
WEEK 31 SCRIPTURE READING

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Parashah Emor | “Say” | אמר

Week 31

IS THE OIL OF YOUR TESTIMONY BURNING?

The verse that stands out for me this week is:

Leviticus 24:1-4 “ADONAI said to Moshe, “**Order the people of Isra’el to bring you pure oil from crushed olives for the light**, to keep lamps burning always. Outside the curtain of the testimony in the tent of meeting, Aharon is to **arrange** for the light to be kept burning always from evening until morning before ADONAI; **this is to be a permanent regulation through all your generations**. He is always to keep in order the lamps on the pure Menorah before ADONAI.

Consider This ...

- ◆ What is the Menorah?
 - ◆ What would it’s spiritual meaning be?
 - ◆ The Menorah is mentioned quite a few times throughout the Bible.
 - ◆ It’s probably a good idea to review most of those Menorah events to see if there is a common thought, or pattern.
- (1) The **first Menorah** that we see, although it is not called that, is in the story of Moses and the burning bush. We see an object (tree) that makes up the lamp, a **fuel that never seems to burn up**, and the declaration that this is Holy ground.
 - (2) The **second Menorah** description that we find is in Exodus ... where the artefacts of the Tabernacle are described. In this portion Moses gives us a clear description of exactly what the Menorah will look like. We soon understand that its role and purpose is quite unique.

Exodus 25:31-36 “You are to make a Menorah of pure gold. It is to be made of hammered work; its base, shaft, cups, ring of outer leaves and petals are to be of one piece with it. It is to have six branches extending from its sides, three branches of the Menorah on one side of it and three on the other. On one branch are to be three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a ring of outer leaves and petals; likewise on the opposite branch three cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with a ring of outer leaves and petals; and similarly for all six branches extending from the Menorah. On the central shaft of the Menorah are to be four cups shaped like almond blossoms, each with its ring of outer leaves and petals. Where each pair of branches joins the central shaft is to be a ring of outer leaves of one piece with the pair of branches — thus for all six branches. The rings of outer leaves and their branches are to be of one piece with the shaft. Thus the whole Menorah is to be a single piece of hammered work made of pure gold. “

Exodus 25:38-40 *“Its tongs and trays are to be of pure gold. The Menorah and its utensils are to be made of sixty-six pounds of pure gold. See that you make them according to the design being shown you on the mountain.”*

There is something quite important that is said here.

The lamps give their **light towards the front**. Normally a candle placed in a room will **cause the darkness to be dispelled from all sides ...light drives the darkness back on all fronts**.

Exodus 25:37 *“Make seven lamps for the Menorah, and mount them so as to **give light to the space in front of it**.”*

- ◆ One gets the idea that this is not an ordinary candle that throws its light in every direction, pushing away at the darkness.
- ◆ Instead we get the idea that the light from all of the candles / bowls is focused towards one central point.
- ◆ Since we know that the Tabernacle is Holy ground, we can then conclude that this ONE LIGHT points to the Messiah and the Covenant.

(3) The **third Menorah** description that we find is in the words of the prophet Zechariah.

Zechariah 4:1-6 *“Then the angel that had been speaking with me returned and roused me, as if he were waking someone up from being asleep, and asked me, “What do you see?” I answered, “I’ve been looking at a Menorah; it’s all of gold, with a bowl at its top, seven lamps on it, and seven tubes leading to the lamps at its top. Next to it is **two olive trees**, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left.” I then asked the angel speaking with me, “What are these, my Lord?” The angel speaking with me said, “Don’t you know what these are?” I said, “No, my Lord.” Then he answered me, “This is the Word of ADONAI to Z’rubavel: **‘Not by force, and not by power, but by my Spirit,’** says ADONAI-Tzva’ot.”*

Once again something quite important is highlighted here.

- i) First of all, there is a bowl on top of the Menorah that creates a reservoir or a fountain of oil ... an endless supply as it were directly from the two olive trees.
- ii) Secondly, there are SEVEN pipes that lead to each bowl or lamp. Since there are SEVEN lamps, this means that there are 49 pipes.

Does this not point us in the direction of an understanding that we should be counting the SEVEN “shmittahs¹” periods so that we can be ready to enter into the year of Jubilee at the correct time?

We cannot accurately determine the first Jubilee year date. Many people are trying to indicate their understanding of this time line.

That’s all physical ...

We live as Living Stones in a Spiritual Tabernacle.

We need to:

- ◆ Work from our first fully functional Passover (where we clearly understood the Feast), and start counting until we reach our own Jubilee.
- ◆ Then we rise up and stand on the prophetic promises that this time holds for our family and claim back the “lost” land.

It seems to suggest that there is a perfect supply of oil. Which in turn leads us to think about the Holy Spirit ... the perfect supply of all of our needs here on earth.

If you are not counting the years after your first Passover as a TRUE son / daughter of the Covenant - then, notwithstanding that the supply of oil is continuous and full - it means you will be missing out on the principles and benefits of the Jubilee year.

(4) The **fourth Menorah** description that we find is that in the **Book of Revelation**.

Revelation 11.4 “These are the **two olive trees** and the **two Menorahs** standing before the LORD of the earth.”

Once again we find the idea of a **continuous supply of oil** ... the lamps are connected to two olive trees, who are the two final end time prophets ... but we understand that they are mandated directly by YHVH and operate exactly as He requires.

¹ During *shmita*, the land is left to lie fallow and all agricultural activity, including plowing, planting, pruning and harvesting, is forbidden by *halakha* (Jewish law). Other cultivation techniques (such as watering, fertilizing, weeding, spraying, trimming and mowing) may be performed as a preventive measure only, not to improve the growth of trees or other plants. Additionally, any fruits or herbs which grow of their own accord and where no watch is kept over them are deemed *hefker* (ownerless) and may be picked by anyone. A variety of laws also apply to the sale, consumption and disposal of *shmita* produce. All debts, except those of foreigners, were to be remitted.



SUMMARY

We have seen a number of descriptions of the physical Menorah.

What are the common elements in each story that come up time and again?

- i) Continuously **supply** of oil ... provided by YHVH
- ii) Light which is **focused**, burning continuously
- iii) Holy ground

NOW HUMANS GET INVOLVED

In the passage in our portion we read the following ...

That it's the humans (each and every believer) who must bring the fresh oil.

Questions?

Now that humans are involved, with their ego and their pride, we need to consider exactly what the possible consequences could be.

How can this be?

- a) Will the oil be pure?
- b) Will we always produce it on time?
- c) Will we focus the light towards one central point?
- d) Will we keep the ground Holy?

YET THIS SEEMS TO BE YHVH's PLAN

In the **Book of Revelation**, John describes the returning of the MESSIAH as the Conquering King.

- ◆ And immediately we are drawn to the concept of the SEVEN Menorahs.
- ◆ But it is the words that follow which should focus our attention.
- ◆ The **seven Menorahs** are connected to **seven churches**.

Revelation 1:9-11 “ I, John, your brother and partner in the tribulation and the kingdom and the patient endurance that are in JESUS, was on the island called Patmos on account of the Word of GOD and the Testimony of JESUS. I was in the Spirit on the LORD's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet saying, **“Write what you see in a Book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus and to Smyrna and to Pergamum and to Thyatira and to Sardis and to Philadelphia and to Laodicea.”**

Revelation 1:12-16 “Then I turned to see the Voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a Son of Man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. The hairs of His Head were white, like white wool, like snow. His Eyes were like a flame of fire, His Feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His Voice was like the roar of many waters. In His Right Hand He held seven stars, from His Mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and His Face was like the sun shining in full strength.”

Revelation 1:17-20 “When I saw Him, I fell at His Feet as though dead. But He laid His Right Hand on me, saying, **“Fear not, I AM the first and the last, and the Living One. I died, and behold I AM alive forevermore, and I have the Keys of Death and Hades. Write therefore the things that you have seen, those that are and those that are to take place after this. As for the mystery of the seven stars that you saw in My Right Hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.”**

Clearly mankind is expected to produce fresh oil ... not so much for the ceremonial lighting of the physical Menorah, but more importantly for lighting the Spiritual Light of YHVH's Glory in the Body of MESSIAH.

The Tabernacle light (although from the oil of olives) had supernatural attributes.

One can sense that this oil / light was a mirror reflection of the Holy Spirit.

In the **Book of Isaiah**, we find the following description of the attributes of this continuous Fire.

Isaiah 11:2 “The Spirit of ADONAI will rest on Him, the **Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Counsel and Power, the Spirit of Knowledge and Fearing ADONAI.**”

Let us list these in more detail ... and then I will add the seven churches in the exact order that they appear.

(a) The Spirit of Adona (Yehovah)

Speaks of:

- The Holy Spirit
- The Authority / Power of YHVH

Church of Ephesus: You have lost your first love

Revelation 2:4 “But I have this against you, that you have **abandoned the love you had at first.**”

(b) The Spirit of Wisdom (chokmah)

Speaks of:

- Ethics and Godly values
- Pragmatic implementation of Biblical principles in everyday circumstances
- GODLY plans to negate the works of the enemy

Church of Smyrna: You must not fear the suffering that will come

Revelation 2:10 “Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation.”

(c) The Spirit of Understanding (bignah)

Speaks of:

- Justice and fair judgements
- Discernment in widely differing opinions

Church of Pergamum: You must deal with mixed seed / false teaching

Revelation 2:14-15 “But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, so that they might **eat food sacrificed to idols and practice sexual immorality.** So also you have some who **hold the teaching of the Nicolaitans.**”

(d) The Spirit of Counsel (etsah)

Speaks of:

- Godly advice in matters of life—family, marriage, business, careers
- Practical planning that makes full use of the talents that God has given us

Church of Thyatira: You must deal with idolatry

Revelation 2:20 “But I have this against you, that you tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess and is teaching and seducing My servants to practice sexual immorality and to eat food sacrificed to idols.”

(e) The Spirit of Strength / Power (gebuwrah)

Speaks of:

- Courage to face uncertain circumstances
- Effective leadership to deal with the problem faced now

Church of Sardis: You need to be born again ... to become a renewed man

Revelation 3:1 “You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead.”



(f) The Spirit of Knowledge (*da-ath*)

Speaks of:

- We have all been given a measure of common sense / and intelligence ... to reason and to perceive whether we are on the correct path

Church of Philadelphia: You must endure ... hold fast

Revelation 3:10-11 "Because you have kept My Word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth. I AM coming soon. **Hold fast what you have**, so that no one may seize your crown."

(g) The Spirit of the Fear of Adonai (*yirah*)

Speaks of:

- The awe that we should reveal
- The respect that we should show for God's creation and our fellow man

Church of Laodicea

Revelation 3:15-16 "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot! So, **because you are lukewarm**, and neither hot nor cold, **I will spit you out of My Mouth.**"

I am sure that you have noticed the **correlation** between the Spiritual Fire of the Holy Spirit and the status of man.

If we are bringing fresh oil then we would not have this indictment against us - but since we have allowed false teachings / strange doctrines / other gods to be introduced mainly due our compromises, we cannot expect the "purity" of the Holy Spirit to be revealed.

Equally interesting is the Hebrew word for "**arrange**" is Strong's **6186 "a-rah"** and carries the following meaning:

- To order
- To array
- To esteem / to value
- To be comparable

It seems that there is an attribute of our character that is being tested here ...

- ◆ Do we value / esteem the Holy Spirit?
- ◆ Do we allow Him to intervene in the daily life decisions / actions that could bruise and crush us to see if there is extra virgin oil?
- ◆ Do we have regular Godly actions that have the ability to produce fresh oil daily?

It's not a once a season matter ... it is **fresh oil daily that will count** to produce continuous bright Light.

What have we learned?

The character traits that have been **developed on the inside of your soul** ... those values that form your very foundation are the **things that will shine on the outside** to the broader community.

- ◆ How often do we see the picture of a son / daughter walking with a father and imitating every action that they make.
- ◆ We may create an image that we think of ourselves, but the truth of the matter is, that our real character traits will be revealed in our daily walk on this earth.
- ◆ Everybody will, sooner or later, know whether you have a supply of fresh virgin oil in your life.

Ephesians 4:1-6 *“Therefore I, the prisoner united with the LORD, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called. Always be humble, gentle and patient, bearing with one another in love, and making every effort to preserve the unity the Spirit gives through the binding power of shalom. There is **One Body and One Spirit**, just as when you were called you were called to **one Hope**. And there is **One LORD, One Trust, One Immersion**, and **One GOD, the FATHER of all**, who rules over all, works through all and is in all.”*

There's a bunny trail ...

- ◆ The rabbis argue about the shape of the Menorah.
- ◆ Some say the arms must be in a straight line pointing up
- ◆ Some say the arms are in a curved shape that we see often in the images

Why get into this debate?

If we understand the Menorah, as a SPIRITUAL LIGHT, then the image that we must get to is a RENEWED MAN standing with his arms raised towards YHVH giving Him all of the glory ... for the great things He has done for us.

Psalms 119:105-106 *“Your **Word is a lamp for my foot and light on my path**. I have sworn an oath and confirmed it, that I will observe Your righteous rulings.”*

WHAT WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT THIS WEEK?

1. **What Fruit have you harvested this week ... is all of it good / wholesome fruit that will produce the best oil?**
2. **What Fruit have we produced that causes division / distrust / harm to the community? Please make restitution.**
3. **Is your entire family in unity this Shabbat? Without unity, our individual lights will be pointing in all directions. Can you say the same for the broader community that you live in?**



A FINAL THOUGHT

- ❖ We have been given different gifts.
- ❖ Each gift will contribute to the “vintage” of the oil.

Have you used your gift lately?

If not, then you have no fresh oil to give - which places you somewhere in one of the seven churches.

1 Corinthians 12:4-10 *“Now there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit gives them. Also there are different ways of serving, but it is the same LORD being served. And there are different modes of working, but it is the same GOD working them all in everyone. Moreover, to each person is given the particular manifestation of the Spirit that will be for the common good. To one, through the Spirit, is given a **word of wisdom**; to another, a **word of knowledge**, in accordance with the same Spirit; to another, **faith**, by the same Spirit; and to another, **gifts of healing**, by the one Spirit; to another, the **working of miracles**; to another, **prophecy**; to another, the **ability to judge between spirits**; to another, the **ability to speak in different kinds of tongues**; and to yet another, the ability to **interpret tongues**.”*

1 Corinthians 12:11-14 *“One and the same Spirit is at work in all these things, distributing to each person as He chooses. For just as the body is one but has many parts; and all the parts of the body, though many, constitute one body; so it is with the Messiah. For it was by one Spirit that we were all immersed into one Body, whether Jews or Gentiles, slaves or free; and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. For indeed the body is not one part but many.”*

We have a calling ... spoken by Y’shua Himself. Now all we have to do is ... **just do it!**

Luke 12:35-36 *“Stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning, and be like men who are waiting for their Master to come home from the wedding feast, so that they may open the door to Him at once when He comes and knocks.”*

Our character is revealed in something called “spiritual maturity”.

It’s a fact that we all begin our walk as believers as “babies” ... in other words at a high level of immaturity. (**1 Corinthians 3.1-3 and Hebrew 5 12-14**)

But, we are expected to grow up.

Many people in the physical domain will transform from child, to teenager, to young adult, to older person, over time.

Sadly, many older people allow their hurts / pride and ego to keep them in bondage at the equivalent of the age of a child. This means that we can find a grey haired man / woman, who, because of their failure to deal with life issues, still acting like a child.

Maturity means:

- ◆ That I can be vulnerable with others.
- ◆ That I can be teachable about new or different ideas.
- ◆ That I can forgive without setting conditions.
- ◆ That I can see / treat everyone (even those who believe differently to that which I believe) as EQUALS at all times.

Allow the oil of the Holy Spirit to be poured over you again ... another time.



BLESSING

Numbers 6:24-27

“Y’varekh’kha YHVH v’yishmerekha.
May YHVH bless you and keep you.

Ya’er YHVH panav eleikha vichunekka.
May YHVH make His Face shine on you and show you His favour.

Yissa YHVH panav eleikha v’yasem l’kha shalom.
May YHVH lift up His Face toward you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:27 *“In this way they are to put My Name on the people of Isra’el, so that I will Bless them.”*

