



Parasha: EMOR/SAY

Torah Portion: VAYIKRA 21:1-24:23

Tanak: EZEKIEL 44:15-31, HOSEA 14:1-9

Brit Hadasha: LUKE 11:30-44, COLOSSIANS 2:16-17,
JAMES 3:8-10,

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The reading this week gives us more instructions to both the priesthood and the sons of Israel. The instructions include everything from whom the priests may marry, to the feast dates for all of the Israel to observe, and even to the laws of death and punishment.

On one hand, this parasha gives some wonderful insight in how the called priests were to live their lives and be kept sanctified while not profaning the offerings or the Tent of Meeting. YHVH shows who may eat of the offerings and how the priest's families were to be taken care of by their portions.

On the other hand, YHVH, also, demonstrates the penalty for not revering His Name. It is an opposite extreme from provision to death.

Within the context of these governing rules and principles, YHVH gave us the precepts of our resting times throughout the year. The *haMoedim*/appointed times are given as a complete list in this week's parasha. This attribute of YHVH that He reveals is very significant. It show the ongoing cycle of life that takes place, regardless to one person's ability to walk uprightly or another person's inability and their ultimate demise.

This is not to say that we serve an uncaring Father, that is farthest from the truth! As a matter of fact, it points out the facts the some will walk in His precepts, and some will not. In all of this, the cycle of life, teaching and respecting YHVH will continue, even into eternity, as we read that the at

the end of Vayikra 23, that the appointed time of Sukkot is observed so that our generations may know that YHVH had the sons of Israel live in booths when they were brought out of Egypt.

Throughout our generations is ongoing. It is a constant cycle that takes place every year during the appropriate months. We consider these cycles to be the paths of righteousness that are described in Psalm 23. YHVH leads us to through these paths, for His Name's sake. It is not coincidence that the son of a Israelite women blasphemies the Name of YHVH and is stoned within the teaching of the cycles of life we read about this week.

You see, YHVH leads us through these ongoing cycles for us to be closer to Him. We are to know His Name and call upon it, especially during the appointed times when we are to gather, either humbling ourselves or celebrating what His Son has done as fulfilment of these feasts. Furthermore, as we are drawn closer to Him, and as we draw closer to Him ourselves, we are told that we are to overcome the world and the temptations that surround us. When we walk in His paths of righteousness as overcomers, we will, then, have the Name of YHVH written upon us, along with the city of YHVH and the new Jerusalem. Also, the new name of YHVH, because we will have held fast to the one true Name now. Not forsaking it, nor the commands that are given to us so that His Name is made manifest in our lives to those around us. But, most importantly, so that His Name is shown back to Him as we walk in it.

Shavu Halacha/Weekly Walking:

The world want us to conform to its standards and to its convenience of speech, lifestyles and attitudes. While we can often find ourselves in conversations that are easy to navigate, we, also, find ourselves in the midst of listening to people while they curse and use YHVH's name vainly, or even, curse YHVH's name. There is slight comfort in knowing that the majority of people who take God's name in vain use a name that is a greek name or a translated name, but, it is the intent and the lack of respect and fear that still is a prevailing attitude. Unfortunately, we hear this on the radio, over the television, in movies and in most conversations being had around us as any given time. It has become more and more difficult to keep these curses out of our minds as we do have to live in this world.

As YHVH's children, we must live as we are commanded. The command is to not take His name in vain. Given all the aspects of a degenerated world, our ear gate is open to these and become immune to the curses. It can sneak into our lives and become a thought pattern or even a speech application. Intentional or not, it is wrong. Safeguard your lives and surround yourself with the praises of Adonai. Allow His Ruach to cleans you from the degradation of His name and the improper usage. Call upon His Name and you shall be saved!

Day 1

PARASHA:
LEV. 21:1-15

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. This week's reading opens with YHVH speaking to Moshe on behalf of the priests, then and forever. He tells them, "No one shall defile himself for a dead person among his people." The Hebrew word used for defile is tamé, meaning to become unclean or impure. Not only does this tell us that touching a dead, unclean animal contaminates us, but touching human death does, as well. Why would touching a dead body, regardless of what relation they had been to a person, make one unclean or defiled?

2. An interesting correlation is shown in Shemot 13:12-14, when YHVH tells the children of Israel to devote the first offspring of every womb. He then states how to do this for a donkey. Thus, we are like donkeys in the fact that we are unclean and our firstborn must be redeemed by a lamb. In this parallel, we see how unclean animals are not to be touched after death without corpse contamination/defilement. Yet, a clean animal, such as a lamb or goat, can be touched without that contamination. We see Yeshua as the Lamb of YHVH Who has redeemed us, the unclean sinners, and now we are alive in Him. Discuss this in relationship to the priests being forbidden to touch death unless they are closely related.

3. We know that we are called to be kings and priests in Yeshua. While on the earth, Yeshua told a follower/disciple to, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."¹ The follower wanted only to bury his father. While this sounds very harsh, it could be seen as an aspect of the instructions to the priesthood. However, we see that it is the follower's father, so he should have been allowed to bury that close relative, shouldn't he? The custom of the day was to bury the dead in a tomb, and after about a year, come back after the body had time for complete decomposition, and place the bones in another place or an ossuary box. This is because tombs were expensive to make and land is valuable. It becomes defiled once a body is buried and can render one unclean if they were touch the grave.² Does this better explain the conversation that Yeshua had and how? If not, what other Torah specific reason would Yeshua have to make this statement?

4. Last parasha, we pointed out the pagan practice of shaving all of one's hair and beard, and the cutting or tattooing into the skin for the sake of the dead. We see this as a command here in verse five. Why would cutting hair or flesh be a mourning ritual for the dead?

How does this have other implications for us in how we cut our hair or don tattoos?

Midrash Point:

In verse 6, YHVH says that the priests present the burnt offerings to Him. It is then called the food (bread/lechem) to their Elohim. We know that YHVH did not physically eat the offerings here on the earth. So, why would the offerings by fire be considered to be bread to YHVH?

¹Matthew 8:22
²Bamidbar 19:16

5. The priests were not to take a woman who had been profaned by harlotry. When we think of harlotry, we assume prostitution. However, harlotry could be the act of intercourse, with consent, by anyone outside of marriage. So, a teenager that becomes sexually active is not only committing fornication, but is playing the harlot according to the Hebrew word *zanah* used for harlot. By not being chaste, a youth could lose the ability to marry a priest or be a priest. Why would this be an important attribute for a priest so as to not marry any woman that was not a virgin?

6. When YHVH tells Hosea to “Go, take to yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry; for the land commits flagrant harlotry, forsaking YHVH.” It is not only to the priesthood that this action is to speak against, but to the entire kingdom. This should show us that the passages for the priesthood here in Vayikra 21 has principles for all of us, not only those who are sons of Aaron. Contrast these two passages and why YHVH would tell Hosea to take a wife of harlotry?

7. How has man played the harlot before YHVH so that we have defiled ourselves and are unfit as brides for Elohim? In this answer, why would it be expedient for YHVH to send His own son so that we would, after His death and resurrection, become His bride? See Ezekiel 44:22 for more clarification.

8. Compare these commands to those that will be the Sons of Tzadok on Ezekiel 44. Are they different or the same? Why would YHVH restate these instruction to Ezekiel?

How are these commands applied to our lives in Yeshua and how did Yeshua fulfill them?

**Sandals
Worshipping in Truth**

We see, in our reading today, that if a daughter of any priest profanes herself by harlotry/fornication, she profanes her father, as well. The command is that she be burned with fire.

There are two interesting applications to be seen from this passage. First, this is a harsh punishment, to be burned with fire, for all to see and smell and everything. It would be a grave deterrent for all to keep chaste. While I am not abdicating that we start burning our youth for their indiscretions and promiscuity, I do think a little punishment goes a long way for the prevention of the multitude falling into sin. The application of making an example out of those that are going to walk in rebellion, after grace has been given over and over again, is a small price for the sake of those watching for any punishment, whatsoever.

Second, we are like that daughter of the High Priest, as our Heavenly Father is the Highest Priest of all. When we rebel and disobey, we play the harlot and turn our lives over for judgment and the lake of fire. This passage is applicable to us as we walk as sinners and are seen as those that are rebellious to our Creator. When we come back to Him, we have to come through the blood of Messiah, for He died for us as our High Priest, so that He could leave us, for a short time, as widows. In this, we are able to be joined back to the Father as the Bride of Messiah Who is alive forever. Our second chance to live comes through the second Adam Who is Life after death, and remarriage after our harlotry to YHVH.

Day 2

- PARASHA:
LEV. 21:16-22:16
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. YHVH is very exacting as He gives the instructions about no defects in any of the priests for service. This includes blindness, lameness, a deformed limb or a disfigured face. Moreover, one who has a hunchback or a dwarf, as a defect in his eye or scabs are not qualified for priestly service. Why would YHVH be so exacting for the qualifications list for His priesthood? Moreover, did Yeshua fit this standard and how was He examined?

2. A man with a broken foot or hand can be healed. So while they have the broken hand or foot, they are disqualified for being priests. However, we can read into this command that after the hand or foot is healed, then the person is, once more, fit for duty. This gives us all hope for the healing of our bodies. Many believers and disciples of Messiah have some sort of disqualifying mark that would disable them from being priests. Yet, we are all to be priests in our Messiah. Give an account as to how we are priests in our present status and how we will be priests in the New Jerusalem.

3. A man with a crushed testicle is not a candidate for the priesthood. Now we understand this to be a man whose reproduction organs are damaged, missing or, literally, crushed. Many men today have opted for a birth control operation of a vasectomy. While this does not damage, crush or remove the testicles, it does render them useless as reproduction is halted by severing the tubes of the system. What is your opinion of this procedure as to how it would affect the qualifications for a priest? Why is should this practice be avoided or used for birth control according to Torah applications?

4. In verse 22:3, YHVH commands that the one who even approaches the holy gifts while unclean will be cut of from before Him. We believe that we have open access to the Throne of YHVH and that we can just boldly march in and have His audience and attention. While Yeshua made a way for us to approach YHVH through Him, we see in this passage of Torah that He is a Holy YHVH and that He is exacting. What should we render from this verse in how we are to approach YHVH? Is the boldness actually speak of the wherewith all to come before YHVH, unlike the sons of Israel who immediately remained at the foot of Mt. Sinai prior to YHVH making any proclamations?

5. We see the principle of immersion as YHVH tells the descendants of Aaron when they may and may not eat of the consecrated gifts. Whether they are lepers, touched a corpse, had intercourse, made unclean by unclean animals or touched another person that is unclean, they were to bathe in water and at sunset, be clean. After bathing and sunset, then the descendants of Aaron may eat of the offerings as his food. This principle has two applications: ritual and spiritual. Give a summarization for why immersion is important for both.

Rirtual Application of Immersion:

Spiritual Application of Immersion:

6. We can take the teachings above and apply them to our lives as we approach YHVH by eating the offering of Messiah's blood and body. We must ready ourselves as we partake of His elements that exemplify His Life, death and resurrection. As we eat them, we identify with His sufferings and are identified with His eternal Life and place at the Throne of YHVH. Describe the application of being ready to eat the body and blood of Messiah and how we should prepare and act as we apply this to our lives.

7. Eating the flesh of a torn animal, a defiled animal even if it was clean, is likened to the following of false prophets and teachers of heresy. We are YHVH's elect as we walk in Messiah and keep His Covenant. As such, the trafe (that which is torn) on the side of the road should not look interesting to us in the least. The same is true for those that spout forth man's wisdom, traditions and religious edicts. By listening to false teachers and prophets, we open ourselves up to deception and, possible/eventual backsliding or rejection of Truth. Make a comparison with this prerequisite of the priesthood, along with others you see as they apply to us.

Day 3

PARASHA:
LEV. 22:17-33

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. YHVH tells Moshe for Aaron that the sons of Israel and the alien may present votive, freewill or burnt offerings. While most of us make assumptions that only those that are of the household of Israel may approach the Tabernacle/Temple. Part of this is the Rabbinical placement of the court of the gentile and the court of the women that was placed around the inner courtyard of the Temple. Man has made a separation of who may approach YHVH in terms of a double standard. Give an explanation as to why these other courts are double standards and not Torah mandated.

Why would YHVH be interested and allow the alien among Israel to bring offerings to His holy Dwelling Place? Moreover, why would man not want this to happen?

2. This gives rise to some risky questions. Namely, how do we understand who Israel is and how is that differentiated from the alien or sojourner?

What is the difference between an alien and a sojourner within Israel?

3. For anyone's offering to be accepted, it had to be with out defect, no matter if it was from cattle, sheep or goats. This would give rise to having other offerings ready, just in case the animal offered had defects inside that could not be detected from the outward appearance. Verse 21 specifically spells it out that the offering shall have not defect *in* it. How does having an animal that is perfect represent what YHVH is looking for in us so that atonement may take place?

Yeshua called the Pharisees white washed tombs full of dead men's bones. Correlate this statement to the defects within the offerings that man is to present to YHVH.

¹Matthew 23:27

4. As we see that the offerings were to be without defect, we know that we must be presented to the Father as blameless and spotless. As such, we will be found as the bride of Messiah, ready for His return. What must we do to be that spotless, blameless bride? What offerings of ourselves are required to be this to YHVH?

5. When we serve others by being the hands and feet, the mouth and ears of Messiah, we are to serve with purity and without self-serving motives. If we allow our flesh to resurrect and serve others, even in the name of Yeshua, we are offering unconsecrated portions to others that should be partaking of the purity of Messiah. Give examples of how we do this without realizing it. Note how we are influenced to serve in love versus that perfect love in Messiah that speaks truth to others.

6. YHVH is very adamant about not having an animal with a crushed or torn out testicle being offered for His food. Today, the majority of cattle farmers castrate their male calves so that the bull to female cattle will be maintained with less effort and better breeding practices. Why would this be a negative aspect of raising livestock as Kingdom members?

7. We are told, at the end of chapter 22, that we are to keep all of YHVH's commandments and do them. We shall not profane His holy name, but that YHVH will be sanctified among the sons of Israel; He is YHVH Who sanctifies us. How are these all related to each other so that YHVH does set us apart by doing all that He says to do?

How does living in Messiah relate to verses 31-32?

Day 4

PARASHA:
LEV. 23:1-22

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. The Hebrew word for convocation is *miqrá*. It means reading, calling together or sacred assembly/convocation. Discuss what a convocation is and how the feasts are set apart convocations. What is our responsibility for a convocation and how would this differ from a solemn assembly?

2. The following questions have to do with each of the Feasts/*moed* of YHVH. We will discuss each one, individually in terms of how they are to be observed by us today, and how Messiah has or will fulfill each feast.

First appointed time is Shabbat. Every seventh day we are commanded to have a complete rest as a Shabbat in all of our dwellings. First, explain how we are to observe Shabbat in regards to what we cease from doing, what we do and do not require others to do for us and the particulars of how to rest according to Torah standards, being led by the Ruach in Messiah.

Second, how has Messiah fulfilled the feast of Shabbat and how does that effect us in our walking in that rest?

3. The second appointed time disclosed to us is in the first month of the year, on the fourteenth day of the month: Passover. What is our mandate for observing Pesach/Passover?

How has Messiah fulfilled Pesach and is there more that He will fulfill regarding this feast?

4. Right after Pesach is the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Pesach actually begins at the very beginning of Unleavened Bread. What are we to do during this Feast and how is that to impact our lives, spiritually?

How has Messiah completed the Feast of Unleavened Bread and what does he expect out from us to live within Him for this perpetual Feast?

Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit

The haMoedim, appointed times, of YHVH are significant to our lives and lifestyles today. They lead us into the deeper understanding of Who YHVH is, Who Messiah is, the importance of keeping Torah, and how deliverance will be carried out by YHVH for His chosen people.

By observing the Feasts, we are brought into the paths, the cycles, of righteousness for His name's sake. It is for the act of obedience and the sake of having His name placed upon us that we observe the Feasts. Moreover, it is as time, as spoken of in Psalm 32:6, that our Creator is found. He inhabits the praises of His people.¹ It is important to gather and give praise and worship the I Am so that we will be enveloped by the very Presence of His being. Just as Aaron ministered before the Ark of the Testimony, we, too, can experience the cloud of incense as our prayers are mingled with the very being of YHVH before our eyes.

5. The Feast of First Fruits takes place within the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Discuss the aspects of how we should observe this feast, since it is not a Shabbat. Describe when this feast is to be observed and why it would be important to understand the aviv and abstinence from consuming new grains until this Feast takes place.

What was Yeshua's role in bringing the Feast of First Fruits to such a incredibly rich Feast and how are we involved in keeping this Feast the way Messiah did?

6. Beginning the morrow after the Shabbat during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, we are to count for fifty days, or seven Shabbats and seven weeks. This is known as the Counting of the Omer. Traditionally, Psalm 119 is read over and again until the Fiftieth day is counted. While that is not commanded in Torah, it does give insight as to what is important about the Counting of the Omer. The Counting of omers is about the bread that comes from the new grain harvest. It is life to YHVH's people. We know that we are not to live by earthly bread alone, but by the manna of the Words of YHVH. Describe why and how we are to Count the Omer and its significance in regard to cycles in our lives as we live in Messiah and walk in Torah.

What application and fulfillment has Yeshau accomplished for the Counting of the Omer?

7. A new grain offering is required for the fiftieth day, which is Shavuot/weeks and is the last of the spring Feasts. This not only ends the barley harvest, but is the first fruits of the wheat harvest. Shavuot is significant since we know that the Ruach was poured out upon Yeshua's disciples as tongues of fire. It is the spiritual application of Torah made manifest in our lives. This was not new, but a renewal and restoration of the giving of Torah on Mt. Sinai. Explain the significance of Shavuot, along with its two large, leavened loaves of bread that were to be wave offerings. How does this represent a seal upon our lives until Messiah returns for His bride?

What has Yeshua done and doing in our lives today, that fulfills this Feast? What will be done as a continuation of the cycle and celebration of Shavuot?

Midrash Point:

What does the last verse in today's reading, Vayikra 23:22, have to do with the appointed times of YHVH?

Why would YHVH include it in this passage of scripture, considering He already placed in a previous set of instructions, as well?

¹Psalm 22:3

Day 5

PARASHA:
LEV. 23:23-44

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. A whole other set of Feasts, not to be differentiate between types of feasts but a different time of year, are given for observance in today’s reading. We will study these in a similar fashion as we did for Day 4 of this parasha.

The first of the fall feast is to be observed on the first day of the seventh month. It is the Day of Shouting or the Feast of Trumpets. The Hebrew word, *teruah*, is used for the description of this appointed time. It literally means shout of joy, blast and war cry. As this Feast falls on the first day of the seventh month, it is important to note that the sighting of the new moon is required in order to properly observe this feast. Remember, it is when the new moon is sighted that the shofar/trumpet is sounded throughout the year, making Yom Teruah (Day of Shouting) a significant New Moon Day.

With this information, and more from Torah, in mind, give an account as to why the Feast of Shouting/Trumpets or Yom Teruah would be important to us and how we should observe it now and in the future.

How has and how will Yeshua Messiah fulfill Yom Teruah?

2. Correlate the Feast of Trumpets with Brit haDasha passages where we know YHVH is telling us how this feast will be fulfilled.

3. Continuing the fall feasts, the tenth day of the same (seventh) month is the Day of Atonement. It is a Shabbat of complete rest and is perpetual for all generations. We are commanded to humble our souls, from evening to evening. Knowing that we are not sacrificing due to the lack of a Temple and the coming of Messiah as our atonement, what does it mean to humble our souls and how should we observe Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)?

We have just read, in an earlier portion, that two goats were used for the Day of Atonement. One was a scapegoat and was released into the wilderness as atonement was made upon it. The other was the goat that was sacrificed as sin offering. The decision for which goat was which was left up to casting lots. Our Messiah has fulfilled this Feast for us on many levels. Furthermore, we are in process of fulfilling this feast, even now, as we are in the world, but not of it. Explain how Yeshua fulfilled and will continue to fulfill Yom Kippur.

4. How we are an intricate part of that fulfillment perpetuation of the Day of Atonement?

5. The last of the yearly, and fall, Feasts is the Feast of Tabernacles, or Sukkot. It begins on the fifteenth of the seventh month and lasts for seven days. The first day is a Shabbat and the eighth day is, also, a Shabbat. The following questions relate to the observance of Sukkot for YHVH's people then and now.

One the first day, we are to take foliage of form four species of trees: beautiful trees: palm branches, boughs of leafy trees, boughs of willows of the brook. Notice a citron is not mentioned here. Neither does it say to make lulavs (all species of trees wrapped together and ceremonially waved). The description is actually in context with taking the foliage on the first day so that Sukkots (tents or booths) can be made for the seven day feast. How do you see the interpretation of this passage, not looking to traditional Judaism, but from a Torah standpoint, for our application. Why use these four specific species?

The traditional lulav consists of date palm branches, myrtle branches and willow branches, accompanied by an etrog or citron fruit. In verse 40, we are told to use foliage of beautiful trees or goodly trees/fruitful trees. Obviously, in the land of Israel, the goodly/fruitful tree. What elements do you see being used for the four species and for what purpose?

6. All the native-born of Israel are to live in booths for seven days. It is to now that YHVH had the sons of Israel dwell in booths when He brought them out of Egypt. Most of us are not native in the sense of being born in the land. Why should we observe this rite? Moreover, is it really important to observe this Feast for all seven days? Why not just on a weekend, or pitch a tent in the backyard? (Remember, this was a pilgrimage feast!)

How did and will Yeshua fulfill the feast of Sukkot? What role will be play in the future fulfillment of Sukkot?

***Sandals
Worshipping in Truth***

Sukkot is not only a time that we are commanded to rejoice, see verse 40, but a time that we should look to as prophetic for our future. As we practice Sukkot, we learn to live in community with others, outside of our comfort zones. We prepare places for ourselves to dwell for seven plus days just like YHVH will prepare places for us to dwell in the wilderness during the tribulation.¹

We will be brought out from the places of comfort and familiarity of living to a place where YHVH will show His might, while we share the space with the other community members of His body. Sukkot has been given to us as a season to learn how to rejoice when we are not as comfortable as we would like to be. It is a time to practice praise and worship for when times do get tough. It is a time to learn, through experience, how to live as YHVH's called out Bride.

¹Revelation 12:6

Day 6

PARASHA:
LEV. 24:1-23

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. Understanding that the command to keep the lights of the menorah outside the veil is an ongoing, perpetual commandment, we must look at our current circumstances and conclude if we are violating Torah or if this command is, in fact, being fulfilled today. Discuss how Yeshua fulfilled and is fulfilling this command as our High Priest.

Additionally, describe how we, as Messiah's priesthood, are keeping the command to keep the lights with clear oil in our lives today.

Midrash Point:
There was a grand aspect of YHVH's Presence within the Tent of Meeting. Namely, after the seven days that the twelve loaves would have sat upon the Table of Showbread, it was still edible. This is not to say that the bread would normally go rancid by the end of a week, but that YHVH commanded the priesthood to eat this bread. It was not only consecrated, but it would have been an honor to partake of this bread.

Discuss the attributes of eating this bread and the wondrous aspect of the bread being appetizing after sitting in the open for seven days before consuming.

Moreover, what aspect of Messiah can be found within this miracle and commandment to eat the bread?

2. We are exhorted not to forsake the assembling of ourselves.¹ As such, we exhort others (or should) as we gather together in worship. The body of Messiah should meet, not to save the world, but to encourage each other through instruction, praise and worship of YHVH and the lifting up of Messiah. When we meet as priests, we feed each other, not bread of the earth, but bread from YHVH, His Word. Explain how this keeps the commands concerning the twelve loaves and their perpetual placement on the Altar of Showbread.

The account found in Mark 8:19 and John 6:13 both detail how the fragments left over from five loaves of bread filled twelve baskets. This is another fulfillment of Torah by Yeshua. How did this miracle fulfill Torah as a spiritual application of Vayikra 24:9?

3. When the son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name, and cursed, he sinned against YHVH and is eventually put to death by YHVH's decree. This gives rise to what was done wrong. We can, obviously, understand cursing YHVH or taking His Name in vain. But what is it to blaspheme the Name?

¹Hebrews 10:25

4. We have all heard those that will not say YHVH, but HaShem, literally meaning the Name. This passage of Torah gives us insight to where that Name of YHVH derived. How do you understand the use of the name HaShem? It is a proper Name of YHVH or is this passage referring to what and how the man did to deserve death?

5. As a culture of people that takes the name of God in vain on a second by second basis, we are looking at passage of scripture that is very solemn. Verse 16 states, “Moreover, the one who blasphemes the name of the LORD shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly stone him. The alien as well as the native, when he blasphemes the Name, shall be put to death.” This would mean that the aliens around us in our present day culture, when they come upon the land that we occupy as our portion from YHVH, will bear the punishment of their speech if they curse YHVH. What is our mandate in terms of safeguarding the Name of YHVH, or just the Name? What should our response be when those around us, those that are close to us even, misuse or curse YHVH’s name?

6. The last portion of today’s reading is about an eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth type of justice and judgment. There are many who say that this antiquated thinking would leave everyone blind and toothless. We can look at this passage and understand the consequences of our actions taken against someone while enraged or out of compulsion. This would set a enormous precedence about how people respect, even love, their neighbors and how they respect their neighbors property. How do you think that this type of legality would divert injustice today, that is perpetrated against other people? Moreover, how could this be used in terms of internet fraud and identity theft when the perpetrator was caught?

7. As a last question, take a look at the compassion and mercy that Yeshua exhibited while with us, how He ministers and cares for us as our Intercessor and what He commands of us in regard to our fellow man. With this in mind, do you see this aspect of Torah as a must or only a means to disperse the justice up to an utmost limit and not beyond, so that people cannot over punish other people. Argue this point as an aspect of mercy and grace instead of the fullness of punishment that we would have a right to inflict.

Shabbat

□ PARASHA:

LEV. 21:1-24:23

□ RESTORATORY—
MIDRASH

□ PRAYER LEAVES

While we are discussing three signs of the Covenant of YHVH, this does not mean that we are discussing all the signs. Other signs of the Covenant of YHVH include tzit-tzit, fruit of the Ruach Hakodesh and various other signs that magnify YHVH as the Creator of all.

As it goes, we have a friend who calls from time to time. She is mildly interested in aspects of Israel, but not enough to bring her into a Covenant lifestyle. The conversations, in the past, have ranged in various subjects relating to God to Messiah and, even, the feasts. As a matter of fact, several phone conversations have taken place along the lines of feast observance. The friend would call and want to be a part various community functions relating to discussions, but having more to do with socializing. So, when she began asking about the feasts, we were pricked to give bits of Torah Truth concerning the appointed times, as they are revealed in Scripture, relating what we would be doing and when and so on.

Finally, within the context of one of these conversations, our friend began saying that she had been observing all the feasts of YHVH. Now, you must understand that we had been teaching and discussing with her, for many years, what a Torah lifestyle is, how it is a way of life and a way of worship. It was not relegated to one day a week or that Yeshua was not banished to the outer chambers of the Brit Hadashah. Through various times of exasperation over many years and conversations, we tried to exemplify Messiah in our walk to our friend and maintained a relationship, even though we had watched her and her family walk away from the knowledge they knew of Torah and applications for worshipping the Father through Yeshua. Obviously, when she told us that she had been walking out the Feasts and observing them, we had a twinge of excitement in that maybe she was coming back into a proper understanding and relationship.

Well, as it turned out, as the phone conversation continued, we heard what was really taking place in her life. You see, our friend had moved to another town and had a new neighbor, who just happened to be Jewish. Instead of being interested in our walk, or wanted to come back to fellowship and worship with us, she really wanted more information about the Feasts so that she could discuss how she was keeping them to her new Jewish friend.

Now, I have no doubt that the Father is and can, and will use that for the sake of planting seed in the lives of all involved. However, the sad statement is this. When we began to elaborate upon all the appointed times, we made one simple declaration. The first Feast of YHVH is a weekly Feast. A curious silence followed. The question of “What Feast is that?” came next.

“The Feast of Shabbat.” we said. “It is a weekly feast that takes place every seven days. Moreover, it is the sign of the Covenant according to Torah.”¹

Another slightly awkward pause ensued. We had not said this to hurt or to condemn, but to help someone put the Feast dates in proper perspective. Our friend had made inferences that she was walking according to the commands, but in fact, had false understandings and faulty footings and foundations as to what the commands were, little lone what they meant.

This has given us some pause to think ourselves. As we study Torah and are given insight on as to how to walk it out by the Ruach Hakodesh, we begin to see an entire canvas being painted upon. It is a broader picture, if you will, of the cycle of our paths in which we are to walk, yearly. Then, being blessed with the mercy and grace to walk in Covenant, the paths of righteousness and the walking out of salvation, we are able to focus on the details of the journey our Creator has us.

It has been a wonderful experience to breathe deep the freshness and newness of these cycle points, even after years and years of walking them. It is like watching a thoroughbred race horse, but only being able to see the top half of the horse due to a wall that obscures the view of all four, powerful legs carrying the rider and the horse to the finish line.

Let us break this down a little bit and see what the legs look like of our walk in Torah. As a sign between YHVH and the children of Israel, YHVH has placed a few markers. The rainbow, circumcision, and the day of rest: Shabbat. We have no control over the rainbow. It is a matter of physics by our earthly understanding, and a matter of hope and promise by spiritual insights to what YHVH has promised to us. It is a Covenant made with man in order to stay the hand of YHVH from destroying all flesh by way of water. It points to Him, as a bow being pulled back to remind YHVH of us, His children and the enmity in us toward His Righteousness. Moreover, the rainbow reminds YHVH and us that there is a hope, a promise, a deliverer.

The second sign of Covenant that YHVH has established with man is the sign of circumcision. This is all about us in relationship with our Elohim as we are watched by Him in order to view obedience. Obedience is an outward show of belief in what YHVH says and commands. On behalf of Abraham, that belief was reckoned to him as righteousness. Abraham had the tenacity to take YHVH at His Word and the faith that even if dead, Isaac would still be the seed in which salvation would come to the earth. It was that tenacity, that belief that YHVH saw as favorable in Abraham. So much

¹Shemot 31:13

so, that He called it righteousness. Righteous about what? About YHVH and His the Covenant of hope that has already been given to the patriarch. Abraham was faithful to carry out the details of the plan of deliverance so that Yeshua would be magnified. Even though circumcision is about our obedience, it ultimately leads us back to the Father by means of faithfulness, trust, belief and the righteousness that He places within us as His Seed of promise.

This reveals a bit more of the legs of Torah and certainly places us further into the journey then our forefathers were.

The third sign is Shabbat. It was established at Creation and was renewed in deed and word by YHVH at Mt. Sinai with the people He would call Israel. Just like the sign of the rainbow, YHVH observes His oversight in knowing that “it is good.” We have nothing to do with YHVH’s observance of His instituted day of rest. He mandated, He observes it; and we cannot make Him cease nor can we change the rules by which He rests. However, we can be like Him, by obeying His command to keep the Shabbat and to separate it. We can enter into that resting place, and when we do, we find Messiah. One could say that it is a complete picture of walking in Torah, starting with the feet.

If we are to shod our feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace, shouldn’t we find that peace for ourselves prior to walking to someone else and pointing at feet that are working and laboring on the seventh day? Our feet carry us. As a matter of fact, they are no longer our feet, but His feet. When we enter into a relationship with YHVH, especially through Messiah, we enter into the gate of rest, first and foremost. The children of Israel did this as they came out from under bondage and were delivered from slavery and oppression. They had to choose if they would carry oppression with them, but YHVH made a way so that they did not have to and were instructed not to take it. They were journeying to a place prepared for them in the wilderness. Their needs would be met and their lives would be changed, forever.

The first thing that YHVH commands them is about Shabbat when He provides manna for them for the first time in the Wilderness of Sin. Shabbat would forever be a foundation for the people to be built upon. The lifestyle of a Torah keeper is one that recognizes, separates and keeps Shabbat. Not as an obligation, but as a blessing and a reward. It is YHVH’s favor to His children to bless them with a day that they do not labor or toil or stress. His children enter into the shelter from the world

around them and protect themselves, and YHVH, from the advances of the enemy and their own flesh by a righteous action of belief and obedience.

Furthermore, Shabbat is a foundation upon which the Torah comes back to as the feast dates are begun and ended by Shabbat observance. Each cycle of the yearly Feasts begin with Pesach, as evening when Shabbat begins the week of Unleavened Bread. That same week ends with a Shabbat. Another Shabbat and Feast Day takes place on Shavuot, when YHVH sent His Ruach to all flesh, if all flesh would have Him. Then the fall feasts begin with a Shabbat of Blowing Trumpets. It flows into the Highest Shabbat of them all, the Day of Atonement. The cycle ends with grand finale when we are dwell in tents and rejoice, and, have two more Shabbats that begin and end the Feast of Tabernacles.

The moed/appointed times are given to us in order. That order listed in Vayikra 23 and begins with the first feast, the foundational feast of Shabbat. It is our resting place and is where we should look to find our Messiah. In this, we clearly see that Yeshua is the foundation of Torah, as the Feasts have the foundation grounded in the premise of Shabbat, our faith has the foundation of Messiah, that has released us from the labor of the curse of sin and death by being the Seed of Promise. He is our resting place, our Shabbat, where we are able to find solice from the attacks of this world, the adversary, whose head has and will be crushed, and our own flesh, as we die to ourselves to become born into the Life of Messiah. Shabbat is where we find the Ruach of YHVH that hovers over us, saying, “It is good, it is finished, it is good.” When we enter into the Rest of Shabbat, provided and prepared for us in this wilderness of existence, we find joy, peace and freedom. We know that where the Ruach is, there is freedom.² Freedom from the ongoing anxiousness of a dying world and freedom to walk in the Life of Messiah as Covenant members.

The firm foundation of Messiah, that we must be built upon cannot be separated from the firm foundation of Torah that Messiah lived. Moreover, as Messiah, He is the living Word come to us. When we believe and walk in obedience, The Father sees His Word, His Son being mirrored back to Himself. He sees faithfulness and reckons it to us as righteousness. As far as Shabbat goes, it is the beginning of our journey. In the end, it is what we will enter into as a reward for knowing our Messiah and the Rest that He is to our souls. Shabbat is the foundational blocks to walking out Torah as sons of righteousness.

² Corinthians 3:17

