

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS: WEEKLY SCRIPTURE

READING

---Roly Buys---

Parashah Emor “Speak” - Week 31

AN IMITATION FROM THE KING

This week’s portion comes from **Leviticus 21:1-24.23, Ezekiel 44:15-31, and Matthew 5:38-42, Galatians 3:26-29.**



We have a series of passages that will describe four major Feasts or sets of Feasts, which we should endeavor to understand and consider the implementation thereof. The portion is an **open invitation** for Sons and Daughters (including those adopted by virtue of the completed work of Y’shua) of Abraham, to **attend a Feast in the Father’s House**.

The **times are designated**, they are fixed by YHVH. You cannot just change them, as you feel fit. **The place is designated** - the Tabernacle in today’s terms: the Tabernacle is made up of Living Stones.

The order of the proceedings are designated and set out clearly in this portion in very simple steps.

****NUGGET!**** You see, it’s His Feast, at His set time, and at His set place—the Tabernacle (in the physical, this would have been Jerusalem).

Leviticus 23:2 *Tell the people of Isra’el: ‘The designated times of ADONAI which you are to proclaim as holy convocations are My designated times.*

We can take some time to look at **the spiritual meaning** of each Feast, at exactly what we **are expected to do**, and according to which **protocol we should follow** to be invited in, and then to understand where we would be seated at the Festival Table.

But first, we must *understand the criteria* that would qualify us to be allowed in. You see, some churches teach that we are 'covered' by grace, and for this reason there are no norms or standards of behaviour that are required / applicable.

It's strange to hear this kind of teaching... it's so contrary to basic human behaviour and good manners.

Almost everyone who receives any invitation reads the requirements...

- 🕒 **Dress:** *Smart casual, or black tie*
- 🕒 **Time:** *7pm for 7.30pm*
- 🕒 **Place:** *The grandest Hotel in town*



No one would think to arrive in shorts and t-shirt, at 11 pm, on the beach and still expect to find everybody waiting for them...would they? If that is true for the worldly functions—*how much more so should it be for a function arranged by the King of the Universe?*

YOU ARE A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

We have previously seen how the ‘first-born’ of each family would serve in the Tabernacle. Unfortunately, as a result of the episode with the golden calf, this calling was *placed on hold for a while*; it was replaced by the order of Levi, **until a Mediator of a ‘better’/ everlasting Covenant could come—Y’shua, the Messiah.**

It’s important to recognize that the order of Levi was NOT the first to perform priestly functions.

A pre-Aaronic priesthood existed, where individuals took on a priestly function (**Exodus 19:22, 24** - see also the example of Noah/Job who offer sacrifices, and Abraham who builds an ALTAR long before the time of Levi.)

When the order of Levi was instituted it took the following format:

- The high priest – Aaron (**Exodus 31:30**)
- The ministerial priests—his two sons (two were killed, **Exodus 28:21**)
- The Levites—as officers in the temple (**Exodus 19:6**)

I submit that the Order of Melchizedek, under the leadership of Y’shua, **follows precisely the same pattern, after the resurrection of the Messiah and the institution of the Living Stone Tabernacle.**

- The Great High Priest - Y’shua (**Hebrews 3:1**)
- The elders (**Romans 15:16**)
- The Living Stone priests (**1 Peter 2:5/9**)

As further proof of this **common connection, let’s look at the following:**

We see the priests in the Tabernacle **offering incense in golden bowls (Numbers 7:84-86)**. In the Heavenly Tabernacle we find 24 elders **holding golden incense bowls, which contain the prayers of the saints (Revelation 5:8)**.

****NUGGET!**** We have the same structure, we have the same functions—the only difference is that we serve in a perfect Covenant—the Order of Melchizedek.

Why would this new Order be “better”?

Simply said, man always *has the tendency to favour the “old-man”* inclination and does not have *the ability to live in absolute purity...* Man, as priest, tries to the best of his ability.

However, our Messiah can, and does, do more than His best—His service is perfect. And therefore the new Order is perfect.

Hebrews 8:4-6 Now if he were on earth, he wouldn't be a cohen at all, since there already are cohanim offering the gifts required by the Torah. But what they are serving is only a copy and shadow of the heavenly original; for when Moshe was about to erect the Tent, God warned him, **"See to it that you make everything according to the pattern you were shown on the mountain."** But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs, just as the covenant he mediates is better. For this covenant has been given as Torah on the basis of better promises.

Within the boundary of the **Order of Melchizedek**, and while we serve in a Tabernacle of Living Stones, as defined in:

1 Peter 2:5 ...you yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be cohanim set apart for God to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Him through Yeshua the Messiah.

And while Y'shua acts as our Great High Priest in this new order,

Hebrews 7:21 but Yeshua became a cohen by the oath which God swore when He said to Him, **"ADONAI has sworn and will not change His Mind, 'You are a Cohen forever.'"**

AND with the empowering of the Holy Spirit, we can serve the KING and our community with a greater degree of Purity. **You are a priest!!!**

James 1:22-25 Don't deceive yourselves by only hearing what the Word says, but do it! For whoever hears the Word but doesn't do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror, who looks at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. **But if a person looks closely into the perfect Torah, which gives freedom, and continues, becoming not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work it requires, then he will be blessed in what he does.**

THE MENORAH

Nothing reveals man's heart and GOD's purpose more than the image of the Menorah. From the moment that GOD (YHVH) issues the Commandment that man is to bring fresh oil to keep the lamp burning, until the picture of Messiah standing in amongst the seven Menorahs representing the Body.

We see the glow of the light from the lamp ...

Keep in mind; the priest had a purpose.

Hebrews 8:3 For every cohen gadol is appointed to offer both gifts and sacrifices; **so this Cohen Gadol too has to have something He can offer.**

Let us summarize:

A priest must have something to offer and as we read the analysis below you will realize that a life that is sacrificed, will be poured out in deeds/actions /works...

We, as priests, are such a lamp. The menorah has equal number of arms and lamp-cups on each side, **the Menorah is always in balance. We, as priests, are always to be in balance.** Let's look at the two sides of a priest in balance...

(A) WE ARE TO BE FOCUSED IN THE LIVING

What could this mean?

All deeds that do not please GOD (YHVH) are death. All actions that reflect the gifts of the Holy Spirit, or an obedience to GOD (YHVH), or loving my neighbour are LIFE.

Leviticus 21:1 *“Speak to the cohanim, the sons of Aharon; tell them: ‘No cohen is to make himself unclean...”*

1) We wear a head-piece on which is written “Holy unto GOD.”

- We are to search the Scriptures for Truth,
- We are to set beachmarks of righteousness,
- We expand on the majesty of the WORD of GOD (YHVH),
- We are dressed in Holy Garments that are bright and clean.

Leviticus 8:12 *He poured some of the anointing oil on Aharon's head and anointed him, to consecrate him. Moshe brought Aharon's sons, clothed them with tunics, wrapped sashes on them and put headgear on them, as ADONAI had ordered Moshe.*

(B) WE WEAR THE BREASTPLATE, WITH THE STONES OF EACH TRIBE ON OUR CHEST.

We understand that the tribes/Body of Messiah are made up of different groupings of people, who have been empowered/gifted to achieve different goals, all of whom are necessary to enter in the New Jerusalem and make up the Tabernacle of Living Stones. We weep over those who break His Commandments, and we comfort those who are wounded.

We guard GOD's Commandments and Feasts, by studying His WORD and keeping these Feasts as the Holy Spirit leads. We seek purity in prayer and worship.

Ezekiel 44:24 *They are to be judges in controversies, and they are to render decisions in keeping with my rulings. At all my designated festivals they are to keep my laws and regulations, and they are to keep my shabbats holy.*

We guard GOD's WORD by keeping the truth of the WORD visible at all times, by never compromising our lifestyle. We formulate our understanding of GOD's intent for us, based entirely on the Truth of the WORD. We make sure that no concepts are added or deleted from the Bible.

We seek to teach/educate/role model the difference between purity and impurity.

Ezekiel 44:23-24 *“They are to teach My people the difference between holy and common and enable them to distinguish between clean and unclean. They are to be judges in controversies, and they are to render decisions in keeping with My rulings. At all My designated festivals they are to keep My laws and regulations, and they are to keep My shabbats holy.*

We seek to reveal GOD’s Heart to all in need. To reach out with compassion to those who are broken, and who despair. We seek to reveal the full extent of the concept of unconditional love.

Such is the role-model of Y’shua, Whose walk on earth impacts the prostitute, the beggars, the tax-collectors...

We seek to reveal a lifestyle of honesty, integrity, the willingness to pursue justice for all, and the desire to be a peacemaker. For that reason, like the priest of old that stripped bare in front of the people, we are willing to become transparent, where nothing is hidden. We are prepared to sanctify our “ears/hands/and feet” so that we can go where the Holy Spirit leads.

We seek to forgive those who have caused us hardship. We harbour no grudges, and we seek to see the good in all people.

Please take note of the two sides of the Menorah. We do not represent the Glory of GOD (YHVH) unless our lives and ministry are in balance.

Priesthood in the Physical	Priesthood in the Spiritual
Bring sacrifice in the outer court	Offer out bodies as living sacrifices
Bring oil for the lamp in the Holy Place	Renew our minds
Serve God once a year	Release light and life Through the Holy Spirit daily

You can see **that it’s easy to be one or the other... but GOD (YHVH) wants us to pursue justice AND mercy.** Somehow our efforts at priesthood are only acceptable to GOD (YHVH) when we can **present both sides of the Menorah.** If I only have the gifts for one side of the Menorah, then my life partner must have the other side/gifts in order for our worship to be a reflection of “in His Image”.

The Levitical order came through a family lineage. By the act of putting on the priestly robe, they **became the office** of the priesthood. Their actions, unfortunately, that were role-modelled for us in so many cases, often did not match GOD’s benchmark/plan. For example, there were times that they took the ARK to war, without consulting with GOD (YHVH).

Earthly man, in his own strength, will often allow his ego/old man to control.

Such is the example of king Hezekiah. He realises that the people have fallen into sin. He sets about cleaning out the land, destroying all of the pagan altars, defining a new regime where GOD (YHVH) **alone** would be worshipped.

However, this lifestyle of **Godly king and priest**, does not last long. Very soon he allows his “riches” to *make him a proud man*. And equally soon afterwards he no longer spoke of the miracle which GOD (YHVH) did for him. Suddenly, it’s ALL, AND ONLY about me!!!!

We too, become unholy/common. Just in case we do not believe this particular Bible story, we read that a seal of this king has just recently been found in Jerusalem.

Makes you think...



2 Chronicles 32:25-29 *However, Hizkiyahu did not respond commensurately with the benefit done for him, because he had grown proud; thus he brought anger on himself and on Y'udah and Yerushalayim as well. But Hizkiyahu then humbled himself for his pride, both he and the people living in Yerushalayim, so that ADONAI's anger did not strike them during Hizkiyahu's lifetime. Hizkiyahu had vast riches and great honor. He provided himself with storage places for silver, gold, precious stones, spices, shields and all kinds of valuable articles; also storehouses for the harvest of grain, wine and olive oil; and stalls for all kinds of livestock and pens for the flocks. He provided cities for himself and purchased flocks and herds in abundance, for God had made him extremely wealthy.*

WE HAVE A DESIGNATED PLACE

We are called to celebrate these Feasts at the place where the Tabernacle resides. At the very beginning, the Tabernacle was made up of all of the children of Israel that kept the Passover meal in their homes.

After the order of Levi was instituted, the designated place became the Tabernacle at each of the sites where they stopped over in the wilderness. At some point in time, **the Tabernacle reached Jerusalem, and this became the permanent residence**, and therefore the place to keep the Feasts.



Peter tells us that we, the sons/daughters of Abraham, together, make up a new Tabernacle. In addition, we are restored as priests and must function as such in this Tabernacle - a community of **believers made up of Living Stones**, with Messiah as the Corner Stone. **It's wherever a group of Commandment-keeping believers gathers.**

1 Peter 2: 5-6 You yourselves, as living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be cohanim set apart for God to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Him through Yeshua the Messiah. This is why the Tanakh says, ***“Look! I am laying in Tziyon a stone, a Chosen and Precious Cornerstone; and whoever rests his trust on it will certainly not be humiliated.”***

WE HAVE A TABERNACLE

In an earlier portion we studied how the wilderness Tabernacle was prepared, sanctified, and anointed for its purpose. This Tabernacle would move wherever the cloud/fire would indicate. And the tribes would live in a defined order all around the Tabernacle. GOD (YHVH) became the center of their existence (**Leviticus 8:10, 35-36**).

Leviticus 9:22-24 Aharon raised his hands toward the people, blessed them and came down from offering the sin offering, the burnt offering and the peace offerings. Moshe and Aharon entered the tent of meeting, came out and blessed the people. Then the glory of ADONAI appeared to all the people! Fire came forth from the presence of ADONAI, consuming the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When all the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces.

Y'shua came to restore all things back to the original plan. We know that the physical Tabernacle is an image of the real one. Y'shua will live, die and be resurrected, so that He can enter the New Priesthood as the perfect sacrifice, and advocate for mankind.

We see that He serves as the Great High Priest, **in the Heavenly Tabernacle.**

Hebrews 8:5-6 But what they are serving is only a copy and shadow of the Heavenly original; for when Moshe was about to erect the Tent, God warned him, ***“See to it that you make everything according to the pattern you were shown on the mountain.”*** But now the work Yeshua has been given to do is far superior to theirs, just as the Covenant He mediates is better. For this Covenant has been given as Torah on the basis of better promises.

Hebrews 9:11-14 *But when the Messiah appeared as Cohen Gadol of the good things that are happening already, then, through the greater and more perfect Tent which is not man-made (that is, it is not of this created world), He entered the Holiest Place once and for all. And He entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of His own Blood, thus setting people free forever. For if sprinkling ceremonially unclean persons with the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer restores their outward purity; then how much more the Blood of the Messiah, who, through the Eternal Spirit, offered Himself to God as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living God!*

The Holy Spirit comes to live with us, within the confines of the Tabernacle made of Living Stones. So we literally have GOD (YHVH) as High Priest and GOD (YHVH) as Holy Spirit, coupling us to the Father in Heaven.

SO IF WE ARE PRIESTS, IN A LIVING STONE TABERNACLE, CONNECTED TO THE GREAT HIGH PRIEST, SHOULD WE NOT CELEBRATE GOD'S FEASTS?

The Feasts are worth a separate study on their own, and should not be crammed into a short Torah portion (**Leviticus 23:1-44**)

All I want to do is highlight some spiritual principles. So how would an adopted son/daughter of Abraham act?

ON SHABBAT

- **Celebrate a day of rest**
- Spend time with the family
- Spend time in God's creation to appreciate how good GOD (YHVH) is
- **Bless the family in WORDS and Deeds**
- Do good deeds to those in need

ON PASSOVER

- Celebrate seven days of rest
- Hold a family meal and share about the miracle of redemption
- Eat the "unleavened" bread, and consider where you have allowed malice and wickedness to come into your life
- Repent, bring restitution, and **reconnect with the values of sincerity and truth**

ON SHAVUOT/PENTECOST

- Celebrate a *1 day* feast
- **Study the beauty of marriage**—review all that God intended that marriage should be
- Evaluate your marriage against this benchmark, restore the broken fences, renew your vows to one another, and then, invite God to once again become the Senior Partner in this covenant

- Restore the marriage robe¹—remove the “spots and wrinkles”

ON SUKKOT / TABERNACLES

- Celebrate **eight days** of this Feast
- We must build a booth—reflecting our understanding that GOD’s Covenant of protection and provision will remain in place thorough all of the years.
- Consider the **depth and the beauty of intimacy**, and of the unity of man and wife.
- Celebrate with great JOY...

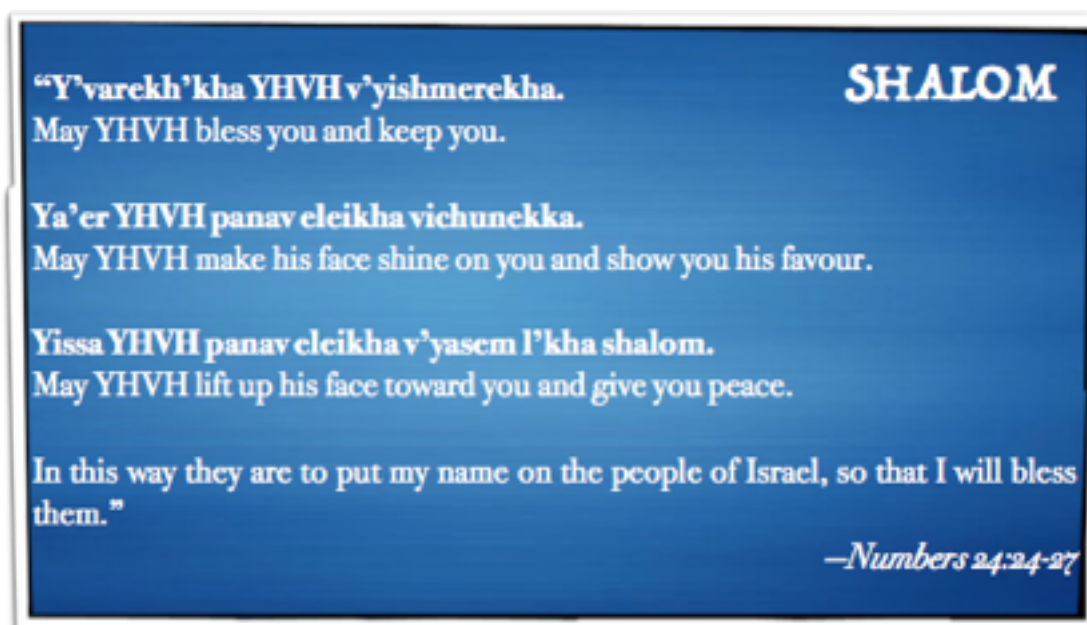
A FINAL THOUGHT

In the **middle of these Feasts**, with all of the food, music and dancing—the celebrating—AND the intimacy with GOD (YHVH) in our Tabernacle of Living Stones, **we are challenged!!!**

Have you created an opportunity for the poor? Have you left something for them to harvest so that they also can bring a wave offering of thanksgiving?

Leviticus 23:22 ‘When you harvest the ripe crops produced in your land, **don’t harvest all the way to the corners of your field, and don’t gather the ears of grain left by the harvesters; leave them for the poor and the foreigner; I am ADONAI your God.’**

We should live as a community, think like a community, and in it all, reflect the glory of GOD (YHVH).



¹ See more detailed teaching on the Marriage Robe <http://www.kanaanministries.org/downloads/?did=374>