more and more people may cause the giving of thanks to abound to the glory of God” – v.15.

We are to make known the way of salvation – Yeshua.

An often troubling concept is that God commands things of us that we are unable to perform.

We are commanded Love God with all of our hearts, all of our souls, and all of our minds, and to love our neighbors as ourselves; but who is able to do that? We are commanded to trust God; but who is able to do that? We are commanded to keep all of God's judgments; but who is able to do that?

If we have faith, it is not of ourselves; it is a gift of God (Ephesians 2:8); it has been received (2 Peter 1:1). Yeshua is both its author and its perfecter (Hebrews 12:2). Therefore Paul thanked God for the faith of saints (Titus 3:15).

If we are led to repentance (turning from sin to God), it is by the goodness of God (Romans 2:4). To whatever extent we keep God's judgments, it is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts both to will and to perform them (Philippians 2:13).

Those who are “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1) have no spark of life to fan, nor any ability to fan it; they need regeneration – they need to be given new life.

God's way is to call sinners by His gospel. God sends out people carrying His Word, and His Word accomplishes that which He intends. His Spirit works in the hearts of sinners with His Word.

“So will My Word be which goes forth from My mouth; it will not return to Me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it” – Isaiah 55:11.

This gives us hope and purpose and direction to evangelize: we can know that when we spread God's Word, that it will be used to accomplish His purpose. Any other methods of ours are of no value in seeing sinners converted: it is not in our own power.

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” – John 1:12-13.

“So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God who has mercy” – Romans 9:16.

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Moreover, from the blue and purple and scarlet material, they made finely woven garments for ministering in the holy place as well as the holy garments which were for Aaron, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ² He made the ephod of gold, and of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine twisted linen. ³ Then they hammered out gold sheets and cut them into threads to be woven in with the blue and the purple and the scarlet material, and the fine linen, the work of a skillful workman. ⁴ They made attaching shoulder pieces for the ephod; it was attached at its two upper ends. ⁵ The skillfully woven band which was on it was like its workmanship, of the same material: of gold and of blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine twisted linen, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁶ They made the onyx stones, set in gold filigree settings; they were engraved like the engravings of a signet, according to the names of the sons of Israel. ⁷ And he placed them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod, as memorial stones for the sons of Israel, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ⁸ He made the breastpiece, the work of a skillful workman, like the workmanship of the ephod: of gold and of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen. ⁹ It was square; they made the breastpiece folded double, a span long and a span wide when folded double. ¹⁰ And they mounted four rows of stones on it. The first row was a row of ruby, topaz, and emerald; ¹¹ and the second row, a turquoise, a sapphire and a diamond; ¹² and the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ¹³ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They were set in gold filigree settings when they were mounted. ¹⁴ The stones were corresponding to the names of the sons of Israel; they were twelve, corresponding to their names, engraved with the engravings of a signet, each with its name for the twelve tribes.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁵ They made on the breastpiece chains like cords, of twisted cordage work in pure gold. ¹⁶ They made two gold filigree settings and two gold rings, and put the two rings on the two ends of the breastpiece. ¹⁷ Then they put the two gold cords in the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. ¹⁸ They put the other two ends of the two cords on the two filigree settings, and put them on the shoulder pieces of the ephod at the front of it.

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹⁹ They made two gold rings and placed them on the two ends of the breastpiece, on its inner edge which was next to the ephod. ²⁰ Furthermore, they made two gold rings and placed them on the bottom of the two shoulder pieces of the ephod, on the front of it, close to the place where it joined, above the woven band of the ephod. ²¹ They bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a blue cord, so that it would be on the woven band of the ephod, and that the breastpiece would not come loose from the ephod, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 5** Amen. ²² Then he made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue; ²³ and the opening of the robe was at the top in the center, as the opening of a coat of mail, with a binding all around its opening, so that it would not be torn. ²⁴ They made pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material and twisted linen on the hem of the robe. ²⁵ They also made bells of pure gold, and put the bells between the pomegranates all around on the hem of the robe, ²⁶ alternating a bell and a pomegranate all around on the hem of the robe for the service, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 6** Amen. ²⁷ They made the tunics of finely woven linen for Aaron and his sons, ²⁸ and the turban of fine linen, and the decorated caps of fine linen, and the linen breeches of fine twisted linen, ²⁹ and the sash of fine twisted linen, and blue and purple and scarlet material, the work of the weaver, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 7** Amen. ³⁰ They made the plate of the holy crown of pure gold, and inscribed it like the engravings of a signet, "Holy to Yahweh." ³¹ They fastened a blue cord to it, to fasten it on the turban above, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ³² Thus all the work of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting was completed; and the sons of Israel did according to all that Yahweh had commanded Moses; so they did.

1 Kings 7:13

*Reader 8** Amen. ¹³ Now King Solomon sent and brought Hiram from Tyre. ¹⁴ He was a widow's son from the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in bronze; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and skill for doing any work in bronze. So he came to King Solomon and performed all his work. ¹⁵ He fashioned the two pillars of bronze; eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar, and a line of twelve cubits measured the circumference of both. ¹⁶ He also made two capitals of molten bronze to set on the tops of the pillars; the height of the one capital was five cubits and the height of the other capital was five cubits. ¹⁷ There were nets of network and twisted threads of chainwork for the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; seven for the one capital and seven for the other capital. ¹⁸ So he made the pillars, and two rows around on the one network to cover the capitals which were on the top of the pomegranates; and so he did for the other capital. ¹⁹ The capitals which were on the top of the pillars in the porch were of lily design, four cubits. ²⁰ There were capitals on the two pillars, even above and close to

the rounded projection which was beside the network; and the pomegranates numbered two hundred in rows around both capitals. ²¹ Thus he set up the pillars at the porch of the nave; and he set up the right pillar and named it Jachin, and he set up the left pillar and named it Boaz. ²² On the top of the pillars was lily design. So the work of the pillars was finished.

*Reader 9** Amen. ²³ Now he made the sea of cast metal ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height was five cubits, and thirty cubits in circumference. ²⁴ Under its brim gourds went around encircling it ten to a cubit, completely surrounding the sea; the gourds were in two rows, cast with the rest. ²⁵ It stood on twelve oxen, three facing north, three facing west, three facing south, and three facing east; and the sea was set on top of them, and all their rear parts turned inward. ²⁶ It was a handbreadth thick, and its brim was made like the brim of a cup, as a lily blossom; it could hold two thousand baths.

*Reader 10** Amen. ²⁷ Then he made the ten stands of bronze; the length of each stand was four cubits and its width four cubits and its height three cubits. ²⁸ This was the design of the stands: they had borders, even borders between the frames, ²⁹ and on the borders which were between the frames were lions, oxen and cherubim; and on the frames there was a pedestal above, and beneath the lions and oxen were wreaths of hanging work. ³⁰ Now each stand had four bronze wheels with bronze axles, and its four feet had supports; beneath the basin were cast supports with wreaths at each side. ³¹ Its opening inside the crown at the top was a cubit, and its opening was round like the design of a pedestal, a cubit and a half; and also on its opening there were engravings, and their borders were square, not round. ³² The four wheels were underneath the borders, and the axles of the wheels were on the stand. And the height of a wheel was a cubit and a half. ³³ The workmanship of the wheels was like the workmanship of a chariot wheel. Their axles, their rims, their spokes, and their hubs were all cast. ³⁴ Now there were four supports at the four corners of each stand; its supports were part of the stand itself. ³⁵ On the top of the stand there was a circular form half a cubit high, and on the top of the stand its stays and its borders were part of it. ³⁶ He engraved on the plates of its stays and on its borders, cherubim, lions and palm trees, according to the clear space on each, with wreaths all around. ³⁷ He made the ten stands like this: all of them had one casting, one measure and one form.

*Reader 11** Amen. ³⁸ He made ten basins of bronze, one basin held forty baths; each basin was four cubits, and on each of the ten stands was one basin. ³⁹ Then he set the stands, five on the right side of the house and five on the left side of the house; and he set the sea of cast metal on the right side of the house eastward toward the south. ⁴⁰ Now Hiram made the basins and the shovels and the bowls. So Hiram finished doing all the work which he performed for King Solomon in the house of Yahweh: ⁴¹ the two pillars and the two bowls of the capitals which were on the top of the two pillars, and the two networks to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the top of the pillars; ⁴² and the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network to cover the two bowls of the capitals which were on the tops of the pillars; ⁴³ and the ten stands with the ten basins on the stands; ⁴⁴ and the one sea and the twelve oxen under the sea; ⁴⁵ and the pails and the shovels and the bowls; even all these utensils which Hiram made for King Solomon in the house of Yahweh were of polished bronze. ⁴⁶ In the plain of the Jordan the king cast them, in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. ⁴⁷ Solomon left all the utensils unweighed, because they were too many; the weight of the bronze could not be ascertained.

*Reader 12** Amen. ⁴⁸ Solomon made all the furniture which was in the house of Yahweh: the golden altar and the golden table on which was the bread of the Presence; ⁴⁹ and the lampstands, five on the right side and five on the left, in front of the inner sanctuary, of pure gold; and the flowers and the lamps and the tongs, of gold; ⁵⁰ and the cups and the snuffers and the bowls and the spoons and the firepans, of pure gold; and the hinges both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, that is, of the nave, of gold. ⁵¹ Thus all the work that King Solomon performed in the house of Yahweh was finished. And Solomon brought in the things dedicated by his father David, the silver and the gold and the utensils, and he put them in the treasuries of the house of Yahweh.

Psalm 68 *(To be sung.) For the choir director. A Psalm for David. A Song.*

¹ Let God arise, let His enemies be scattered, and let those who hate Him flee before Him. ² As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melts before the fire, so let the wicked perish before God. ³ But let the righteous be glad; let them exult before God; Yes, let them rejoice with gladness. ⁴ Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up a song for Him who rides through the deserts, Whose name is Yahweh, and exult before Him. ⁵ A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, is God in His holy habitation. ⁶ God makes a home for the lonely; He leads out the prisoners into prosperity, only the rebellious dwell in a parched land. ⁷ O God, when You went forth before Your people, when You marched through the wilderness, Selah. ⁸ The earth quaked; the heavens also dropped rain at the presence of God; Sinai itself quaked at the presence of God, the God of Israel. ⁹ You shed abroad a plentiful rain, O God; You confirmed Your inheritance when it was parched. ¹⁰ Your creatures settled in it; You provided in Your goodness for the poor, O God. ¹¹ Yahweh gives the command; the women who proclaim the good tidings are a great host: ¹² "Kings of armies flee, they flee, and she who remains at home will divide the spoil!" ¹³ When you lie down

among the sheepfolds, You are like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and its pinions with glistening gold.¹⁴ When the Almighty scattered the kings there, it was snowing in Zalmon.¹⁵ A mountain of God is the mountain of Bashan; a mountain of many peaks is the mountain of Bashan.¹⁶ **Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, at the mountain which God has desired for His abode? Surely Yahweh will dwell there forever.**¹⁷ The chariots of God are myriads, thousands upon thousands; Yahweh is among them as at Sinai, in holiness.¹⁸ You have ascended on high, You have led captive Your captives; You have received gifts among men, even among the rebellious also, that Yahweh God may dwell there.¹⁹ Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears our burden, the God who is our salvation. Selah.²⁰ God is to us a God of deliverances; and to Lord Yahweh belong escapes from death.²¹ Surely God will shatter the head of His enemies, the hairy crown of him who goes on in his guilty deeds.²² Yahweh said, "I will bring them back from Bashan. I will bring them back from the depths of the sea;²³ that your foot may shatter them in blood, the tongue of your dogs may have its portion from your enemies."²⁴ **They have seen Your procession, O God, the procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary.**²⁵ The singers went on, the musicians after them, in the midst of the maidens beating tambourines.²⁶ Bless God in the congregations, even Yahweh, you who are of the fountain of Israel.²⁷ There is Benjamin, the youngest, ruling them, the princes of Judah in their throng, the princes of Zebulun, the princes of Naphtali.²⁸ Your God has commanded your strength; show Yourself strong, O God, who have acted on our behalf.²⁹ **Because of Your Temple at Jerusalem kings will bring gifts to You.**³⁰ Rebuke the beasts in the reeds, the herd of bulls with the calves of the peoples, trampling under foot the pieces of silver; He has scattered the peoples who delight in war.³¹ Envoys will come out of Egypt; Ethiopia will quickly stretch out her hands to God.³² Sing to God, O kingdoms of the earth, sing praises to Yahweh, Selah.³³ To Him who rides upon the highest heavens, which are from ancient times; behold, He speaks forth with His voice, a mighty voice.³⁴ Ascribe strength to God; His majesty is over Israel and His strength is in the skies.³⁵ **O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary.** The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God!

Hebrews 8:1-5

*Reader 13** Amen.¹ Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,² a minister in the sanctuary and in the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.³ For every high priest is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; so it is necessary that this high priest also have something to offer.⁴ Now if He were on earth, He would not be a priest at all, since there are those who offer the gifts according to the Law;⁵ who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things, just as Moses was warned by God when he was about to erect the Tabernacle; for, "See," He says, "that you make all things according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain."

Commentary:

Today's portions relate the past, present, and future meanings of the priesthood and Temple. Both the Tabernacle and Temple were earthly models of the eternal heavenly Temple.

The Torah portion tells of the priest's garments (See Commentary **Y2-14** for details and pictures of the priest's garments), prepared for service in the Tabernacle. This Tabernacle was the place where God met with man for about 500 years, and may be seen as representative of this present life. A tabernacle (as the word *sukkah* is used in Scripture) is a temporary building. Our present earthly bodies are called tabernacles, and Yeshua came 2000 years ago in His tabernacle.

"For we know that if the earthly tabernacle which is our house is torn down, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For indeed in this house we groan, longing to be clothed with our house from heaven" – 2 Corinthians 5:1-2.

"And the Word became flesh, and tabernacled among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth" – John 1:14.

The Haftarah portion (1 Kings) tells of the furnishings being completed for the Temple of the Holy One. This Temple was the place for God to meet with man for about 1000 years, and was representative of future earth. The Psalm speaks of the awesomeness of God as seen from His sanctuary – the Tabernacle or Temple.

"Because of Your Temple at Jerusalem kings will bring gifts to You. . . O God, You are awesome from Your sanctuary" – Psalm 68:29, 35.

The Apostolic portion speaks of our High Priest Yeshua, in the heavenly Temple.

“We have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary and in the true Tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man”
– Hebrews 8:1-2.

In the earthly models, Levitical priests offered sacrifices for sin, and thanksgiving offerings. Yeshua, who is our priest – after Malchi Tzedek, not the Levites – has made the ultimate sacrifice for our sins: the sacrifice that earthly animal-offerings pictured, and will picture in future offerings.

Ezekiel 45 gives commandment concerning how future sacrifices and offerings are to be performed. It is important, for understanding God’s Word, that we see that animal sacrifices never took away sin (*“For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins”* Hebrews 10:4): they were pictures of Yeshua, and in the future will still be valid pictures of Yeshua. The Passover sacrifice of Tabernacle times was intended to picture Yeshua’s future crucifixion; and after Yeshua’s work was accomplished, was to be a memorial picture of Yeshua’s crucifixion (*“Do this in remembrance of Me”* – 1 Corinthians 11:24). The past picture of what He was to do in the then-unseen future, will still be a valid future picture of what He did in the now-unseen past. The fulfillment of the crucifixion, which could only be seen for a brief moment, did not negate the usefulness of pictures to promote understanding and remembrance of its application to us.

When the Tabernacle was traveling in the wilderness, as the Ark moved, Moses said, (Numbers 10:36) *“Arise, Yahweh! Let Your enemies be scattered, and let those who hate You flee before You”*. But in Temple times, which picture God’s permanent restoration of earth, the Psalm says, (v.1-3) *“Let Elohim (the Creator-Judge) arise! Let His enemies be scattered, and let His enemies flee before Him.”* And, *“Let the wicked perish in the face of Elohim.”* Smoke or vapor symbolize the haughty man, whose pride drives him to higher and higher toward power and riches, only to have it dispersed as he perishes. So, for the present we see the grace of Yahweh, in patience; but in the end, the judgment of Elohim, taking vengeance.

We have a God – Yahweh – Who deals with us in grace. He is loving toward us, working all things together for our good – even if it doesn’t always feel good to us. We can rest in Him, assured that He cares for us. Some of us have a hard time ‘feeling’ that we really have such a God. It isn’t a matter of us feeling lovey-dovey about God, but knowing that He created us for His glory, and is leading us to our final state. Today’s Psalm reads, (V.19-20) *“Blessed be Yahweh, who daily bears our burden, the God who is our salvation. Selah. God is to us a God of deliverances; and to El Yahweh belong escapes from death.”* We should note here, that His “deliverances” are from sin, resulting in our “escapes from death.”

But for those who have no part with Yeshua, it is not so. There is a judgment coming, where none can stand on his own before a Holy God.

In the last part of today’s Psalm, we are seen by God’s enemies, as we enter with a procession into the Temple: (v.24-26) *“They have seen Thy procession, O God, The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary. The singers went on, the musicians after them, in the midst of the maidens beating tambourines. Bless God in the congregations, even Yahweh, you who are of the fountain of Israel.”*

And once we are inside the Temple, it is: (v.35) *“O God, Thou art awesome from Thy sanctuary. The God of Israel Himself gives strength and power to the people. Blessed be God!”*

Then the Apostolic portion gives fitting conclusion: (Hebrews 8:1-2) *“Now the main point in what has been said is this: we have such a high priest, who has taken His seat at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a minister in the sanctuary, and in the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man.”* We have a high priest, who makes atonements for our sin. He is clothed in glory and light, and sits in the heavenly Temple. We have a savior Who loved us enough to go to an agonizing death for us, and lives to lead us to walk with Him, and is coming back to rule a perfected creation.

Vayaviyu et haMishkan / They Brought the Tabernacle

Commentary Y2-24

Exodus 39:33 – 40:38 Isaiah 33:20 – 34:8 Psalm 69 Revelation 15:1-8

Elul 16, 5762 / Aug 24, 2002

Elul 13, 5765 / Sept 17, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ³³ They brought the tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings: its clasps, its boards, its bars, and its pillars and its sockets; ³⁴ and the covering of rams' skins dyed red, and the covering of porpoise skins, and the screening veil; ³⁵ the ark of the testimony and its poles and the mercy seat; ³⁶ the table, all its utensils, and the bread of the Presence; ³⁷ the pure gold lampstand, with its arrangement of lamps and all its utensils, and the oil for the light; ³⁸ and the gold altar, and the anointing oil and the fragrant incense, and the veil for the doorway of the tent; ³⁹ the bronze altar and its bronze grating, its poles and all its utensils, the laver and its stand; ⁴⁰ the hangings for the court, its pillars and its sockets, and the screen for the gate of the court, its cords and its pegs and all the equipment for the service of the tabernacle, for the tent of meeting; ⁴¹ the woven garments for ministering in the holy place and the holy garments for Aaron the priest and the garments of his sons, to minister as priests.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁴² So the sons of Israel did all the work according to all that Yahweh had commanded Moses. ⁴³ And Moses examined all the work and behold, they had done it; just as Yahweh had commanded, this they had done. So Moses blessed them. ^{40:1} Then Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying, ² "On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. ³ You shall place the ark of the testimony there, and you shall screen the ark with the veil. ⁴ You shall bring in the table and arrange what belongs on it; and you shall bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps. ⁵ Moreover, you shall set the gold altar of incense before the ark of the testimony, and set up the veil for the doorway to the tabernacle. ⁶ You shall set the altar of burnt offering in front of the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. ⁷ You shall set the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it. ⁸ You shall set up the court all around and hang up the veil for the gateway of the court.

*Reader 3** Amen. ⁹ "Then you shall take the anointing oil and anoint the tabernacle and all that is in it, and shall consecrate it and all its furnishings; and it shall be holy. ¹⁰ You shall anoint the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and consecrate the altar, and the altar shall be most holy. ¹¹ You shall anoint the laver and its stand, and consecrate it. ¹² Then you shall bring Aaron and his sons to the doorway of the tent of meeting and wash them with water. ¹³ You shall put the holy garments on Aaron and anoint him and consecrate him, that he may minister as a priest to Me. ¹⁴ You shall bring his sons and put tunics on them; ¹⁵ and you shall anoint them even as you have anointed their father, that they may minister as priests to Me; and their anointing will qualify them for a perpetual priesthood throughout their generations."

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹⁶ Thus Moses did; according to all that Yahweh had commanded him, so he did. ¹⁷ Now in the first month of the second year, on the first day of the month, the tabernacle was erected. ¹⁸ Moses erected the tabernacle and laid its sockets, and set up its boards, and inserted its bars and erected its pillars. ¹⁹ He spread the tent over the tabernacle and put the covering of the tent on top of it, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ²⁰ Then he took the testimony and put it into the ark, and attached the poles to the ark, and put the mercy seat on top of the ark. ²¹ He brought the ark into the tabernacle, and set up a veil for the screen, and screened off the ark of the testimony, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 5** Amen. ²² Then he put the table in the tent of meeting on the north side of the tabernacle, outside the veil. ²³ He set the arrangement of bread in order on it before Yahweh, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ²⁴ Then he placed the lampstand in the tent of meeting, opposite the table, on the south side of the tabernacle. ²⁵ He lighted the lamps before Yahweh, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ²⁶ Then he placed the gold altar in the tent of meeting in front of the veil; ²⁷ and he burned fragrant incense on it, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses.

*Reader 6** Amen. ²⁸ Then he set up the veil for the doorway of the tabernacle. ²⁹ He set the altar of burnt offering before the doorway of the tabernacle of the tent of meeting, and offered on it the burnt offering and the meal offering, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ³⁰ He placed the laver between the tent of meeting and the altar and put water in it for washing. ³¹ From it Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet. ³² When they entered the tent of meeting, and when they approached the altar, they washed, just as Yahweh had commanded Moses. ³³ He erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court.

*Reader 7** Amen. Thus Moses finished the work. ³⁴ Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle. ³⁵ Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of Yahweh filled the tabernacle. ³⁶ Throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; ³⁷ but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up. ³⁸ For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of Yahweh was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.

Isaiah 33:20 – 34:8

*Reader 8** Amen. ²⁰ Look upon Zion, the city of our appointed feasts; your eyes will see Jerusalem, an undisturbed habitation, a tent which will not be folded; its stakes will never be pulled up, nor any of its cords be torn apart. ²¹ But there the majestic One, Yahweh, will be for us a place of rivers and wide canals on which no boat with oars will go, and on which no mighty ship will pass-- ²² for Yahweh is our judge, Yahweh is our lawgiver, Yahweh is our king; He will save us-- ²³ your tackle hangs slack; it cannot hold the base of its mast firmly, nor spread out the sail. Then the prey of an abundant spoil will be divided; the lame will take the plunder. ²⁴ And no resident will say, "I am sick"; The people who dwell there will be forgiven their iniquity.

*Reader 9** Amen. ^{34:1} Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples! Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it. ² For Yahweh's indignation is against all the nations, and His wrath against all their armies; He has utterly destroyed them, He has given them over to slaughter. ³ So their slain will be thrown out, and their corpses will give off their stench, and the mountains will be drenched with their blood. ⁴ And all the host of heaven will wear away, and the sky will be rolled up like a scroll; all their hosts will also wither away as a leaf withers from the vine, or as one withers from the fig tree. ⁵ For My sword is satiated in heaven, behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom and upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction. ⁶ The sword of Yahweh is filled with blood, it is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams. For Yahweh has a sacrifice in Bozrah and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. ⁷ Wild oxen will also fall with them and young bulls with strong ones; thus their land will be soaked with blood, and their dust become greasy with fat. ⁸ For Yahweh has a day of vengeance, a year of recompense for the cause of Zion.

Psalm 69 *(To be sung.) For the choir director; according to Shoshannim. A Psalm for David.*

¹ Save me, O God, for the waters have threatened my life. ² I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold; I have come into deep waters, and a flood overflows me. ³ I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; my eyes fail while I wait for my God. ⁴ Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies; what I did not steal, I then have to restore. ⁵ O God, it is You who knows my folly, and my wrongs are not hidden from You. ⁶ May those who wait for You not be ashamed through me, O Lord Yahweh of hosts; may those who seek You not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel, ⁷ because for Your sake I have borne reproach; dishonor has covered my face. ⁸ I have become estranged from my brothers and an alien to my mother's sons. ⁹ For zeal for Your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me. ¹⁰ When I wept in my soul with fasting, it became my reproach. ¹¹ When I made sackcloth my clothing, I became a byword to them. ¹² Those who sit in the gate talk about me, and I am the song of the drunkards. ¹³ But as for me, my prayer is to You, O Yahweh, at an acceptable time; O God, in the greatness of Your lovingkindness, answer me with Your saving truth. ¹⁴ Deliver me from the mire and do not let me sink; may I be delivered from my foes and from the deep waters. ¹⁵ May the flood of water not overflow me nor the deep swallow me up, nor the pit shut its mouth on me. ¹⁶ Answer me, O Yahweh, for Your lovingkindness is good; according to the greatness of Your compassion, turn to me, ¹⁷ and do not hide Your face from Your servant, for I am in distress; answer me quickly. ¹⁸ Oh draw near to my soul and redeem it; ransom me because of my enemies! ¹⁹ You know my reproach and my shame and my dishonor; all my adversaries are before You. ²⁰ Reproach has broken my heart and I am so sick. And I looked for sympathy, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none. ²¹ They also gave me gall for my food and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. ²² May their table before them become a snare; and when they are in peace, may it become a trap. ²³ May their eyes grow dim so that they cannot see, and make their loins shake continually. ²⁴ Pour out Your indignation on them, and may Your burning anger overtake them. ²⁵ May their camp be desolate; may none dwell in their tents. ²⁶ For they have persecuted him whom You Yourself have smitten, and they tell of the pain of those whom You have wounded. ²⁷ Add iniquity to their iniquity, and may they not come into Your righteousness. ²⁸ May they be blotted out of the book of life and may they not be recorded with the righteous. ²⁹ But I am afflicted and in pain; may Your salvation, O God, set me securely on high. ³⁰ I will praise the name of God with song and magnify Him with thanksgiving. ³¹ And it will please Yahweh better than an ox Or a young bull with horns and hoofs. ³² The humble have seen it and are glad; you who seek God, let your heart revive. ³³ For Yahweh hears the needy and does not despise His who are prisoners. ³⁴ Let heaven and earth praise Him, the seas and everything that moves in them. ³⁵ For God will save Zion and build the cities of Judah, that they may dwell there and possess it. ³⁶ The descendants of His servants will inherit it, and those who love His name will dwell in it.

Revelation 15

*Reader 10** Amen. ¹ Then I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished. ² And I saw something like a sea of glass mixed

with fire, and those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God. ³ And they sang the song of Moses, the bond-servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvelous are Your works, O Lord God, the Almighty; Righteous and true are Your ways, King of the nations! ⁴ "Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; For all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed."

*Reader II** Amen. ⁵ After these things I looked, and the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened, ⁶ and the seven angels who had the seven plagues came out of the temple, clothed in linen, clean and bright, and girded around their chests with golden sashes. ⁷ Then one of the four living creatures gave to the seven angels seven golden bowls full of the wrath of God, who lives forever and ever. ⁸ And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God and from His power; and no one was able to enter the temple until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.

Commentary:

(V.1) *They brought the Tabernacle to Moses.* All of the pieces were brought to Moses.

(V.42-43) *So the sons of Israel did all the service (avodah) according to all that Yahweh had commanded Moses. And Moses examined all the service and behold, they had done it; just as Yahweh had commanded, this they had done. So Moses blessed them: "And let the favor of Yahweh our God be upon us; and do confirm for us the work of our hands; yes, confirm the work of our hands" – Psalm 90:17.*

Within ten months of receiving the Torah at Mt. Sinai, the Tabernacle was completed. The work of building the Tabernacle was called service (*avodah*), the same word as for offering a sacrifice. (Hebrews 12:25-29) We are to "offer acceptable service, with reverence and awe," by not refusing Him who is speaking. For He whose voice then shook the earth at Mt. Sinai, will in the future shake also the heavens, such that only those with an acceptable offering will remain.

(V.40:17) *Now it came about on the first day of the first month of the second year, that the Tabernacle was erected.* Moses set up the Tabernacle. He anointed the Tabernacle and all of its furnishings. Then Aaron and Aaron's sons went through a *mikvah* (baptistry), and Moses anointed them. Thereby, all of this was dedicated to the service of Yahweh.

Next, Moses lit the lamps of the menorah, and burned incense on the golden altar. Then he offered the first of the continual elevation offering: in the morning, (*the tamid*) a year-old lamb, and a large loaf of unleavened bread made from fine wheat flour and olive oil, were burned so that the aroma would ascend to the heavens. So, Moses initiated all that the priests were to perform. Henceforth, this would be done daily for most of fourteen centuries – until the destruction of the Temple about forty years after Yeshua's crucifixion – to be resumed when the Temple is rebuilt according to Ezekiel 45.

Then Moses set up the courtyard around the Tabernacle, and the laver for Aaron and his sons to wash before entering the Holy Place.

When all was completed, God confirmed their service according to Moses' blessing: (v.34-35) "Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of Yahweh filled the Tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of Yahweh filled the Tabernacle."

(V.38) *Throughout all their journeys, the cloud of Yahweh was on the Tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.*

"In the sight of all the house of Israel": (Isaiah 33:20-21) "Look upon Zion . . .; your eyes shall see Jerusalem an undisturbed habitation, a tent which shall not be folded, its stakes shall never be pulled up nor any of its cords be torn apart. But there the Majestic One, Yahweh, shall be for us . . .".

This was prophesied at the middle of the first Temple period, 700 years after the Tabernacle was established. In another 700 years, John would amplify this prophecy.

Apparently, about 2000 years after John, the prophecies will be fulfilled. (Revelation 15): Some real latter-day saints are going to be singing the Song of Moses (*Micha-mocha*), and the real Tabernacle / Temple (that the earthly ones picture) is going to be opened in heaven. And, as Moses could not enter the Tabernacle because of the glory of God, then no one is going to be able to enter the heavenly because of the smoke from the glory of God and from His power – in the latter case, until the seven angels pour out their seven last plagues.

Then this latter-day Tabernacle will come down to the earth. (Isaiah 33:20) It is called the City of our appointed Feasts – the eternal Feasts of Unleavened Breads, Firstfruits (Pentecost), and Tabernacles. It is called a tent that shall not be folded. Therein will reside the Majestic One. (V.36) *“And those who love His Name will dwell in it.”* (Revelation 21:3-4) This Tabernacle of God is where God will dwell among us, and we shall be His people, and He will be our God. Former things will have passed away, and all things will be new.

But this is for those who have been given to love His promised coming, not those who live for the love of pleasure. (2 Timothy 4:8) *“In the future there is laid up for me (Paul) the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”* (Titus 2:11-15) *For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Messiah Yeshua; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds. These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority.*

Those who built the Tabernacle were performing the service (*avodah*) of God. They loved the promise of God’s presence.

To go back to Psalm 69:

This is a Messianic Psalm. It relates not only to David, but to the then-future crucifixion of Yeshua. It is about Yeshua performing the priestly service of God. It is as though Yeshua were saying this from the cross – and part of it He did.

(V.3-4 – see John 15:25) *“I am weary with my crying; my throat is parched; my eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; those who would destroy me are powerful, being wrongfully my enemies.”*

(V.6-8) *“May those who wait for Thee not be ashamed through me, O Yahweh God of hosts; may those who seek Thee not be dishonored through me, O God of Israel, because for Thy sake I have borne reproach; dishonor has covered my face. I have become estranged from my brothers, and an alien to my mother’s sons.”*

(V.9 – quoted in John 2:17) *“For zeal for Thy house has consumed me.”*

(V.15 – see Matthew 12:11) *“May the pit not shut its mouth on me.”*

(V.21 – see Matthew 27:34, 48) *“They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”*

(V.31) And this service will please Yahweh better than animal offerings.

Vayiqra / Then He Called

Leviticus 1:1 – 2:16 Isaiah 43:21, Jeremiah 31:19, Micah 6:9 – 7:8 Psalm 70 1 Corinthians 3:1-23

Commentary Y2-25

Elul 23, 5762 / Aug 31, 2002

Elul 20, 5765 / Sept 24, 2005

*Reader 1** Amen. ¹ Then Yahweh called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, ² "Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When any man (*adam*) of you brings an offering (*to come near, be elevated*) to Yahweh, you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd or the flock. ³ 'If his offering is an elevation offering (*olah*) from the herd, he shall offer it, a male without defect; he shall offer it at the doorway of the tent of meeting, that he may be accepted before Yahweh. ⁴ 'He shall lay his hand on the head of the elevation offering, that it may be accepted for him to make atonement on his behalf. ⁵ 'He shall slay the young bull before Yahweh; and Aaron's sons the priests shall offer up the blood and sprinkle the blood around on the altar that is at the doorway of the tent of meeting. ⁶ 'He shall then skin the burnt offering and cut it into its pieces.

*Reader 2** Amen. ⁷ 'The sons of Aaron the priest shall put fire on the altar and arrange wood on the fire. ⁸ 'Then Aaron's sons the priests shall arrange the pieces, the head and the suet over the wood which is on the fire that is on the altar. ⁹ 'Its entrails, however, and its legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer up in smoke all of it on the altar for a burnt offering, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh.

*Reader 3** Amen. ¹⁰ 'But if his offering is from the flock, of the sheep or of the goats, for a burnt offering, he shall offer it a male without defect. ¹¹ 'He shall slay it on the side of the altar northward before Yahweh, and Aaron's sons the priests shall sprinkle its blood around on the altar. ¹² 'He shall then cut it into its pieces with its head and its suet, and the priest shall arrange them on the wood which is on the fire that is on the altar. ¹³ 'The entrails, however, and the legs he shall wash with water. And the priest shall offer all of it, and offer it up in smoke on the altar; it is an elevation offering, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh.

*Reader 4** Amen. ¹⁴ 'But if his offering to Yahweh is an elevation offering of birds, then he shall bring his offering from the turtledoves or from young pigeons. ¹⁵ 'The priest shall bring it to the altar, and wring off its head and offer it up in smoke on the altar; and its blood is to be drained out on the side of the altar. ¹⁶ 'He shall also take away its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar eastward, to the place of the ashes. ¹⁷ 'Then he shall tear it by its wings, but shall not sever it. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke on the altar on the wood which is on the fire; it is an elevation offering, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh.

*Reader 5** Amen. ^{2:1} 'Now when anyone presents a grain offering as an offering to Yahweh, his offering shall be of fine flour, and he shall pour oil on it and put frankincense on it. ² 'He shall then bring it to Aaron's sons the priests; and shall take from it his handful of its fine flour and of its oil with all of its frankincense. And the priest shall offer it up in smoke as its memorial portion on the altar, an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh. ³ 'The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy, of the offerings to Yahweh by fire. ⁴ 'Now when you bring an offering of a grain offering baked in an oven, it shall be unleavened cakes of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers spread with oil. ⁵ 'If your offering is a grain offering made on the griddle, it shall be of fine flour, unleavened, mixed with oil; ⁶ you shall break it into bits and pour oil on it; it is a grain offering. ⁷ 'Now if your offering is a grain offering made in a pan, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.

*Reader 6** Amen. ⁸ 'When you bring in the grain offering which is made of these things to Yahweh, it shall be presented to the priest and he shall bring it to the altar. ⁹ 'The priest then shall take up from the grain offering its memorial portion, and shall offer it up in smoke on the altar as an offering by fire of a soothing aroma to Yahweh. ¹⁰ 'The remainder of the grain offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: a thing most holy of the offerings to Yahweh by fire. ¹¹ 'No grain offering, which you bring to Yahweh, shall be made with leaven, for you shall not offer up in smoke any leaven or any honey as an offering by fire to Yahweh.

*Reader 7** Amen. ¹² 'As an offering of first fruits you shall bring them to Yahweh, but they shall not ascend for a soothing aroma on the altar. ¹³ 'Every grain offering of yours, moreover, you shall season with salt, so that the salt of the covenant of your God shall not be lacking from your grain offering; with all your offerings you shall offer salt. ¹⁴ 'Also if you bring a grain offering of early ripened things to Yahweh, you shall bring fresh heads of grain roasted in the fire, grits of new growth, for the grain offering of your early ripened things. ¹⁵ 'You shall then put oil on it and lay incense on it; it is a grain offering. ¹⁶ 'The priest shall offer up in smoke its memorial portion, part of its grits and its oil with all its incense as an offering by fire to Yahweh.

Isaiah 43:21

*Reader 8** Amen. "The people whom I formed for Myself, will declare My praise.

Jeremiah 31:19

*Reader 9** Amen. 'For after I turned back, I repented; and after I was instructed, I smote on my thigh; I was ashamed, and also humiliated, because I bore the reproach of my youth.'

Micah 6:9 – 7:8

*Reader 10** Amen. ⁹ The voice of Yahweh will call to the city-- and it is sound wisdom to fear Your name: "Hear, O tribe. Who has appointed its time? ¹⁰ Is there yet a man in the wicked house, along with treasures of wickedness and a short measure that is cursed? ¹¹ Can I justify wicked scales and a bag of deceptive weights? ¹² For the rich men of the city are full of violence, her residents speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. ¹³ So also I will make you sick, striking you down, desolating you because of your sins. ¹⁴ You will eat, but you will not be satisfied, and your vileness will be in your midst. You will try to remove for safekeeping, but you will not preserve anything, and what you do preserve I will give to the sword. ¹⁵ You will sow but you will not reap. You will tread the olive but will not anoint yourself with oil; and the grapes, but you will not drink wine. ¹⁶ The statutes of Omri and all the works of the house of Ahab are observed; and in their devices you walk. Therefore I will give you up for destruction and your inhabitants for derision, and you will bear the reproach of My people."

*Reader 11** Amen. ^{7:1} Woe is me! For I am Like the fruit pickers, like the grape gatherers. There is not a cluster of grapes to eat, or a first-ripe fig which I crave. ² The godly person has perished from the land, and there is no upright person among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed; each of them hunts the other with a net. ³ Concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asks, also the judge, for a bribe, and a great man speaks the desire of his soul; so they weave it together. ⁴ The best of them is like a briar, the most upright like a thorn hedge. The day when you post your watchmen, your punishment will come. Then their confusion will occur. ⁵ Do not trust in a neighbor; do not have confidence in a friend. From her who lies in your bosom Guard your lips. ⁶ For son treats father contemptuously, daughter rises up against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own household. ⁷ But as for me, I will watch expectantly for Yahweh; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. ⁸ Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; though I dwell in darkness, Yahweh is a light for me.

Psalm 70 *For the choir director. A Psalm for David; for a memorial.*

¹ O God, hasten to deliver me; O Yahweh, hasten to my help! ² Let those be ashamed and humiliated who seek my life; let those be turned back and dishonored who delight in my hurt. ³ Let those be turned back because of their shame who say, "Aha, aha!" ⁴ Let all who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; and let those who love Your salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified." ⁵ But I am afflicted and needy; hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Yahweh, do not delay.

1 Corinthians 3:1-23

*Reader 12** Amen. ¹ And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants in Messiah. ² I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, ³ for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men? ⁴ For when one says, "I am of Paul," and another, "I am of Apollos," are you not mere men? ⁵ What then is Apollos? And what is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, even as the Lord gave opportunity to each one. ⁶ I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. ⁷ So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth. ⁸ Now he who plants and he who waters are one; but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor. ⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

*Reader 13** Amen. ¹⁰ According to the grace of God which was given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building on it. But each man must be careful how he builds on it. ¹¹ For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Yeshua the Messiah. ¹² Now if any man builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it because it is to be revealed with fire, and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work. ¹⁴ If any man's work which he has built on it remains, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

*Reader 14** Amen. ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are. ¹⁸ Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you thinks that he is wise in this age, he must become foolish, so that he may become wise. ¹⁹ For the wisdom of this world is foolishness before God. For it is written, "He is the one who catches the wise in their craftiness"; ²⁰ and again, "Yahweh knows the reasonings of the wise, that they are useless." ²¹ So then let no one boast in men. For all things belong to you, ²² whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you, ²³ and you belong to Messiah; and Messiah belongs to God.

Commentary:

In the Book of Exodus, we saw the completion of the Tabernacle. It was to serve as the resting place of God among men, and His glory filled the house. It was the depository for the ark with the stone tablets, the place from which the Word of God was to emanate to all the earth. It was the place for men to come to be elevated to heavenly purpose.

The final destination of the Tabernacle, in Jerusalem, was to be the source, for all of the world, of spiritual light and prophecy and judgment. Neither Salt Lake City nor Abilene Texas was ever proclaimed by God to be the source of prophecy. Neither a past Christian Europe nor America was ever proclaimed to be the source of prophecy. “*The Torah shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of Yahweh from Jerusalem!*” Yeshua and the Apostles were prophets of Jerusalem.

Only to the Tabernacle or later Temple in Jerusalem could men go to fulfill the Torah picture and offer themselves to God for purification and service. Only to the Temple of the Holy One in heaven can we go to seek cleansing through a risen-ascended Yeshua, to fulfill the purpose of service for which we were created. We are to make ourselves an offering, by dedicating ourselves unreservedly to God.

Elevation Offerings

(V.2) “When any man (*adam*) of you brings *himself as* an offering (*olah – to come near, be elevated*) to Yahweh” – the name Yahweh, rather than Elohim, is always used in relationship to offerings: God’s attribute of mercy, rather than judgment, relates to the offerings. The person bringing the offering must lean with both hands upon the head of the animal, thereby dedicating his strength and purpose to God. He then either confesses the specific sin for which he is seeking atonement, or states the specific spiritual goal which he desires, or offers praise to Yahweh.

The animal is a substitute for the bringer, prefiguring Yeshua – who is the antitype substitute (Ephesians 5:2). It goes up (is elevated) in smoke as a sweet aroma to God, representing the man being elevated to heavenly stature or purpose through Yeshua.

Animal Elevation Offerings (in descending order of what one could afford):

(V.1:3) Elevation offering from herd (bull – from large domestic cattle)

(V.10) Elevation offering from flock (lamb or kid goat)

(V.14) Elevation offering from birds (turtledove or dove)

The dove is a bird of the pigeon family recognized by its cooing cry. The turtledove is a sub-group known for its devotion to its mate and to its young. These birds were raised in dome-shaped caves in northern Israel: one can visit these caves today and see the pigeon-holes all around the large rooms.

Grain Elevation Offerings (This is the offering of the poor, and is as though one offered his soul.):

A “soul” (*nephesh*) may bring a grain offering (*minchah*), made of unleavened finely ground wheat flour, olive oil, salt, with granules of hardened frankincense (an aromatic tree resin). Grain, the staple of human diet, represents our very existence being dependent upon God. Oil symbolizes comfort and healing, and frankincense represents joy and satisfaction; salt symbolizes God’s immutable covenant, because it preserves. No leaven or fruit-honey is allowed. The soul’s service should not be sluggish (represented by the slow action of leaven), nor should it be reduced by pursuit of pleasure (represented by adding the sweetness of honey).

These offerings were brought by someone desiring to overcome traits such as anger, jealousy, greed, or cynicism. Cooked offerings are made as ten cakes or wafers, and then broken into crumbs. “Threefingersful” (*kometz*) of the grain offering and all of the frankincense are burned on the altar as the memorial portion. The remainder may be eaten only inside the courtyard by priests.

(V.2:1) Grain offering – uncooked:

wheat flour mixed with oil is salted and offered with frankincense.

(V.4) Grain offering baked in oven:

wheat flour is kneaded with water, cakes mixed with oil *or* wafers spread with oil after baking, salted and offered with frankincense.

(V.5) Grain offering fried on griddle:

wheat flour is kneaded with water, wafers mixed with oil, broken into bits and spread with oil, salted and offered with frankincense.

(V.7) Grain offering deep-fried in pan:

wheat flour is kneaded with water, cakes mixed with oil, then cooked in oil, salted and offered with frankincense.

Firstfruit Offering on Waving Day

(This wave offering, on the second day of Unleavened Breads, is not a “sheaf” of grain, and the day is neither the “Feast of” nor “Day of” Firstfruits.)

(V.14) Omer of barley flour (for second day of unleavened breads):

An *ephah* of plump kernels of barley were parched over a fire, then ground and sifted into an *omer* of fine flour (An *omer* is about two liters; it is a tenth of an *ephah* – Exodus 16:36).

It was mixed with oil, salted, and sprinkled with grains of hardened frankincense.

It was waved before Yahweh upon a lamb.

Paul said to the Corinthian church, “*I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Messiah. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly.*”

If we are to become “spiritual,” we must become elevated beyond greed, hedonism, jealousy, cliquishness, exalting men, profaneness, etc. In today’s religious world, the Torah offerings are mostly ignored as irrelevant; so also are spiritual attributes ignored as unnecessary – even undesirable. Who wants to overcome this world’s manner of seeking riches and power and pleasure? Who seeks the good of others more than his own? Who desires even this milk of God’s Word, much less meat?

The offerings are the Torah basis for so much of what Paul taught; but in ignoring them, we lose the foundation of much basic Christian/Messianic doctrine.

If our hearts are on the things of this world, then our talk and our prayers will be also. We do not read of Job praying that hurricanes would not fall on himself or his family. We do not read of Job praying that terrorists or thieves would not fall on himself or his family. We do not read of Job praying disease or injury would not befall himself or his family. We do read that Job was a righteous man, and he was concerned that his children might have cursed God in their hearts, and therefore he sought atonement for them.

If we are walking with God, then all of the calamities that come our way are from Him, and are for our good! Calamity is used to bring some toward God, and to bring others toward their destined end.

“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose” – Romans 8:28.

“It is Yahweh Who gives, and Yahweh Who takes away; blessed be the name Yahweh!” – Job .

This is not to say that we should not care about health and safety and prosperity, or that we should not pray concerning them; it is to say that we must see these things in a proper perspective under God. We should not be anxious about such things, and we should seek God’s purpose for us in them.

“Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Do not take anxious thought for the morrow, for the morrow will take care of itself; each day has enough trouble of its own” – Matthew 6:33-34.

We also need to continually consider how we are following God’s Word. We must not get caught up in the doctrines of some person whom we trust, nor in our own feelings about what is right. We should seek to grow in proper understanding and correction from the foundational words that God has given us – the Torah, Prophets, Psalms, and Apostles.