



Parasha: S H E M I N I / E I G H T H

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AS WE BESTOW OUR GIFTS, OFFERINGS, sacrifices unto the altar of YHVH, our spirits are amalgamated with Messiah's Spirit and we become His hands and feet carrying out His will on the face of the earth. Through His Ruach we are called to care for the poor, needy widows, orphans and Levites. Messiah gave these instructions when He walked among men upon the earth. They were not new instructions, but a restoration of what Torah had commanded from the days of Moshe. Man is the one who stopped loving, implementing and walking out the precepts of YHVH.

As we take a closer look at this week's reading we consider Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, and their defiant approach unto YHVH. Each son took his censer and put fire in it and laid incense on it and offered unauthorized fire before Adonai.¹ At first glance, we may assume that these two sons acquired strange incense that had not been consecrated for the specified Tabernacle use as instructed.² Or, perhaps, Aaron's sons took fire from some other source than the Altar of Burnt Offering and placed the holy incense upon it. Possibly there was a combination of these variances. Yet, what we should deduce from this incident is that Nadab and Abihu were not lazy or just walking in blatant disobedience, but they did not revere the consecrated protocol in approaching YHVH.

Frequently we presume that the grace of YHVH will overlook a sin, although it is in direct disobedience to His Torah. While I do believe that YHVH meets us where we are in life, it does not give us a license to dishonor what has been commanded or trample underfoot what is sanctified. Our Elohim is exacting. He means what He says and requires obedience. If this were not so, if YHVH could simply look the other way, wink at our sin, or wave the magical wand of grace upon all that we commit against Him. Subsequently, Yeshua's sinless and blameless life which fulfilled all of Torah would have been for naught and Yeshua's death would not have been required for the remission of our sins. However, it is YHVH's grace that is sufficient to bring us back to Himself through the blood

of Messiah, His obedience and righteousness, which we were never capable of achieving for ourselves.

Moreover, any exuberance which is erroneously placed within Torah (truth) and attributed to the Ruach (Spirit) is unbridled zeal which leads to corruption. Nadab and Abihu illustrated this through their actions. They had just finished being consecrated for eight days, basked in the Presence of YHVH and had personally witnessed His magnificence. When the Tabernacle had been erected, YHVH gave Moshe explicit instructions as to when to make sacrifices and how to present offerings by fire. YHVH's instructions were to be unerringly followed, lest the Priesthood become guilty of sin. After YHVH made His Presence known within the Tabernacle, furnishings and garments, subversion was found within the priesthood.

The offering of strange fire was not from an outside source, nor was the incense from another source other than the consecrated source as commanded by YHVH. The crux of the matter was the prerequisites of YHVH were to faithfully followed, i.e. how and when it was to be done. Accordingly, when Aaron's sons presented incense, they would have gone into the Holy Place bearing their fire pans before the Altar of Incense. When this was done in defiance to protocol, it became profaned.

We must be sure we are called to minister Torah by the Ruach of YHVH through Messiah. To operate in any facet without the anointing and directive of YHVH is offering strange fire. It may have the best intentions in the world, and may even look identical to what a leader or co-laborer has just offered by clothing, feeding and/or caring, but is it the way that YHVH has commanded us, at the time and in the context that we are exhorted to do it?

Laboring for YHVH is exciting and feels wonderful. However, to go forward into self initiated ministry without the mantel of Messiah with His Ruach and Truth is like treading into a dangerous territory of land mines. Regrettably, when all is said and done, the ones who arbitrarily did good deeds may possibly hear Yeshua say, "I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice lawlessness."³

¹Vayikra 10:1-2
²Shemot 10:34-38
³Matthew 7:23
⁴Psalms 23:3

Shavu Halacha/Weekly Walking:

Every one of us exhibits our own brand of religion. Either by means of what we believe the Holy Spirit has whispered to us or through someone else's rendition of His will; or, perhaps, by way of personal revelation or interpretation of the Scriptures. Our perspective of how to be spiritual and have the Presence of YHVH evident in our lives, the ways in which we perceive the blessings of YHVH, or the approval of Yeshua come from manifold avenues. Whether if it's by doctrinal statements made by a man or denomination; or if our own intellect has put together parts of the puzzle, all of us have our own way to walk out and to explain to others our understanding and application of our personal spirituality. All of this may have a small place and small truths; however, the reality of walking hand in hand with Messiah has nothing to do with our own interpretation, with doctrinal stances, man's theology or by what a soft voice said in passing. Our walk must be tempered in the application of how the Ruach is leading us to walk out the spirit of Torah and how Torah teaches us to hear the voice of the Ruach and obey Him. If they are not in equal proportions, then we begin to find other aspects of spirituality taking hold of our lives. Test every spirit to be sure that the voice you are hearing is that of our Good Shepherd by going to His Torah for verification. Test the applications and interpretations of Torah by what the Ruach teaches and proclaims to us as He guides us in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.⁴

Day 1

PARASHA:

LEV. 9:1-22

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. On the eighth day, after the Presence of YHVH was demonstrated within the Tabernacle, Aaron and his sons, along with the elders of Israel were summoned by Moshe. It was the end of the consecration period and the Priesthood would now begin the service of sacrificing unto YHVH as commanded through Moshe. Why would YHVH choose eight days over seven days for this anointing time for the Priesthood?

What is significant about eight days? Moreover, where in Torah and the Tanak does the aspect of eight days repeat and show this significance?

2. The order given by YHVH to Aaron and his sons was to take the calf of the sin offering, then the ram for the burnt offering and offering them before YHVH. Then, they were to speak to the sons of Israel saying to them to bring a male goat for a sin offering and a calf and a lamb both for a burnt offering, ox and a ram for peace offerings and a grain offering mixed with oil. This is the first application we see when the Priesthood performed their priestly duties in the designated place as the people brought them their offerings. What is important about the order that YHVH gives to Aaron and his sons? Why are their offerings to be first?

What is the importance of the sin offering offered first, then the burnt offering second? Moreover, are these done prior to or after the daily burnt offering?

Why is there a difference in the priest's sin offering in contrast to Israel's sin offering?

Lastly, the sons of Israel are asked for two animals for peace offerings while the Priesthood is not asked for a peace offering at all. Why?

*Sandals
Worshipping in Spirit*

By loving YHVH with all of our heart, all of our soul and our entire mind, we begin to identify with the daily sacrifices that took place at the Altar. As each animal was presented to YHVH, they were to be completely consumed, either by fire or by eating. Those around the sacrifice being offered would have heard the bleating of the animal being prepared and slaughtered. They would have seen the blood being shed and poured out as the offering; and, they would have smelled the smoke going up to YHVH while the animal was on the Altar.

As we give ourselves over to YHVH's will, purpose, plan and consumption, we are to love Him with all the essence of our being. Others will see our sacrifice(s). As they do, they will be witnesses as we speak of the ways of YHVH, His yoke, the adversities and challenges; they will also hear of His praises and deliverances. They will observe as others take advantage of us and as we are to die to our flesh. Those around us will perceive the pain that sin causes in our lives and the emptying out of our lives to serve YHVH and those around us. They will benefit from the aroma that comes as we are offered on the Altar where we serve, with sincere hearts. They will partake of the fragments that are given to them from our broken lives to lead others to Messiah and will witness as many attest to the covenant we keep with YHVH that dwells within us.

3. Verse 5 states that the whole congregation came near and stood before YHVH. Obviously, this is a very large crowd that could have consisted of the numbered 600,000 men twenty years and up. In this scenario, do the elders of Israel represent the sons of Israel or did all the people actually go up to the Tent of Meeting to be on hand for the sacrifices?

4. The flesh and the skin of the sin offering for the Priests are burned with fire outside of camp. While the animal, inside and out, must be without defect, the insides of the animal are offered on the altar. This gives regard to how the animal was to bear the sin of the Priests (or laymen if the sin offering was for a regular Israelite) and not become sin, inside and out. Discuss the reasons why the skin and flesh were burned outside of camp and why the flesh would be burned and not eaten.

5. Our lives are to be offered as living sacrifices to YHVH in Messiah. We are to be ready for Messiah's return as His bride, spotless and without blemish. Our flesh and our outward parts move according to the world's rules and are influenced according to the sin nature into which we are born. Yet, our inward parts, where YHVH searches, are the deeper areas where upon YHVH writes teachings and instructions, His Torah. It is these same areas that, from the animals of the sin offerings, that are burned upon the Altar of Burnt Offering. We give these wholly over to YHVH and walk in His ways according to Ezekiel 36 with YHVH's Ruach poured upon us as we are Spirit led to walk in His precepts and statutes. Contrast our inward parts to that of the innocent animal that were offered as sin offerings. In what ways do we identify with those sacrifices and how are we to be without spot or blemish, like them, on the inside as well as the outside?

Furthermore, compare our inward parts to Yeshua, Who was the perfect sacrifice. If we are to be like Him, identify with Him and be imitators of Messiah, how does He become integrated within our inward parts and our outward being so as to be without blemish?

Day 2

PARASHA:

LEV. 9:23-10:3

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

**Sandals
Worshipping in Truth**

When the people shout and fall on their faces, they are in deep awe of what YHVH has just done. Notice that the people did not “ooh” and awe at the Presence of YHVH. They did not start laughing, uncontrollably sobbing, or start shaking and using hand motions to sweep away the unclean off the next person. The people did not fall down backward being “slain” in the spirit. The people shouted and fell on their faces, forward, in worship and as an expression of the wonders of YHVH.

While worshipping the Father in Spirit, we may seem to do strange things and, some, may even seem foolish to us. However, YHVH tells us in Torah what is expected of us. We cannot be true worshippers if we are being led to take actions that are contrary to Torah or ways in which Torah teaches us to worship. We must learn what it is to worship righteously and truthfully, without unwarranted fleshly demonstrations or disrespectful actions. This is not to say that YHVH does not call us to act contrary to what the world assumes is normal; but, He does have order in His assembly and prescribes how we are to approach Him and behave while in and out of His Presence.

1. As Aaron and his sons finished the sin, burnt and peace offerings, Moshe and he turned to go into the Tent of Meeting. For what purpose would they have gone into the Holy Place at this point in time?

2. After the offerings were made on behalf of Aaron and his sons, as well as, the sons of Israel, then Moshe and Aaron went into the Tent of Meeting. This was the proper order of approaching YHVH. This acceptable approach to YHVH, was preceded with atonement through the substitution of an innocent animal. YHVH also had to see the two men, and Israel, through the smoke of the burnt offerings. Why would these prerequisites be needed to enter into the Holy Place to encounter YHVH?

Discuss how this gives us insight as to the price Yeshua paid so that we may pray to YHVH and He hear our prayers and answer us.

3. After Moshe and Aaron came out of the Holy Place, they blessed the people. Then, the glory of YHVH appeared to all the people. This was not a mystical experience so that only those with spiritual eyes could see. Torah plainly states that His glory appeared to all the people. We do not know what this glory looked like, however, in Hebrew, the word for glory is *kabode*, meaning glory, honor, glorious or abundance. The root word for *kabode* is *kabad* meaning to be heavy or weighty. While we want to believe that the children of Israel saw a physical manifestation of YHVH’s glory, it may be that they experienced the weighty presence of that glory all around them. Moreover, the Hebrew word for *appeared* is *ra’ah* meaning to see, looks at, inspect, consider or perceive. How do you see, from a Torah perspective, the glory of YHVH appearing to all the people? Do you believe it was something they saw, felt, heard, or touched or something that they perceived?

4. Along the same lines as question three, verse 24 states that after the glory of YHVH appeared to all the people, then fire came out from before YHVH and consumed the burnt offering of the fat portions. This was the manifestation of YHVH’s Presence, not necessarily the appearance of His glory. Discuss the difference between the fire and the glory.

5. In the beginning of Vayikra 10, two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, offered strange fire before YHVH. While the strange fire could have been offered from an unauthorized source, or the incense could have been from an unconsecrated variety, it is clearly stated that YHVH had not commanded them to offer this fire. In what way(s) do you see the incense offered by the two brothers as being strange (*zuvr* meaning to be strange, stranger, or strange woman as in prostitute or harlot) rather than the fire?

6. By offering strange fire that had not been commanded, Aaron's sons added to Torah. They were not only guilty of profaning what was consecrated, but they were guilty of what the entirety of Judaism and the church have committed over and over again throughout the centuries. They took the aspects of Torah, discarded them, and then made the rules to suite themselves based on Torah interpretation or disregarded the veracity of Torah. Nadab and Abihu nullified, in their own minds, Torah's mandated instructions of how to approach YHVH and replaced them with what was a human way of doing things. Describe Aaron's son's actions based upon this definition of strange fire.

How are we guilty of offering strange fire to YHVH, either by wrong motives, by not following the instructions YHVH has set before us, or by adding to or subtracting from Torah?

7. The fire that had just consumed the offering on the Altar was the same fire (and the root Hebrew word *'esh*) that came from the Presence of YHVH to consume the two brothers. This is similar to YHVH going through Egypt and taking their firstborn, yet the same Elohim rescued the sons of Israel out of Egypt. How should we understand these aspects of YHVH in life and death, preservation and destruction?

8. For those that have been given much, much is required. In the case of the Priesthood, they were entrusted to draw near to YHVH and to treat Him as holy. This responsibility is inherently about each individual learning to respect our holy YHVH with the responsibility placed on leadership to teaching and make disciples. Discuss Aaron's role in what happened to his sons and why Moshe would go to Aaron to speak the words found in verse 10:3.

Day 3

PARASHA:
LEV. 10:4-7

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. The subject of caring for death, although sorrowful, is also something that YHVH prescribes for us to do by removing death from our households and encampments. However, something interesting takes place in verse 4. Moshe does not call upon just anyone to take the dead from the Tabernacle. He calls upon the relatives of other Levites, to remove the corpses from the Tent of Meeting. It is as if Moshe makes a distinction as to whom may handle the body of one of YHVH's set apart priests. Discuss why Aaron's Uncle's sons were chosen for this duty and not just anyone else.

2. Whether motivated by zeal or laziness, Nadab and Abihu were in the wrong and were punished for their actions. When we stray from YHVH, we are like dead men walking. We have a reality around us, but our purpose and fulfillment is amiss. Yeshua told one person, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of YHVH." In what ways do the sons of Uzziel and Aaron's sons resemble this statement made by Yeshua?

3. YHVH did not wait to punish Nadab or Abihu. When they committed the act, they were immediately punished. We tend to think that YHVH is going to put up with our sin or our disobedience perpetually. While we are told to forgive seven times seventy, we are also told that YHVH is just and righteous. He is the Judge of the ages. Why did YHVH execute judgment so swiftly upon Aaron's sons, and then remove them so quickly from the Tent of Meeting?

4. There is an aspect of mercy found in the way YHVH takes Nadab's and Abihu's lives. Verse 5 states that they carried them out still in their tunics. The fire that consumed the brothers did not linger to torment them, but to strike them dead; otherwise, their tunics would have been burned up, as well. Discuss how this is an aspect of mercy by YHVH in contrast to burning everything up and/or engulfing Aaron's sons in a lingering flame.

5. We know that the time of offering strange fire is just after the ordination through eight days, as verse 7 says that the anointing oil is still upon Aaron. As such, there is a lesson to us in this, not only how we are to approach YHVH, but how we are to conduct ourselves once in His Presence. While Nadab and Abihu may have rebelled, taken liberties or just had passion by offering something extra in their zeal for YHVH and position, they were

Midrash Point:

In relationship to the fire of YHVH consuming Nadab and Abihu, we are able to contrast their demise to Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. Likewise, Uzzah reached out to steady the Ark of Elohim and took hold of it. Instead of receiving thanks for keeping the Ark upright, YHVH smote him dead in 2 Samuel 6:6-7.

Compare these two different situations with the death of Aaron's sons.

simply amiss and were judged instantaneously. What does this say to us about how we are to maintain our relationship with YHVH and how we are to behave while in the court of His presence?

6. Aaron is told by Moshe not to uncover his head (the head piece and name plate had been placed there), or tear his clothes (he was wearing the priestly garments) so that he would not die and, as the intercessor for the whole house of Israel; YHVH's wrath would not be brought against them. Aaron was warned not to go out from the doorway of the Tent of Meeting or he would die. Later in Torah,¹ YHVH tells the priests that they are not to defile themselves for the sake of the dead, except for his mother, father, son, daughter, brother or a virgin sister who is near to him. Why is there a difference here in what Aaron is not allowed to do for mourning in contrast to the later commandments in Torah?

7. Two concepts are introduced at the end of verse six. First, Aaron's kinsmen are not just blood brothers, but the whole house of Israel. Second, as his kinsmen, the whole house of Israel would bewail the burning of his sons. Why is the whole house of Israel now kinsmen to Aaron; and, why would YHVH place the yoke of mourning upon them?

8. Notice that the incident with Nadab and Abihu was immediately followed by instructions for the entire, perpetual priesthood. It is a set of ordinances that is also found in Ezekiel when YHVH describes Messiah's reign upon the earth. Compare this passage of Torah to that found in Ezekiel 44 when YHVH describes the Sons of Tzadok. How are they the same and different from each other? Why do these statutes appear right after Aaron's son's wrong actions and death?

Why would YHVH need to re-establish the requirements of the Priesthood in Ezekiel when it was already mandated here in Vayikra? What is the difference between Aaron's sons, as Levites, who serve as priests and the Sons of Tzadok?

¹Vayikra 21:1-4, Ezekiel 44:25

Day 4

PARASHA:
LEV. 10:8-20

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

1. We already discussed how these first verses pertain to the Sons of Tzadok (Sons of Righteousness) found in Ezekiel 44. Now, let's discuss the application of what these mean. The drinking of strong drink or wine while ministering before YHVH or to the people makes perfect sense so that man does not defile himself, the tabernacle, others or mock YHVH. Subsequently, the priests are charged with making a distinction between the holy and the profane, and between the unclean and the clean. This is so that Aaron and his sons, perpetually, will teach the sons of Israel all the statutes of YHVH. As Yeshua's kings and priests through the order of Melchizedek (King of Righteousness), we should know the differences between these concepts as well, especially, if we walk in Torah and in the Covenant established by YHVH.

Give some distinctions between the holy and profane:

Give some distinctions between the clean and unclean:

From what you have listed, how would you want to be taught to do and don't in these distinctions?

2. We know that we are all to work out our salvation with fear and trembling.¹ Yet, here in Vayikra, the Priesthood is charged with teaching the sons of Israel all the statutes of YHVH. This gives rise to considering the discipleship process in which Yeshua ordained His disciples when He commissioned them to make disciples of all nations. This was not a new concept, but, yet another restoration of Torah precepts and the call of YHVH that rings out from the fall of man. As Yeshua's priesthood, the Sons of Tzakok are to teach these same teachings and instructions (Torah) and, in doing so, make disciples of all those that are of the nations of the earth. Compare and contrast the role of the Priesthood to that of our commission by Yeshua in Matthew 28:19.

Midrash Point:

YHVH speaks to Aaron, directly, in verse 8. After the ordination process and the death of two of his sons, YHVH speaks to Aaron. Why would YHVH choose this time to speak directly to Aaron?

¹Philippians 2:12

3. When Aaron, Elazar and Ithamar lost their sons and brothers, they would have felt much remorse and, possibly, anger toward YHVH. Most of us would not want to immediately partake of food or fellowship. Yet, Moshe gives directives for all of them to; *once again, take up the grain offering left over from YHVH's offering by fire and eat it*. Then, he reminds them that this is their due (prescribed portion or *chog* in Hebrew). Why would Moshe use this time to have the priests eat their due from the offering?

What does this say about YHVH's compassion and provision for those who serve Him?

4. In verse 14, we are given some clarity as to how the priests took care of their family from their portions. Not only were they to eat from the wave offerings of the breast and the thigh, but their sons and daughters (presumably their wives, also) were to partake of these portions. They were to be eaten in a clean place, probably within the courts of the Tent of Meeting, since we were told earlier that sanctified portions were not to leave the Tabernacle.² Describe this process of provision. How have we strayed from that provision for the priests of today that feed, shepherd and tend YHVH's flock?

How could you see these proper portions come back to those that are chosen to be Sons of Tzadok in this day and age?

Moreover, what would qualify a person to receive these portions as a Son of Tzadok?

5. Even though the rules about sin offerings were already set, Aaron's sons did not eat the portion that was set apart for them. Why would they be excused for not eating their portion of the offering? Furthermore, why would they be required to eat that portion opposed to burning it because it was not consumed?

How does this exemplify Yeshua's sacrifice and our consumption of Him in His death?

Sandals Worshipping in Spirit

All of us must test every spirit. In verses 16-20, we think that Aaron is in trouble again with YHVH and that Moshe is about to rebuke him. However, Moshe hears what Aaron says and it seemed good in his sight.

Moshe had wanted the portions from the sin offering to be eaten by Aaron's sons, yet, it had been burned up. We would assume that Moshe would just know how to handle this situation, but he either was testing Aaron and his surviving sons, or he really needed to hear Aaron's explanation.

Every situation is different as we walk out Torah through the guidance of the Ruach haKodesh. We must tackle every situation with a fresh perspective of what Torah teaches, how Messiah lived it and what the Ruach is telling us and leading us to do. An identical approach to walking with YHVH does not work the way we think it should. Each person is different and each situation has different parameters and circumstances involved.

Aaron was listening, in his time of sorrow when the Ruach could reach him the easiest, to his heart where the Ruach was talking and comforting him. At first, it just did not make sense to Moshe, however, in the end; Moshe saw what the Breath of YHVH was doing in Aaron and his son's lives.

May we have ears to *shema* hear what the Ruach wants to teach us and others as we walk in Messiah.³

²Vayikra 6:26

³Revelation 3:6

Day 5

PARASHA:

LEV. 11-1-28

TORAH STUDY

PRAYER LEAVES

*Sandals
Worshipping in Truth*

We seem to have turned the corner in the Torah at this reading. The texts are not about sacrifice and offerings, but how we are to present ourselves to YHVH as His living sacrifices. This may seem a stretch, but we just finished reading about the sacrificial system and the ways in which Aaron's sons were not pleasing to YHVH. This is the perfect place for YHVH to show the rest of Israel the proper way to approach Him and to remain in His Presence.

Our lives have to be governed by what YHVH has commanded us to do. In doing these commands, we find Life. Not just life in ourselves as eating, breathing and resting and working, but the Life and essence of Yeshua that is in us as we die to our sin nature. Although, our old nature rebels against the laws of the Creator, we overcome that old nature through Yeshua when we totally surrender and abandon ourselves unto Him.

When we encounter a positive aspect of life, we assume that we are doing something correct. YHVH tells us here that we must obey His Word and precepts to be walking in His will. It is heart-felt conviction to do this and becomes a lifestyle that perpetuates righteous walking in His ways to please YHVH.

1. Most people who are walking in Torah precepts see Leviticus as a book pertaining only to the Priesthood and not to everyday individuals. Some overlook significance of the Greek Septuagint name Leviticus (having to do with the Levites or Priests) given to Vayikra (and He called). However, as seen in our opening verses, YHVH spoke to Moshe and Aaron, telling them to "Speak to the sons of Israel..." The offerings to be brought and the ways in which a sacrifice was to be presented, killed and eaten were for all the people, including the people of the house of Israel, not just the priests or Levites. Discuss this viewpoint of Vayikra and how you see that it applies to you as a priest and king in Messiah, and, an individual of the household of faith, not presenting sacrifices at the Tabernacle.

2. The diets of YHVH's people are important to Him. He created the one who eats and the substance that he is to eat. Specifically, YHVH gave commands about dietary directives at several points in history. At the beginning, in B'reisheet 2, YHVH tells Adam what he may and may not eat. Later in chapter 8, Noach already knows the difference between clean and unclean animals; then, in chapter 9, YHVH tells Noach what man may eat. Much later, after the coming of Messiah, the council at Jerusalem,¹ the apostles and elders wrote a letter concerning things strangled and sacrificed to idols (this was said after stating that Moshe has in every city those who preach him, giving direct acceptance of Torah). Discuss how these different applications of YHVH's dietary passages are related to each other and how they all confirm one another in what is clean and unclean.

3. Adam was told by YHVH not to eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil when Eve was not yet formed. She knew this command, yet she was still deceived. As we fast forward into our time, we must acknowledge that the church has neglected these precepts given by YHVH. As we have not been taught to honor YHVH through our diet, we deny the plausibility of these commandments having a place in our lives at all, not to mention the fact that most everyone, with exception of religious Jews, around the world eats unclean animals as regular staples in their diets. It was expectant upon Adam to teach the one dietary law to his wife and, eventually, his children. How much more incumbent is it upon us to teach these ordinances to our future generations? Discuss how we should teach these laws to our children and to others coming into our communities or strangers that ask about it.

¹Acts 15:23-29
²Acts 15:21

4. Why would it be important for us to keep the dietary laws today? Please list spiritual reasons along with your health rationales.

5. YHVH gives specific parameters for what is considered as clean and unclean animals. Today's reading gives distinctions between that which has split hooves and chews the cud; that which has scales and fins; the differences in various species of birds; and abhorrent insects versus those that have jointed legs. Using these guidelines from YHVH, cite the difference between clean and unclean, why YHVH would use these guidelines.

6. These dietary laws tell us what animals are on the menu, specifically, those which are clean. Conversely, He commands us not consume animals (and in some cases not to even touch the carcasses) that are unclean or abhorrent. What is the difference in what is unclean and what is abhorrent? Moreover, how are we to detest certain animals, such as the birds listed in verses 13-19?

7. Verses 24-28 teaches us how all are made unclean by stepping on ants or other insects or the carcass of any other unclean animal. Yet, this did not necessarily make the person sin, only unclean. What is the difference in unclean and sin?

Why would touching the carcass of an unclean animal or insect make a person unclean?

8. The majority of Christians do not see a need to differentiate between clean and unclean, pertaining to food or otherwise. It seems very foolish to keep to YHVH's dietary laws, yet for us this is a lifestyle of worship to Him. Why do you believe that YHVH's dietary laws and the Shabbat, are the two most controversial issues, and hardest to come to grips with, when believers find out about Torah living and becoming a part of the Covenant relationship with YHVH?

Day 6

- PARASHA:
LEV. 11:29-47
- TORAH STUDY
- PRAYER LEAVES

1. Thus far, whether it has been of mammal or beast, fish or other sea life, bugs or birds, YHVH has made distinction between what is clean or unclean, edible or abhorrent. Each category has had some redemptive species that are fit to be consumed, up until now. The swarming animals, which include the mole, mouse and all the reptile or amphibian species, are unclean. Why would YHVH make this entire and specific category unclean and unfit as food in contrast to the other categories of food?

Midrash Point:

Trafe (*treif*) is not unkosher. *Trafe* refers to what is torn in the field (specifically of the clean animals) or incorrectly slaughtered (not draining all the blood) and is not to be eaten by the sons of Israel. It can, however, be sold, given and consumed by the stranger and sojourner.

Discuss the difference in something that is biblically fit to eat (*kosher* or *kashrut*) and that which is *trafe*. Moreover, from where do the words *trafe* and *kosher* derive?

2. YHVH tells us that the vessels in which we cook or store anything can become unclean if an unclean dead animal, whether it swarms, swims or otherwise, comes in contact with that vessel. Furthermore, an earthenware vessel, namely clay pottery but also utensils or other household items, even an oven that has been touched by a corpse is to be broken or smashed. Why would these items have to be rendered unusable in contrast to wood, clothing, skin or metal that is immersed and is clean at evening?

2 Timothy 2:20-21 compares us to vessels in a house, some of which are used for honor and some for dishonor. We are exhorted, in this, to be cleansed so that we will be sanctified and useful to Yeshua, prepared for every good work. Compare these passages in 2 Timothy to Vayikra 11 and discuss how we are those vessels that are to consume what is clean and abhor what is evil, or absorb what is unclean, becoming unclean ourselves.

Additionally, how does man, who is born with a dishonorable spirit of sin, become a vessel of honor prepared for every good work? Also, what is referred to when discussing those good works used by Yeshua in us?

3. Verse 39-40 suggests if the carcass of a clean animal that is considered food dies on its own and someone touches it or eats it will become unclean until evening. Seemingly, since it is considered to be a dead animal, if a person eats of the carcass of the clean animal, they would be picking up the carcass of a dead animal by default. In regard to this passage, list other Torah commands and teachings that tell us about touching dead animals and corpse contamination. Contrast these passages to Vayikra 11 in terms of how to deal with dead animals and corpses.

What constitutes a corpse versus an animal that does not transmit uncleanness?

4. Does the unclean state of a corpse carry over into the hide and body parts of an unclean animal that could be rendered useful as tools or decoration (bones), arts (guts used for strings for instruments), cover or pleasure (skins used for coats, coverings, furniture or footballs), or any other aspect of usefulness? Discuss your answer and what should or could be done if these items do transmit uncleanness.

5. We are told that we are unclean until evening if we touch an unclean corpse. Moreover, if we pick it up, we are to wash our clothes and be unclean until evening. What is significant about the evening that we would transform, even without immersion, back to a state of cleanness so that we are considered to be set apart once again?

6. Nowadays, most families have some sort of pet, whether one owns a goldfish, dog, cat or pet hamster. We can see how we should not consume such animals, whether they are considered to be our livestock or not. Some livestock live outside the home, as is the case for cattle, horses and donkeys, hunting dogs, chickens and so forth. Torah gives us commandments about donkeys and we know that our forefathers used camels, as well. Yet, this does not mean that they kept livestock inside their homes as pets. The question does arise and begs to be asked at this point; should we have unclean animals as pets inside our homes? What are the inevitable Torah repercussions of having indoor pets? (Discuss not only the death of the animal, but the mating habits, licking and messes left behind that we tolerate so as to keep our family pets.)

7. At the end of chapter 11, YHVH emphasis that He is the One Who brought us out of bondage and that He is set apart. In keeping these dietary commands, we shall be set apart, as well. He tells us that these commands are for us to make a distinction between the clean and unclean and the edible creature and that which is not to be eaten. How does doing YHVH's commandments make us set apart? What is the difference in being set apart and sanctified and being redeemed by Messiah; and are both seen as a lifestyle?

Midrash Point:

Today's modern day 21st century menu is filled with by-products from all sorts of animals. Not only this, but much of the medication is derived from unclean animal's blood. We should be aware of what we should and should not eat. Moreover, much of what is stated to be "kosher" is still derived from swine's flesh in the form of gelatin, but is approved by a rabbi because it is so far removed from the actual pig.

Discuss all the animals and food products made with animal parts, pieces and fats. Which are considered proper for our consumption?

How far do we take these applications of what is clean and unclean in our diets? Should we lovingly eat what is placed before us with thanksgiving or diplomatically reject what was never meant to be consumed as food?

Shabbat

PARASHA:

LEV. 9:1-11:47

RESTORATORY—
MIDRASH

PRAYER LEAVES

The anointed Priesthood, after eight days, had experientially encountered the Presence of YHVH. To them, it was the day of YHVH and the fulfillment of their call and purpose were being realized. All the shackles of the enemy had been broken. Their journey had been laborious, yet YHVH had met their needs. Idolatry had divided the camp and the Priesthood stood on the side of Righteousness when all others played the harlot with the molten calf. The Priests and their tribe were in the midst of preparing the way of YHVH and had sat tarrying at His feet for over a week.

YHVH does not need man to prepare His way. Yet He uses man to make declaration and proclamation that YHVH is on His way to make restoration and visitation. In as much, Isaiah 40 states, “Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; and let the rough ground become a plain, and the rugged terrain a broad valley; then the glory of YHVH will be revealed, and all flesh will see it together; for the mouth of YHVH has spoken.” YHVH, even in the days of old, when He took the offering that Abraham guarded, and the time when YHVH processed all of His glory before Moshe so that only His back would be seen, YHVH continues to prepare His own way, in His own time and rationale.

Aaron and his sons were experiencing all the ways in which Moshe had gone before them to proclaim the presence of YHVH and make ready the whole house of Israel. Like now, and throughout the Prophets, some listened and some did not. Yet, the Priesthood and the tribe of Levi did hear the voice crying out and walked in limited obedience. Why limited? Because they suffered the same hardship of all of humanity, their own flesh without the intervention of the Ruach HaKodesh as their moral, emotional, physical and spiritual keeper, helper and friend.

The excitement of finding a place where YHVH is and having an encounter with Him is the most incredible experience of which any of us will ever partake. That encounter has the ability to take the sick and make them whole. It replaces sorrow, depression, despair and anger, with joy, peace, love and righteousness. YHVH has the ability to turn our mourning into dancing and to remove our sackcloth of sorrow. Just a simple glimpse of His Glory and we are made complete and whole.

However, if truth be told, we could be in the midst of YHVH's Presence and not even realize the gravity of what we are experiencing. Moshe had this take place as he spent time with Elohim. It was not until the people could not gaze at Moshe's face and he had to place a veil over his glowing face, that

he realized the manifest Presence of Adonai that was being imparted to the multitude around him. We get so bogged down in the circumstances of life that we lose sight of the path in front of us and, sometimes, do not see the goal at the end of the path. For those that have been called and chosen, we must not lose heart, faith or grow weary in well-doing. YHVH saw fit to deliver a people that He knew to be stiff-necked and stubborn of heart. He knew we would all play the harlot. YHVH knew that each and everyone of us would fall short of His Glory and, by way of sin, miss the mark and be disqualified for the prize. Nevertheless, the Creator reached down and plucked the sons of Israel out from captivity and bondage. He hears the cries of those that seek His deliverance. He longs for us to seek Him, but meets us where we are so that He can teach us to seek Him with all of our being.

After that deliverance, wherever we are in life, we are ambassadors for the King, making a way for Him, in the wilderness, school, workplace or grocery store. We are to be like the priests that abide in the Presence of Adonai for as long as it takes. Eight days is a nano-second in the grand design of eternity. The fiery trials that we are in right now seem like a lifetime to us now, but they are merely birth pangs of what YHVH is delivering out of our lives. It takes the tough times to have the resolve to seek YHVH with all of our hearts, souls and minds. It takes the desolate places to realize what it means to find an oasis. It takes the lack of much to have the zeal and passion to protect all that YHVH has placed in us and given us as stewards for His Righteousness. It takes that quiet time before the King of Kings to recognize the sound of His voice; to *Shema*/hear what He is saying and to receive the instructions of how to implement His plan as His hands and feet, mouth and ears, His walking in the Ruach and Truth.

In all of this, we must wait upon YHVH for deliverance. To take action in our own flesh, excitement, passion, or sorrow is to make ourselves king of our hearts and to place YHVH in the backseat. YHVH is not a backseat driver, He does not copilot well, and He will not allow you to steer and only use the accelerator or brake for you. He wants it all. In other words, the four-door sedan that we drive belongs to Him. He gets first selection of who sits where. Moreover, He chooses what goes in the trunk and who rides shotgun. We want to rule the vehicle and bully everyone riding with us to think we are in complete control. It is these times when we should be the most afraid. If we allow YHVH to have the full reign of our lives, then we do not decide if we like His way of driving, His route or

His destination, or take back control out of His hands. If we do, we are place ourselves as Elohim and have become lawless.

The sons of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu misappropriated an occasion that was precious in the sight of YHVH, Moshe, Aaron and the people. The zeal they had for presenting holy offerings to YHVH had not been tempered with the Truth in which they were directed to walk. In essence, they added to Torah, when YHVH had already told them not to add to or take away from His Words. In addition, they had the anointing oil upon them. They had not only entered a Covenant of saying, "Whatever YHVH says we will do," they had been given the yoke of walking before YHVH for the sake of the people; to accept their sin and guilt offerings, and to offer on behalf of the people's burnt and peace offerings. The Priesthood had entered into a relationship before YHVH that stood as a breach for the sons of Israel's transgressions. Their call was higher than that of the ordinary man. They had a holy obligation to walk in the precepts of YHVH and to present the punishments of the people in the form of offerings and sacrifices. If they could not walk righteously in the aspects of how and when to present the consecrated incense, how could YHVH have trusted them to teach His statutes and precepts to the people? How could YHVH trust them to keep the Torah and His Testament guarded from the profane? He could not trust them, so they were consumed.

Our brief encounters with YHVH are not even remotely what Aaron and his sons experienced when the Glory of YHVH resided at the Tabernacle. Nevertheless we all could fall into the same sin as Aaron's sons. It is not a matter of being clamorously foolish, as King David was before the Ark. It is a matter of serving inside the Tabernacle and keeping the unclean forbidden. Our frivolous behavior must be checked at the door. YHVH will not tolerate foolishness. YHVH's Altar of Burnt Offering is not the place to play with sticks and see if we can write our name in the air with smoke or sparks. The Altar of Incense is not the place to act drunk, falling down and writhing on the floor in the guise of pseudo intercession by way of laughing or staggering around like a drunken person. Our encounters with YHVH must be in order and in check by what the Ruach is telling and leading us to do and by what the Word of Torah has commanded us to do. If these are out of order or out of balance, we will bear the guilt of our wrongdoing. Furthermore, how much more should we be responsible, as we have been given all of Torah to read daily and all of the Ruach to have within us always? Our predecessors did not have

four or five Torah scrolls within their homes. They did not have the opportunity to hear the message of Messiah or about the Ruach/the Helper at every hour of everyday. We do!

Most of us want to think that we are exempt from the hard tasks of Tabernacle upkeep. We don't have to do all those laborious deeds of sacrifice, eating from the portions offered, offering incense or keeping the lights on the Menorah lit. How wrong we are to assume such things. If we have entered into a Covenant relationship with YHVH and we name Yeshua the Messiah, as He is, recognizing Him as Emmanuel, then we are the priesthood to this dying generation and are to keep all this through the Scriptures and by His Spirit.

Our fervent intercession offered up for the sake of the lost and dying around us is the incense rising to the Throne of Heaven. Through denying our flesh and proclaiming Yeshua as our Way, Truth and Life is the way of continual burnt offerings. This walk requires that we completely surrender ourselves in order to be closer and closer to Him. This is similar to the continual maintenance of the Lights of the Menorah. The flames are the tongues of fire coming down and residing upon our heads, while shedding light to those around us so that they may see and walk in Truth.

If we pray amiss or pray against something that YHVH has established as righteousness, then we are praying against the Creator. When we watch the violence or the seduction on television or movies, then offer up thanksgiving, we are offering tainted sacrifices unto the King. If we come to YHVH to observe His feast that was appointed last month or last week, or, we work for YHVH in our own flesh without His call, anointing or permission, we offer strange fire at His Golden Altar and are guilty of being outside of His will.

Our call is to be the hands and feet of Messiah. Working in the missions field in South Africa or down the road at the food bank are both noble assignments. But is that what you were created to do? Are these the actions that YHVH has called you to work? Yes, we are all to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the poor and take care of the Levite, there is no doubt or question in that. Yet, how are we to function as His priests? What is our role as His kings? These questions can only be answered by the walk and continual worship in Spirit and in Truth. When we stray from these boundary stones, we stray from the Presence of YHVH in our lives. We, then, assume the sovereign role of our own lives and defy the orders of the One Who has true authority. "The steps of a man are established by YHVH, and He delights in his ways."¹

¹Psalm 37:23

