



Taking Messiah Yeshua and Torah to the World!

Tree of Life Messianic Ministries
PO Box 467, Organ, NM 88052-0467
866-874-7250 * Fax: 866-800-2390
tolmm@etz-chayim.org * www.etz-chayim.org

Message 5-1-10
Emor-Say
Leviticus 21:1-24:23
Ezekiel 44:15-31
1 Peter 2:9-10

Introduction

The title to this week's Parashah means "speak." As in "God said (emor) to Moses, speak to the sons of Aaron." A unique syntax occurs in the opening verse with a double command: "And say (*ve'amarta*) to them," implying not an imperial relationship between a ruler and his elite priesthood, the *noblesse oblige* of the Jews, but a feeling of closeness.

Leviticus 23:1-3

1 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** "Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, These are the appointed feasts of the LORD that you shall proclaim as holy convocations; they are my appointed feasts. **3** "Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work. It is a Sabbath to the LORD in all your dwelling places. (Lev 23:1 ESV)

I have found it amazing when people completely ignore this passage where the Sabbath is the first of the Festivals **AND** it is commanded on the seventh day. I really do not know where people, who profess to be followers of Messiah Yeshua simply have tunnel vision when it comes to obeying God's instructions?

In this chapter from Leviticus 23 we find all of the Festivals that God requires' us to keep. There are some other festivals or times that are mentioned in Scripture like the New Moon, Purim, Chanukah, etc. While Chanukah is not seen in the Tanach it is mentioned by the Apostle John in his gospel account. In fact, he tells us that Yeshua was in the Temple walking around the colonnades of Solomon. Chanukah is referred to as the Feast of Dedication or Lights in this passage.

John 10:22 At that time the Feast of Dedication took place at Jerusalem. It was winter, **23** and Yeshua was walking in the Temple, in the colonnade of Solomon. (Joh 10:22 ESV)

There are other holiday's that have been added to the Jewish calendar by the rabbis over the centuries. You are free to keep these if you choose to or to not keep them. You are commanded to observe the Festivals He gives us in Leviticus 23 and that includes the seventh day Sabbath.

Exodus 16:26 "Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *which is* the Sabbath, there will be none." (Exo 16:26 NKJ)

Exodus 16:29 "See! For the LORD has given you the Sabbath; therefore He gives you on the sixth day bread for two days. Let every man remain in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day." (Exo 16:29 NKJ)

Some like to use Exodus 16:29 as the basis for trying to show you are not to do anything or go anywhere on the Sabbath. What they have failed to understand is that this was before the construction of the Tabernacle and the children of Israel had just been brought out of slavery in Egypt where it is quite possible they did not have any day of rest at all. The fact that some of them went out on the Sabbath day to try to find manna tells us about a fundamental lack of faith in their Creator who had just brought devastation on Egypt in such a way that the known world became aware of what had happened in Egypt.

The Hebrews faith in their God was one based on emotions rather than one grounded in trust in a God who had just shown them who He was. It would seem that what counted with the Israelites went from moment to moment or what are you going to do for me next? We tend to be like this more than we care to acknowledge. This is where taking daily stock of our relationship with God is a must do, not a maybe if I have the time. Just as the Hebrew's were having a hard time obeying God we have the same problem today. Salvation is by grace based on our faith in Messiah Yeshua but we are called to walk a lifestyle based on a foundation of Torah – God's holy instructions to His people Israel.

Exodus 20:8 "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. **9** Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, **10** but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. (Exo 20:8 ESV)

It is clear from this passage that the Sabbath applies to every living creature whether of Israel or not who are part of His nation. God has a nation upon the face of the earth that He is waiting to bring back together from their exile. In their exile He has planted them in the four corners of the earth for thousands of years not just for punishment but to have them plant seeds about God and His holy word.

Acts 15:19 Therefore my judgment is that we should not trouble those of the Gentiles who turn to God, **20** but should write to them to abstain from the things polluted by idols, and from sexual immorality, and from what has been strangled, and from blood. **21** For from ancient generations **Moses** has had in every city those who proclaim him, for **he is read every Sabbath** in the synagogues." (Act 15:19 ESV)

Verse 21 is the key here. It is not the four requirements that precede verse 21. If the Torah was not for the new Believers in Yeshua who are Gentiles then why instruct them to go to the synagogues on the Sabbath? It was because the Torah or Moses was not being required of these new Believers immediately. The decision was they would go to the synagogues to hear the Torah being taught and they would come to follow it when they knew more about it. It wasn't that the Torah no longer had any place in the life of Believers it was that many of the new Believers were not Jewish or God-fearers and they had no idea what the Torah was and what it required of them.

Coming to faith in Messiah was only the beginning not the culmination of everything. He was only the beginning and it would be through their new faith in Yeshua the Ruach HaKodesh/the Holy Spirit was given to these new babes in Messiah to help them understand what this new walk or Halachah required of them. It would not be through works that one would be saved but through faith alone but works would be the stamp of approval that one was truly saved not through mere lip service. Faith without works is nothing. The Apostle James, the brother of Yeshua, and the leader of the Jerusalem congregation had this to say:

James 2:18 But someone may *well* say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works." **19** You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder. **20 But are you willing to recognize, you foolish fellow, that faith without works is useless?** **21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac his son on the altar? **22** You see that faith was working with his works, and as a result of the works, faith was perfected; **23** and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," [Genesis 15:6] and he was called the friend of God. **24** You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone. **25** In the same way, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? **26** For just as the body without *the* spirit is dead, **so also faith without works is dead.** (Jam 2:18 NAU)

When I hear someone tell me that because I follow the Torah I am under the law it surprises the lack of understanding so many Believers have of what the Bible teaches. Even if you were to disregard the Tanach I really don't know how you can come away from reading the Apostolic Scriptures and placing what was written in their proper context we see instructions to live a Messiah centered Torah based lifestyle. All I can say is that the Church needs to find a new argument because the "*under grace not under law*" ship sailed long ago.

Ezekiel 44:23-24

23 "And they shall teach My people *the difference* between the holy and the unholy, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. **24** "In controversy they shall stand as judges, *and* judge it according to My judgments. They shall keep My Torahs and My statutes in all My appointed meetings, and they shall hallow My Sabbaths. (Eze 44:23 NKJ)

Don't you find it interesting how keeping the Sabbath is tied to the teachings of what is holy and what is unholy? What is clean and unclean also enters into the picture as well and these are teachings found in the Torah and run to the heart of what God expects from His people. The teachings on holy and unholy and clean and unclean go further than just the dietary laws or avoiding specific situations it is about our relationship with our Creator and from this our relationship with our fellow man.

Romans 14:20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. **21** It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. **22** The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. **23** But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. **15:1** We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. **2** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. (Rom 14:20 ESV)

The Apostle Paul is speaking about keeping the dietary laws, not for the sake of the laws themselves, but for the sake of one's faith. If we keep the Torah for the wrong reason it can affect negatively our brothers and sisters in the faith if they are not at the same place we are. We do not keep the dietary laws to gain salvation we keep them to please Abba – our Father. This is not about doing away with the dietary teachings found in the Torah because Paul did not have the authority to change the Torah nor would he do so because he was a Pharisee, an Orthodox Jew from ancient times. His walk should be an example for how one can live a life based on faith in Messiah Yeshua and follow the Torah because Yeshua tells us we are to do so.

1 Peter 2:9-10

9 But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR *God's* OWN POSSESSION [Isaiah 43:20, Deuteronomy 10:15], so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; **10** for you once were NOT A PEOPLE, [Isaiah 61:6, 66:21] but now you are THE PEOPLE OF GOD [Exodus 19:6, Deuteronomy 7:6]; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY [Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 4:20, 14:2], but now you have RECEIVED MERCY [Isaiah 9:2, 42:16]. (1Pe 2:9 NAU)

In this one passage of Scripture the Apostle Peter quoted so many Scriptures from the Tanach and especially the Torah how can we dare to even think the Torah no longer has any place for us in our lives? This argument surface 2,000 years ago when the new Believers coming to faith in Yeshua were overwhelmingly non-Jewish. The Jewish Believers struggled with this then and we are still struggling with this today. Recently a major Messianic Jewish ministry that encourages Gentiles to follow a Torah based lifestyle reverted to an earlier incarnation of its Messianic Jewish past in which they say that Gentiles have no obligation or necessity to follow the Torah but that Jews who come to faith in Messiah do. They have gone on to teach that if a Gentile wants to follow Torah they can but if they choose not to it is not a sin to be held against them.

Where do they come off saying what is sin and not sin when God gives one Law or Torah to one people – Israel? Are we going back to the days when only the Jews make up Israel and everyone else is a “wannabe?” This is not an issue I take lightly because the basis for my entire ministry is Torah is a lifestyle for everyone who desires to be a part of Israel. What this Messianic ministry does not say about their thinking is that they do not believe or accept that Gentiles can become part of Israel – because of they did they would not have had a crisis of understanding the place of Torah in the life of all Believers in Messiah Yeshua. The early Jewish Believers struggled with this same issue and Acts 15 was supposed to settle it once and for all, and yet, here we are 2,000 years later still hashing out the same issue. What benefit is there to being grafted into the tree of Israel, whose root is Messiah Yeshua, if after the grafting in a Gentile is still a Gentile?

What point is there to the teaching of adoption? Isn't the point of adoption to make that person a legal part of that family who has petitioned the court for the adoption? A good example of this is my own two children. My son and daughter were adopted from Korea as babies. We brought them here to the United States and were reviewed by the adoption agency to see how we were all settling in. After a period of time we were allowed to petition the court to finalize the adoptions severing any claim by the birth mothers or the adoption agency. The court granted the adoption petitions and we were instructed by the judge to understand our responsibilities to our children. They were now our children legally and were entitled to all the rights that a birth child had.

The final step was applying to the United States government to grant our children citizenship entitling them to all the rights and privileges a citizen was entitled to. My point is that there is no difference between a native born Israelite or a grafted in one because in the end we are all grafted into the tree of Israel through our faith in Yeshua and our following His Torah which He received from His Father. As He chooses to obey His Father out of His love for Him we are called to do the same in our relationship with Yeshua.

John 15:9 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. **10** If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. **11** These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (Joh 15:9 ESV)

To follow Yeshua's commandments is from love so that our joy may be full. Now that's a promise we should take to heart.

When the Hebrew school teacher asks little Miri to summarize the Jewish holidays, she replies, "They tried to kill us, we won, let's eat."

May the Lord bless you and yours... *Mordecai Silver*

If you have been blessed by what you have read in these daily e-mails or by what you have read or listened to on our website at www.etz-chayim.org please make a donation to Tree of Life Messianic Ministries on our website by clicking on the donation button in increments of \$25.00 and you can increase your donation by changing the quantity...

If you would like to have your group listed on our website at www.etz-chayim.org/directory.htm drop us an e-mail with your information...

Subscribe to our free e-mail groups by sending an e-mail to tolmm@etz-chayim.org asking to subscribe to one of our three e-mail lists. We offer the Whole House of Israel group (Torah commentary, news updates from Israel, Whole House of Israel light (a "light" version of Whole House of Israel with Torah commentary's only along with information pertinent to Tree of Life Messianic Ministries) and other items of interest and our Messianic Life magazine.

Tree of Life Messianic Ministries is a legally incorporated non-profit ministry with 501 (c) (3) status...