

PARASHAT EMOR

(SPEAK)

LEVITICUS 21:1-24:23

ETZ CHAYEEM HOO (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-Apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading

Ezekiel 44:15-31

Testimony of Yeshua

On becoming a living sacrifice and set-apart priesthood: **Romans 12:1-2; 1 Peter 2:9; Heb 12:14; 1 Peter 1:13-17**

On Yeshua our set-apart and perfect High Priest: **Hebrews 7:26**

On YHVH's feasts being prophetic foreshadows: **Colossians 2:16-17**

On the saints being living menorahs for YHVH: **Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 5:8**

Yeshua is the Light of the world: **John 1:4, 9; 8:12; 2 Corinthians 4:6**

Yeshua teaches on "an eye for an eye": **Matthew 5:38-42**

Do not be a respecter of persons — one standard for all: **James 2:1-9; 1 Peter 1:17**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

- 21:1 Laws of the Priests Concerning Dead Bodies, Beards, Marriage
- 21:10 Laws Concerning the High Priest (*Kohen haGadol*)
- 21:16 Disqualifying Blemishes (Pertaining to Priestly Service)
- 22:1 Safeguarding the Sanctity of Offerings and Contamination
- 22:10 Contaminations of Offerings/Contributions (*Terumah*)
- 22:17 Do Not Offer Blemished Animals to YHVH
- 22:32 Desecration and Sanctification of Elohim's Name
- 23:1 Sacred Festivals/Set-Apart Times
- 23:3 *Shabbat* (Sabbath)
- 23:4 *Pesach* (Passover)
- 23:9 The *Omer* ([Barley] Sheaf)
- 23:15 The *Omer* Count and *Shavuot* (Feast of Weeks or Pentecost)
- 23:23 *Yom Teruah* (Day of Trumpets)
- 23:26 *Yom Kippur* (Day of Atonement)

- 23:33 *Sukkot* and *Shemini Atzeret* (Feast of Tabernacles and the Eighth Day)
- 24:1 The Menorah: To Be Kept Burning With Pure, Pressed, Clear Olive Oil Perpetually
- 24:5 The Showbread: Two Stacks of Six Loaves Replaced Each Shabbat Perpetually
- 24:10 The Blasphemer: A Rebellious Son Blasphemes the Name of YHVH and Is Stoned
- 24:17 The Penalty for Hurting Someone Else: An Eye For an Eye, Tooth for Tooth, etc.

Study Questions for This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion)

1 In Chapter 21, This chapter contains the regulations for the conduct of priests. YHVH's standards were high, and a priest could easily be disqualified from service for failing to measure up. YHVH demands higher standards of righteousness, obedience and holiness for those in leadership over his people. The higher up in leadership one desires to go, the more one's walk must characterize service, self-deprecation and holiness. (See 1 Tim 3:1–13; Tit 1:5–9.) Standards of holiness rise as one attains a deeper and more intimate relationship with YHVH. Yeshua condemned the religious leaders of his day for not practicing what they preached (i.e., hypocrisy), for living lives of pretense and show (he called such ones “whited sepulchers full of dead man's bones”), and for greediness and pride. Check your walk in these areas. Do you want to “go places” with YHVH in service to him and his people? Are you willing to pay the price? The sacrifices necessary to be Yeshua's bondservant comes at a high price (especially for the flesh), but the spiritual rewards are priceless!

2 **22:1–31**, In this section of the Torah, YHVH makes some strong delineations between that which is profane, polluted or contaminated and that which is *kadosh* or set-apart in service to YHVH. To come into his Presence demands that men follow high and exacting standards. Why? It is to teach sinful man that although YHVH is high and lifted up above the mortal and mundane plane in his set-apartness and righteousness, he is not unapproachable by men if they will prepare themselves properly to come into his Presence. (Read Eccl 5:1–2.) He wanted to impress this upon the Israelites as they began the service of the tabernacle.

Therefore, YHVH specifies that certain offerings brought to his altar that are contaminated will be rejected if (a) the offerer is in a state of physical contamination, (b) he is contaminated through improper marriage, or (c) he is offering a blemished animal. What can we learn from this? What offerings do we bring to YHVH's altar now? Our time, our money, our energy, our talents and spiritual gifts, our devotion? Do we give him the best? Do you pray to him and study his Word in the morning when you are the freshest, or do you give him the crumbs of your day after a hard day's work just before bed when you offer up “sleepy time” prayers and read the Scriptures as you're drifting off to sleep? Are your tithes the crumbs and leftovers after all the bills are paid, the government has taken out its portion and your play money has been set aside?

If you are a young person, are you serving YHVH while you have the health and vigor of youthfulness, or are you planning on playing now and serving YHVH *after* you have sated the lusts of the flesh? (Read Eccl 11:9–10; 12:1–14 and Matt 6:24.) Examine your life. Are you giving YHVH the best in all areas? If not, repent and change your priorities. Then see what happens in your spiritual walk and relationship with him!

3 **22:2 and 32**, *Profane not my set-apart/kodesh name*. Chapter 22 opens and closes with YHVH commanding his people to not desecrate his *kodesh* name, but to sanctify or to keep it set-apart. In Hebrew thought, a name is not only what we verbally call a person, but it is also a reflection of one's character and identity. Why does YHVH stress the importance of revering and sanctifying his name? How does having a proper understanding of his name help humans to not offer profane, polluted or contaminated offerings to YHVH? In Exodus 20, we find the Ten Commandments. The Jews teach that the first word or command is *not* “You shall have no other gods before me ...” but rather “I am YHVH your Elohim ...” Why is knowing his identity and his name so vital to a righteous walk? Do you use his name carelessly or utter it with great fear and reverence?

- 4** **23:2**, *Set-apart convocations*. The Torah declares times (*Shabbat* and the annual festivals), persons (priests and Levites), objects (e.g., articles in the tabernacle) as *kadosh* or set apart. In the Torah, and in traditional Judaism, times are designated as set-apart (Lev 23:2) through ritual, prayer or declaration. Humans are declared *kodesh* or set apart for service through initiation involving anointing with oil, immersion in water, and the imposition or laying on of hands. In our modern church culture of extreme informality, casualness and personal independence, the kind of formalities that Torah contains when it comes to recognizing set-apart people, times and places can seem foreign, awkward and unnecessary. What are your thoughts on this? Do you make place in your religious expression for rituals that highlight holiness issues? Such is very much a part of the Hebrew roots of the Christian faith, and originates from the Creator himself!
- 5** **23:3**, *The seventh day is the Sabbath*. Notice that the weekly Shabbat heads the list of *kodesh*, set apart, appointed times and is called a set-apart “convocation” (Heb. *miqra*, Strong’s H4744) or “assembly, calling together, convocation.” Obviously, YHVH takes the weekly, seventh-day Sabbath very seriously. How seriously do you take it? Intimacy with YHVH demands personal holiness in heart, mind and action (walking it out). Holiness demands recognizing YHVH’s set-apart times. This is an aspect of YHVH’s spiritual economy and protocols whether we like it or not. We can play by his rules and as a result be blessed, or we can play by our own rules and suffer the consequences. (For a complete study of the Sabbath, see my teaching on the subject available at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/shbt.pdf>.)
- 6** **23:1–36**, How many annual festivals are there? What is the spiritual significance about the number seven?
- 7** For how long are the annual festivals to be kept? (Read Lev 23:14, 21, 31.)
- 8** Are the annual festivals arranged in chronological order as to one’s spiritual walk and development? Do they contain the plan of salvation or the steps man must go through to be reconciled to his Creator? How are those steps outlined in each of YHVH’s seven annual feasts? (For more information on these feasts and how they relate to YHVH’s seven-step plan of salvation, see my teaching on the subject at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/feasts.pdf>.)
- 9** **23:2, 4, 37, 44**, *Feasts of YHVH*. Does this chapter refer to the annual festivals as “the Jewish feasts” or as “the feasts of YHVH?” Why do you think that those who teach and believe that these days are “done away with” refer to them as the “Jewish holidays” as if they originated from men? What is the difference in the subtle connotation between the phrases “YHVH’s feasts” and “Jewish holidays”? Are those who view YHVH’s feasts as being *only* “Jewish feasts” less likely to celebrate them?
- 10** The weekly, seventh-day Sabbath and the seven annual sabbaths (or feasts) dominate YHVH’s biblical calendar. The Israelites planned their lives around these events. This is YHVH’s economy and biblical lifestyle. Do you plan your work, vacation, and lifestyle routines around these *mo’edim* (divine appointments)? If so, this shows that you have your priorities rightly aligned before YHVH. He calls his people to make a difference between that which is *kodesh* (or set apart) and that which is profane (or secular; see Ezek 22:26; 44:23), and observing these times helps us to do that. Through it all, our walk of intimacy with our Heavenly Father will grow and so will our level of spiritual understanding of his Word.
- 11** **24:1–4**. *Care of the Menorah*. The menorah was a very special piece of furniture in the Tabernacle of Moses. It was made of pure gold and was the only source of light in the tabernacle’s sanctuary. It had seven branches that were spiritually symbolic of Yeshua and his elect. Even the flames are spiritual metaphors for the fruits and gifts of the Set-Apart Spirit. The choice of olive oil as the fuel to light the menorah, and the means by which olive oil is prepared is all symbolic of the spiritual walk of the redeemed believer. As is evident from this passage, not only was the oil to be pure, but Aaron the high priest was to care for the menorah continually, and to keep it burning perpetually. This is symbolic of the care that the saints must take to insure that the lamp of their spiritual life burns brightly for YHVH. In Yeshua’s Parable of the Ten Virgins, the condition of the virgins’ lamps figured prominently in determining whether they would be allowed into the marriage feast or not (review Matt 25:1–13). What were Yeshua’s final

instructions to his disciples at the end of this parable, and how does this relate to the continual care that the high priest had to give to the menorah to make sure that it stayed burning? (Read Matt 25:13.)

Furthermore, to what does Yeshua liken the saints of the seven assemblies in Revelation 2 and 3? (See Rev 2:1.) What warning does Yeshua give to the congregation in Ephesus? (Read Rev 2:5.) Why did he issue this warning? What sin had they committed? (See verse 4.) To what is he referring here? How can we be certain that we don't fall under the same condemnation? It all goes back to each of us diligently caring for his spiritual menorah!

(For more details on the menorah, see my teaching on the Tabernacle of Moses at <http://www.hoshana-rabbah.org/pdfs/tabernacle.pdf>. See also my teaching on how the pure olive oil was prepared and how this pictures the redeemed believer's life available at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/oliveoil.pdf>.)

- 12** **24:8, *Every Sabbath.*** The priests placed 12 fresh loaves of bread on the table of presence each Sabbath. The priests then were allowed to feast on the week-old bread that had been removed. There are several lessons to be learned from this. These 12 loaves represented what? When each week were they to appear before YHVH freshly baked and anointed with frankincense? The Sabbath is a divine appointment (Lev 23:2–3) of which all of YHVH's people are commanded not to miss. The priests were also allowed to eat of the bread. What does this teach us about the support of the ministry by those who benefit from it? (See 1 Tim 5:17; Phil 4:14–17; 1 Cor 9:14–17; Gal 6:6.)
- 13** **24:10, *Son of an Israelite woman...an Egyptian.*** This passage clearly illustrates the dangers of believers marrying non-believers resulting in messed-up children! What does Torah teach about marrying unbelievers? (See Exod 34:15–16; Deut 7:3.) What are the bad results from such unions? (Read Deut 7:4.) What does the Testimony of Yeshua teach in this regard? (Look at 2 Cor 6:14–16.) Why has Elohim forbidden his saints from marrying the heathen, and how does this relate to the special destiny he has for his set-apart children? (See 2 Cor 6:16–18.)
- 14** **24:11, *Blasphemed the name of YHVH.*** Blasphemy comes out of a heart that is reprobate and totally dead and cold toward YHVH. Sadly, little can be done for such a person. Oftentimes, such individuals know better, but have chosen to defy YHVH willfully. What is the penalty for willful sin? (Look at Num 15:30–31 cp. Heb 6:6; 10:26.)
- 15** **24:22, *You shall have one manner of law.*** There is one Torah-law for both the Israelite and the *ger* (or sojourner). This instruction is stated elsewhere (Exod 12:49; Num 15:16,29). Doesn't this fact contradict the Jewish religious idea that the Torah is *only* for the Jews, while the Noahide laws are for all non-Jews? Doesn't this also destroy the Christian concept of dispensationalism, which says that the law is for the Jews and grace is for the Christians who are no longer required to keep the law—except for those aspects of Torah they deem applicable for regulating morality and for funding the church-system (i.e., the laws of tithing)? One thing is certain: YHVH is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34) and he doesn't ever change his standards of righteousness (Mal 3:6). If Torah were good for his people in the past, then it is still good for them now!

The Biblical Feasts: A Glorious Template of YHVH's Plan of Redemption for the Earth

YHVH'S SET-APART (*kodesh*) FEAST DAYS ARE PROPHETIC SHADOW-PICTURES or symbols of the steps man must take to be reconciled to his Heavenly Father. They are the complete plan of salvation or redemption rolled up into seven easy-to-understand steps. Though a child can understand these steps, the truths contained therein can at the same time be expanded and unfolded until one literally has rolled out before oneself the entire message of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation — a message that to the human comprehension is staggering, deep and rich beyond understanding. These seven annual festivals are literally the skeletal structure upon which the truths of the entire Bible hang. The message of redemption, sanctification, salvation, the atonement, glorification, eschatology, the history of Israel, the entire gospel message, the covenants, the marriage of the Lamb, the Bride of Messiah and

Yeshua the Messiah are all prefigured within the glorious spiritual container of YHVH's appointed times (*moedim*) contained in seven steps. Seven is the biblical number of divine perfection and completion.

Quite assuredly, without a deep, walking-it-out comprehension of the these feast days of YHVH, no matter how learned one is in biblical understanding, or how academically astute and mentally acute in biblical erudition one may be, one will not have a deep understanding of those scriptural subjects listed above....

To read the rest of this teaching article go to <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/feasts.pdf>. In this article we discuss the following subjects:

- ☞ Why keep the *moedim* (appointed times) of YHVH?
- ☞ The appointed times of YHVH represent the seven steps of YHVH's plan of salvation/redemption for mankind.
- ☞ We will give a quick overview of the three spring *miqra kodesh* (set-apart convocations) and the four fall *miqra kodesh* and explain the past, present and prophetic relevance to believers.
- ☞ We will show that the feasts of YHVH have not been "done away."
- ☞ The apostles of Yeshua kept YHVH's *moedim*.
- ☞ The inhabitants of earth will keep YHVH's appointed times during the Millennium.

Extensive and detailed teaching articles on each of YHVH's seven annual feasts are found on the "Articles" page of the Hoshana Rabbah website at <http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/teaching.html#feast>.

HAFTORAH READING — EZEKIEL 44:15-31

What Does It Mean to Be Set-Apart (*Kodesh*)

THE FOLLOWING IS A QUICK STUDY ON THE SUBJECT OF WHAT IT MEANS to be a set-apart and sanctified people. It is the desire and purpose of YHVH, "to open the eyes of those who are without YHVH and without hope (i.e. who are Gentiles, see Eph 2:12), and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto YHVH, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them who have been sanctified (i.e., set apart unto Elohim for a holy purpose) by faith in Yeshua the Messiah" (Acts 26:18). The Apostle Paul in 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5,7 further adds,

For this is the will of YHVH, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from [sexual immorality]: that every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor; not in the [lustful sexual desires], even as the [pagans] which know not YHVH ... For YHVH has not called us unto uncleanness, but unto being set-apart.

The words *sanctification* and *set-apart (kodesh)* are related words in the Greek language and have the same meaning, which is "to purify, to consecrate, morally blameless, sacred, pure." Only One (i.e., YHVH) who is set-apart and morally pure can take something that is unholy and defiled (i.e., man) and make it pure.

It is impossible for man to pull himself up spiritually by his own bootstraps and bring himself to a higher level. He cannot become set-apart or holy, blameless and pure through his own good works. As we just read in Acts 26:18, we are sanctified (made set-apart, morally pure, blameless) through faith in Messiah who washed away the sin in us that made us unholy in the first place. He wiped clean the slate that recorded our past sins and then deposited into our lives his Set-Apart Spirit to supernaturally empower us to walk sin-free.

But then we have to stay set-apart by keeping ourselves under the sin-cleansing blood of Yeshua, by turning away from sin daily and by living a righteous, Torah-obedient life. Such will keep us in the path of righteousness. And if we happen to sin, we must confess that sin and YHVH promises to forgive us of our sin and spiritually cleanses us and restores us to a state of being set apart (1 John 1:9).

Sadly, some mistakenly believe that the Torah of Elohim (YHVH's standard for holiness or righteousness) is no longer for us today — that it was "done away with at the cross." If this concept is valid, then what part of the Torah (YHVH's instructions in righteousness) is no longer for us today? You shall not murder? You shall not steal or commit adultery? Do not worship idols? Do not have sex with an animal? Keep the Sabbath? How about

tithing? Tithing is part of YHVH's Torah-law, and most Christian churches strongly advocate adherence to that law! In reality, following all of these commandments shows us *how* to love YHVH with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and *how* to love our neighbor as ourselves. Keeping his divine laws helps us to walk in a sanctified manner, and to stay holy or set-apart.

Sanctification involves coming out of the world, and *getting the world out of us!* It involves separating and cleansing ourselves from something that is unholy and profane (namely, the world, the flesh and the devil) and becoming a vessel that is set-apart and sacred (Yeshua-like). It is something that happens to us when we are born again, but it is also a lifelong process. Yeshua describes this in John 17:14,17:

I have given them your word; and the world has hated them, because *they are not of the world*, even as I am not of the world ... Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 6:17 exhorts YHVH's people to,

"[C]ome out from among [the paganism of the world], and be you separate," says YHVH, "and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and you shall be my sons and daughters," says YHVH Almighty.

In summary, sanctification and being set-apart has several parts. First, there is a separation from the world, flesh, sin and darkness, which involves turning to YHVH through faith in the atoning blood of Messiah. At this point YHVH sanctifies or makes one set-apart for his set-apart purposes. This involves living a set-apart life and doing YHVH's set-apart will. Sanctification takes something that is dirty, purifies it, and then dedicates it for a set-apart or godly use, and then commissions it to be used for that purpose. Remember the process this way: *separation, purification, consecration* leading to *use* or *service* with the end result being *glorification* and *exaltation* as kings and priests in YHVH's eternal kingdom.

To read the rest of this teaching article go to http://www.hoshanarabbah.org/pdfs/holy_pr.pdf. In this article we discuss the following subjects:

- ☞ YHVH's people are called to live a set-apart (holy) or sanctified life.
- ☞ YHVH's people are commissioned to make a difference between the set-apart and the profane.
- ☞ How can that which is set-apart by YHVH return to that which is filthy??
- ☞ What are some examples in the Scriptures of what can be profaned?
- ☞ What keeps a person from becoming a set-apart priest of YHVH?

But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a set-apart nation, a peculiar people, that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
(1 Pet 2:9)

And [Yeshua] has made us kings and priests unto Elohim and his Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. ... and we shall reign on the earth ... with [Messiah] a thousand years (Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:6)

