

Shavua Tov

Weekly Parsha

A Rood Awakening! Torah Commentary
By Glenn McWilliams

Torah Portion: *Achrei Mot* אַחֲרֵי מוֹת “After the death”

God spoke to Moses right after the death of Aaron's two sons, who brought an unauthorized offering before God and died.

**Vayedaber Adonay el-Moshe acharey mot
shney beney Aharon bekorvatam lifney-Adonay vayamutu**

Scripture for study: *Vayikra* (Leviticus) 16:1 – 18:33

Torah Portion: *Kedoshim* קְדוּשִׁים “Holy Ones”

You must be holy, since I am God your Lord [and] I am holy

**Daber el-kol-adat beney-Yisra'el ve'amarta alehem kedoshim
tiheyu ki kadosh ani Adonay Eloheychem.**

Scripture for study: *Vayikra* (Leviticus) 19:1 – 20:27

This week is a double portion. Acharei Mot and Kedoshim.

I want to begin our double portion this week with a brief outline of what we have already covered in the book of Leviticus. Let us remember, however, that this book is directly connected to the book of Exodus by the letter Vav in the first word of the book Vayikra.¹ When prefixed to a word, the Hebrew letter Vav serves as the conjunction “and.” In the Ancient Hebrew ideographs the letter Vav is the picture of a nail, which is clearly meant to join things together. I mention all of this because it is important that we realize the timing of these teachings as well as their context. Therefore before we begin looking at the brief outline of the book of Leviticus, or Vayikra, let us quickly summarize the book of Exodus, or Shemot.² The book of Shemot begins with the children of Israel in bondage in Egypt.

- Genesis 46:1-Exodus 2:25 The children of Israel in Egypt

- Exodus 3:1-7:7 Moses called and sent as a deliverer
- Exodus 7:8-12:36 YHWH performs signs and wonders in Egypt
- Exodus 12:37-13:22 The children of Israel leave Egypt
- Exodus 14:1-15:21 The crossing of the Yam Suph³
- Exodus 15:22-18:27 The journey to Sinai
- Exodus 19:1-31:18 The making of the covenant and the giving of the Torah

At this point the story takes a sudden turn.

- Exodus 32:1-10 The children of Israel are defiled by the making of the golden calf
- Exodus 32:11-33:23 Moses intercedes and the people repent
- Exodus 34:1-35 Moses returns to Mount Sinai and receives the new tablets
- Exodus 35:1-40:33 The children of Israel build the tabernacle

Moses assembles the tabernacle, and it is filled with the glory of YHWH.

Exodus 40:34 Then a cloud covered the tent of the congregation, and the glory of YHWH filled the tabernacle. And Moses was not able to enter into the tent of the congregation, because the cloud abode thereon, and the glory of YHWH filled the tabernacle.

The book of Vayikra then begins:

Leviticus 1:1 And YHWH called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying...

As soon as the tabernacle is erected, YHWH begins teaching the children of Israel about its purpose and its function. The first set of teachings are general teachings addressed to the children of Israel concerning their offerings and sacrifices.

- Leviticus 1:1-17 Teachings of the Burnt Offering
- Leviticus 2:1-16 Teachings on the Meal/Minchah Offering
- Leviticus 3:1-17 Teachings on the Peace Offering
- Leviticus 4:1-5:13 Teachings on the Sin Offering
- Leviticus 5:14-6:7 Teachings on the Trespass Offering.

We should note that the general teaching on the sacrifices is given to those who may desire to draw near to YHWH. There is no sense of coercion present in any of these teachings.

Leviticus 1:1 And YHWH called unto Moses, and spake unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying, ²Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, If any man of you bring an offering unto YHWH, ye shall bring your offering of the cattle, even of the herd, and of the flock.

The Hebrew word for offering, *korban* (Kof, Resh, Bet, Nun), is from the root *karav* (Kof, Resh, Vet), which means "to draw near." Thus these teachings are to illuminate the protocol for those

who desire to draw near to their Creator, Deliverer, Redeemer, and Savior. Understanding that there is a protocol for drawing near to the Holy One becomes clearer as this revelation progresses.

This section is then followed by further teachings on the offerings and sacrifices. This second group of teachings is specifically addressed to the *cohanim* that perform the sacrifices.

- Leviticus 6:8-13 Teachings on performing the Burnt Offering
- Leviticus 6:14-23 Teachings on performing the Minchah Offering
- Leviticus 6:24-30 Teachings on performing the Sin Offering
- Leviticus 7:1-10 Teachings on performing the Trespass Offering
- Leviticus 7:11-38 Teachings on performing the Peace Offering

With the sacrificial teachings in place, the next phase to be accomplished is the consecration of the *cohanim*. Prior to Aaron and his sons serving at the altar or entering into the presence of the Holy One of Israel, they must be set apart and sanctified. Before they can enter into the presence of the Holy One their own sin and defilement must be cleansed and covered, and so the next teachings in the book of Vayikra are those surrounding the consecration of the *cohanim*.

- Leviticus 8:1-36 The consecration of the *cohanim*
- Leviticus 9:1-24 The inaugural celebration of the *cohanim*
- Leviticus 10:1-20 The death of Nadab and Abihu; the first offerings.

After a dramatic warning against presuming to come into the presence of YHWH, the teachings of the book of Leviticus again focus upon the children of Israel as a whole. The following teachings are largely about understanding the distinction between the two states of *tahor* and *tamei*.⁴ Let us remember that *tahor*, usually translated as “clean,” is what is considered helpful or acceptable to being the image of the Holy One. To the contrary, that which is designated *tamei*, often translated as “unclean,” is the state of being unacceptable or useless for being the image of the Holy One. Thus the following teachings are about moving from the realm of *tamei* into the realm of *tahor*. This next set of teachings instructs the children of Israel on how to be restored from and live free of such defilement.

- Leviticus 11:1-47 Dietary laws
- Leviticus 12:1-8 Purity laws after childbirth
- Leviticus 13:1-14:57 *Tsara'at*⁵ and its cleansing
- Leviticus 15:1-33 Personal purity

All of these teachings and events lead us to the very heart of the Torah – Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. We should realize from this historical overview that the children of Israel were still living in a state of defilement from their stay in Egypt. Let us remember that the tabernacle and the priesthood were meant to be examples and object lessons for the children of Israel. We have already witnessed the fact that the *cohanim* were set apart and consecrated before they could serve as *cohanim* to the children of Israel. For seven days the *cohanim* were isolated from the world and even from the defilement of the children of Israel.

Leviticus 8:33 And ye shall not go out of the door of the tabernacle of the congregation in seven days, until the days of your consecration be at an end: for seven days shall He consecrate you. ³⁴As He hath done this day, so YHWH hath commanded to do, to make an atonement for you. ³⁵Therefore shall ye abide at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation day and night seven days, and keep the charge of YHWH, that ye die not: for so I am commanded. ³⁶So Aaron and his sons did all things which YHWH commanded by the hand of Moses.

Through the rite of consecration Aaron and his sons were washed of worldly defilement and their nakedness was covered by special holy garments. Only after they were cleansed, covered, and anointed, were the *cohanim* allowed to function in this holy office. Here we should recall that the children of Israel were likewise called to be YHWH'S priestly people.

Exodus 19:5 Now therefore, if ye will obey My voice indeed, and keep My covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto Me above all people: for all the earth is Mine: ⁶And ye shall be unto Me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

With the tabernacle erect and the *cohanim* consecrated and ready to perform, the next step is to likewise cleanse and cover the priestly children of Israel that they too may fulfill their calling. This is what is at the heart of the Yom Kippur service. While the children of Israel agree to accept the covenant of Torah prior to Moses ascending Mount Sinai, it is only now that the reality of this agreement begins to be lived out. In many ways what we witness in the Yom Kippur service is the rebirth of the children of Israel. Through the Yom Kippur service it is as though the slate is being wiped clean and the children of Israel start anew to become the image of YHWH ELOHIM in the world around them.

With this context in mind let us now look at the rite for Yom Kippur and glean what truths we may receive. Before we look at the details of this unique service, there are two significant points that must be made. The Torah is quite specific that this celebration is to be something that we celebrate from generation to generation. Yom Kippur is one of the *mikra'ay kodesh*⁶ and *mo'adim*⁷ of YHWH.

Leviticus 16:29 And this shall be a statute for ever unto you: that in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country, or a stranger that sojourneth among you: ³⁰For on that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before YHWH. ³¹It shall be a sabbath of rest unto you, and ye shall afflict your souls, by a statute for ever. ³²And the priest, whom he shall anoint, and whom he shall consecrate to minister in the priest's office in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen clothes, even the holy garments: ³³And he shall make an atonement for the holy sanctuary, and he shall make an atonement for the tabernacle of the congregation, and for the altar, and he shall make an atonement for the priests, and for all the people of the congregation. ³⁴And this shall be an everlasting

statute unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year. And he did as YHWH commanded Moses.

Leviticus 23:26 And YHWH spake unto Moses, saying, ²⁷Also on the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto YHWH. ²⁸And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before YHWH your Elohim. ²⁹For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. ³⁰And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. ³¹Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. ³²It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye celebrate your sabbath.

Numbers 29:7 And ye shall have on the tenth day of this seventh month an holy convocation; and ye shall afflict your souls: ye shall not do any work therein: ⁸But ye shall offer a burnt offering unto YHWH for a sweet savour; one young bullock, one ram, and seven lambs of the first year; they shall be unto you without blemish: ⁹And their meat offering shall be of flour mingled with oil, three tenth deals to a bullock, and two tenth deals to one ram, ¹⁰a several tenth deal for one lamb, throughout the seven lambs: ¹¹One kid of the goats for a sin offering; beside the sin offering of atonement, and the continual burnt offering, and the meat offering of it, and their drink offerings.

As Yom Kippur is one of the *mo'adim* and *mikra'ay kodesh* of YHWH, we should recognize both the historical significance of this day and its rite as well as its present and prophetic implications. From a historical perspective we note that the location of this particular day in the yearly cycle of *mo'adim* is consistent with the historical narrative of the children of Israel. Let us look briefly at the cycle of the *mo'adim* as it recalls Israel's history.

- Pesach - Passover - the miracles of Egypt
- Chag HaMatzot - the Feast of Unleavened Bread - the exodus from Egypt
- Bikkurim - the Firstfruits - the redemption of the firstborn of Israel
- Shavuot - the Feast of Weeks - the giving of the Torah
- Yom Teruah - the Day of Trumpets - the time of judgment and repentance (golden calf)
- Yom Kippur - the Day of Atonement - that the children of Israel may draw near to YHWH and begin their service as His priestly people
- Sukkot - the Feast of Tabernacles - the wandering in the wilderness

So we see in the order of the *mo'adim* and *mikra'ay kodesh* the historical narrative retold. By celebrating each of these *mo'adim* and *mikra'ay kodesh* we retell and relive the history of Israel. In Hebraic thinking, when one tells the story, one is to relive it as well, experiencing all of its emotion and power. So the events of Yom Kippur were not to be merely a new beginning point for the first generation of Israel that came out of Egypt, but each succeeding generation is to

experience this same sense of new beginnings and service. Every year the children of Israel are to be renewed in their service to YHWH. This sense of being renewed for service lends itself to a spiritual understanding of these same events.

- Pesach - recalls the sacrifice of Messiah that sets us free to enter into covenant with YHWH ELOHIM
- Chag HaMatzot - teaches us to remove the leaven of sin and religion from our lives
- Bikkurim - we offer up the firstfruits of our new faith; the tablets of our hearts
- Shavuot - the Spirit of the Holy One begins to write the Torah upon our hearts
- Yom Teruah - the Spirit begins to reveal the remaining filters, sins, and defilement still present in our lives and hearts; we are convicted, cry out, and confess
- Yom Kippur - we repent of our previous lives, sins, and defilement, putting it all away, as Messiah came to cover our sins and shortcomings
- Sukkot - we tabernacle with YHWH through Messiah that we may fully serve our calling

A second issue that we should understand concerning this day of Yom Kippur is the meaning of the word "atonement." E.W. Bullinger is the first to point out that there is no etymological connection between the Hebrew word *kafar* (Kaf, Fay, Resh) and the English word "atonement." Bullinger writes:

*"ATONEMENT. The first occurrence of the English word. The Heb. kafar, to cover, gives the essential meaning, as shown in its first occurrence, Gen. 6:14, where it is rendered "pitch (it)"....The English "at-one-ment" has no connection whatever with Heb. Word kafar."*⁸

Genesis 6:14 Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch [kafar] it within and without with pitch.

Both Noah Webster's The American Dictionary of the English Language⁹ as well as The Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology¹⁰ agree that the English word "atonement" comes from the compounding of the phrase "at-one-ment." Implicit in this word is the understanding of being in harmony with, united to, or reconciled with another. Noah Webster gives us a clear definition of the word "atone."

- "1. To agree; to be in accordance*
- 2. To stand as an equivalent; to make reparation, amends, or satisfaction for an offence or a crime, by which reconciliation is procured between the offending and offended party."*¹¹

I believe that the choice of this English word is understandable, but it has clearly skewed the meaning of the Hebrew word *kafar* and has created a similarly distorted understanding of Old Testament Theology. This warped theology is in many ways at the foundation of the Christian Church's replacement theology and its general disregard for the Torah.

The letter to the Hebrews clearly lends itself to the Church's replacement theology. This is especially true of the English translations where the translators have added words to the text to support this errant theology.¹² The letter to the Hebrews does correctly state:

Hebrews 10:4 For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

Here is where the correct understanding of *kafar* is important. If the Hebrew word *kafar* is translated as “atonement,” then we must agree that the Torah teaches that the blood of bulls and goats does take away sins and makes unity with YHWH a possibility. So the Church teaches that the Israelites were deceived by Torah into putting their faith in the blood of bulls and goats. The Church then teaches that when Messiah came, however, this Old Covenant (the Torah) with its false sacrifices was done away with. All of this is based on a mistranslation or understanding of the Hebrew word *kafar*.

We have already stated in previous portions the differences between the pagan sacrificial system and that of the children of Israel. Pagan practitioners sacrificed pigs, cows, goats, lambs, virgins, and even their children to appease the appetites or manipulate the emotions of their elohim. The thought beneath the pagan concept of sacrifice is simply one of satisfying the hunger of the elohim with offerings so that the elohim do not choose to eat the one making the offering; whether this be an individual or a village. Another thought is that if we satisfy the desires and appetites of the elohim, they might look upon us favorably and bless us with our desires. Thus pagan sacrifices are made with the idea of assuaging or appeasing the idol’s wrath, satisfying the idol’s desires, and provoking the idol to act in a manner beneficial to the worshipper. This same pagan understanding is implicit in the Church’s teaching of atonement. This is not, however, what is proclaimed by the Torah.

The Hebrew word *kafar* as is attested to by the first usage of the word, means “to cover.” Both William Gesenius and Ernest Klein demonstrate the etymological relatedness between the Hebrew word *kafar* and the Arabic word *kafar*, as well as the Aramaic word *kefar*; all of which mean “to cover.” According to both of these scholars the word may also mean “to wipe” or “wipe away,” to “hide,” “rub off,” or “obliterate.”¹³

The ancient Hebrew ideograph is very helpful in conveying the concept of the Hebrew word *kafar*. The letter Kaf is a picture of an open hand. The letter Fey is a picture of an open mouth. The letter Resh is a picture of a head or person. Together we may read these images as an open hand covering the open mouth of the accuser! Again note that the concept conveyed is that of covering. With this understanding let us look again at what is being taught in this portion concerning the sacrifices.

We confirm the verse quoted above from the letter to the Hebrews. The blood of bulls and goats does not take away sin. But this has never been what the Torah teaches. The purpose of Israel’s altar has always been that of proclamation; in other words, the offerings and sacrifices are simply visible words. The offerings and sacrifices are meant to communicate the hearts of the one offering and the one receiving. That Israel is unfit to be a dwelling place for YHWH ELOHIM has been clearly demonstrated from their many complaints, acts of rebellion, murmurings, and outright sins. That YHWH still desires intimacy with His Bride is made clear by the mere fact that He has made provision for Israel to draw near to Him even after their stumbling, murmuring, and shortcomings. The provision of the altar in the midst of a sinful

and defiled Israel is a testimony of the love, grace, and mercy of YHWH ELOHIM. The mere fact that YHWH made provision for our return when we come to our senses speaks volumes about the faithfulness of our Elohim.

Understanding that the sacrifices of bulls, rams, lambs, and goats do not take away our sins but COVER them means that these animal offerings are not THE PROVISION, but a temporary covering that allows us to continue in our return until the final provision (Messiah) is made. Again we are to realize that within each of these offerings and sacrifices there is a proclamation of some aspect of the Messiah's ministry and sacrifice. In other words, the provision of YHWH for our reconciliation is Messiah Yeshua; not the blood of bulls, rams, lambs, and goats. These animal sacrifices simply point to and make real the true provision. Let me demonstrate this with the most blatant of examples.

In the ritual of Yom Kippur there are two goats used for the sin offering.

Leviticus 16:5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two kids of the goats for a sin offering, and one ram for a burnt offering.

Leviticus 16:8 And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for YHWH, and the other lot for the scapegoat. ⁹And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which YHWH'S lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. ¹⁰But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before YHWH, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness.

Leviticus 16:15 Then shall he kill the goat of the sin offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: ¹⁶And he shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation, that remaineth among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Leviticus 16:21 And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: ²²And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

The Talmud teaches that these two goats are to be identical in appearance and value.

"The religious requirements concerning them is that the two of them be equivalent in appearance, height, and value."¹⁴

The tradition states that once the lots were cast, a crimson thread was tied around the neck of the scapegoat so that the *Cohen Gadol* could tell which one was which. The idea that these two goats were identical was to give the impression that there was in fact one goat. In this we see

the beautiful shadow picture of YHWH'S provision, Yeshua the Messiah. The first goat is slain, while the other goes free. If in fact we are to believe that these goats are depicting the same being, then we see that the one who is slain also goes free. In this we clearly see the death and resurrection of Messiah.

Here I must make comment about the dangers of adding to and diminishing from the Torah. By the time of the writing of the Talmud, there was clearly a tradition that taught that the scapegoat was bound, taken out into the wilderness, and thrown over a cliff and killed. That the intention was to kill the scapegoat is very clear.

"Now what did he do? He divided the crimson thread. Half of it he tied to a rock, and half of it he tied between its horns. He then pushed it over backward, and it rolled down the ravine."¹⁵

The Talmud speaks of a case where the *Cohen Gadol* might inadvertently kill the wrong goat at the altar. The Talmud declares,

"(He shall be) exempt from liability on account of the one for Azazel would in any case be killed outside the sanctuary."¹⁶

The Torah is very clear that the scapegoat is to go free. There is nothing said about killing this goat. By adding to the Torah the rabbis have destroyed the shadow picture of YHWH'S provision. We may recall that this is the same sin that kept Moses from entering the promised land.¹⁷

Clearly the ritual of the goats is a proclamation of YHWH'S provision for taking away the sins of the people. The two goats were not the provision; but they pointed to the provision. Here we may compare the function of these sacrifices to Yochanan the Immerser.

John 1:6 There was a man sent from Elohim, whose name was Yochanan. ⁷The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. ⁸He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

Again we must be clear on this matter that the blood of bulls, rams, lambs, and goats did not take away the sin, but proclaimed the one who would. Thus the people's faith was not in the goats, but in the very promise and provision of YHWH that the offerings and sacrifices proclaimed. In the meantime the children of Israel understood that their faith in the provision of YHWH would cover them and allow them to continue to walk with their Creator, Deliverer, Redeemer, and Savior. By keeping this yearly *mo'ed* and *mikra kodesh* the children of Israel renewed their faith in the provision of YHWH to address their sins and allow them to be reconciled to Him and restored to the covenant relationship entered into at Mount Sinai.

We should also understand that these sacrifices and offerings not only proclaim YHWH'S desire to be in relationship with the children of Israel, but they also proclaim the children of Israel's willingness and desire to draw near to YHWH. Again, as we have stated in the past, the offerings, the *korban*,¹⁸ are the demonstration of the children of Israel's desire to draw near to

YHWH. The animal sacrifices are not given to satisfy the hunger of YHWH or to manipulate His emotions. The animal sacrifices are meant to be a proclamation of the children of Israel's willingness to put off their lower, selfish, self-satisfying, self-centered, animal nature for the sake of fulfilling their higher calling. These offerings and sacrifices are the proclamation that the children of Israel are willing to submit to the fulfilling of YHWH'S will and purposes. In this regard these offerings may be understood as the fruits of repentance. This is the reason that Aaron offers a bull for his sin offering. In this offering Aaron professes that the very thing he once worshipped (the golden calf) he now takes dominion over and puts to death.

So it is that through this ritual all the defilement of living in the world of paganism and unbelief is covered. The children of Israel are renewed, cleansed, transformed, and ready for service as the restored image of YHWH ELOHIM in the world.

Kedoshim, the second part of our double portion, contains numerous instructions for living the sanctified life. Following the Yom Kippur ritual the Torah repeatedly reminds us of our calling.

Leviticus 19:2 Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, and say unto them, Ye shall be holy: for I YHWH your Elohim am holy.

Leviticus 20:7 Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am YHWH your Elohim.

Leviticus 20:8 And ye shall keep My statutes, and do them: I am YHWH which sanctify you.

Leviticus 20:26 And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I YHWH am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine.

We should note that just as the *cohanim* were separated and set apart for service, so too are the children of Israel to live a set-apart life. We should also note that YHWH states that He sanctifies us and tells us to sanctify ourselves. We should understand that YHWH sanctifies or sets us apart by giving us the Torah.

Psalm 147:19 He sheweth His word unto Jacob, His statutes and His judgments unto Israel. ²⁰He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them. Praise ye YHWH.

We sanctify ourselves by keeping the Torah.

Leviticus 20:22 Ye shall therefore keep all My statutes, and all My judgments, and do them: that the land, whither I bring you to dwell therein, spew you not out. ²³And ye shall not walk in the manners of the nation, which I cast out before you: for they committed all these things, and therefore I abhorred them. ²⁴But I have said unto you, Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey: I am YHWH your Elohim, which have separated you from other people. ²⁵Ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean, and between unclean fowls and clean: and ye shall not make

your souls abominable by beast, or by fowl, or by any manner of living thing that creepeth on the ground, which I have separated from you as unclean. ²⁶And ye shall be holy unto Me: for I YHWH am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be Mine.

Let us be very clear that what sanctifies us or sets us apart is not some phony title of privilege, mystical power, U.N. Resolution, or strange iridescent glow. What sets us apart from the nations is that we submit ourselves to Elohim to live according to His TORAH! We should also note here that this does not mean that we have to run to downtown Jerusalem and buy all of the Judaica we see. Keeping the Torah begins simply by keeping the appointed *mo'adim* and *mikra'ay kodesh* as established by the Creator. It also means that we learn to make the Creator's distinctions between what is *tahor* or useful for fulfilling our calling, and what is *tamei* or useless in being the image of Elohim. Keeping Torah is as simple as learning not to be a talebearer among the people.¹⁹ Keeping Torah means that we don't lie, cheat, or exploit our brethren or anyone else.²⁰ Keeping Torah means that we do not bear a grudge against our brethren,²¹ nor hate our brother in our heart.²² Keeping Torah means that we live our lives in the order of the Creator, Deliverer, Redeemer, and Savior, submitting to His revelation and the terms of His Covenant.

At the heart of these two portions is the concept that when we are cleansed and covered by Messiah Yeshua, the provision of YHWH, we should see this not as an opportunity for license, but as an opportunity to live a holy, sanctified, and set-apart life in order that we might fulfill our calling as *cohanim* to the rest of the world.

SHAVUA TOV !

¹ Vayikra is the Hebrew name of the book of Leviticus, and means "And he called."

² Shemot is the Hebrew name of the book of Exodus, and means "Names."

³ Yam Suph is the Hebrew name for the Red Sea.

⁴ *Tahor* is usually translated as "clean," while *tamei* is usually translated as "unclean." A better translation of these words would be "acceptable" and "unacceptable," or "useful" and "useless." *Tahor* and *tamei* are designations for two realms or states of being. As children of Israel we are called to be the image of Elohim. Things that belong to the realm of *tahor* are those things which are consistent with being the image of Elohim. Things that are designated as being *tamei* are those things which are not acceptable or useful for being the image of Elohim.

⁵ *Tsara'at* is mistranslated as "leprosy." *Tsara'at* is not a natural disease, but a divine affliction meted out by Elohim to lead one to repentance.

⁶ *Mikra'ay kodesh* (*mikra kodesh* in the singular) is the Hebrew for "holy rehearsals," though it is often translated as "holy convocations."

⁷ *Mo'adim* is the Hebrew word for "appointed times" (*mo'ed* in the singular), and is sometimes translated as "feasts."

Together, *mo'adim* and *mikra'ay kodesh* are understood as "appointed rehearsals" that are shadow pictures of future prophetic events.

⁸ The Companion Bible, Note on Exodus 29:33 E.W. Bullinger, Kregel Publications, Pg. 114

⁹ The American Dictionary of the English Language (1828), Noah Webster, Foundation For American Christian Education, Pg. 17

¹⁰ Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology, Edited C.T. Onions, Oxford Press, Pg. 60

¹¹ Webster Pg. 17

¹² This debate is too large for this article, but I will give but one example for your consideration. Hebrews chapters 8-9, according to the English translation, teach that a "New Covenant" has replaced the "Old Covenant." Note, however, that the word "Covenant" has been added by the translators in 8:7, 13, and 9:1. When these additions are removed and the passage is read in context, it becomes clear that the author is writing about the priesthood (note the word "them" referring to the priests in 8:8) and not the Torah.

¹³ A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament, Williams Gesenius, Oxford Press, Pg. 497 and A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English, Ernest Klein, MacMillian Press, Pg.284

¹⁴ The Babylonian Talmud, (Yoma 62A-68B), Jacob Nuesner, Hendrickson Publishing, Pg. 397

¹⁵ Ibid Pg 400

¹⁶ Ibid Pg. 398

¹⁷ Compare Exodus 17:6 and Numbers 20:8-12. The Rock symbolizes Messiah. The first time Moses is commanded to smite Messiah with his staff. This is a shadow picture of John 19:34. Messiah was smitten by the tree and spear for our provision. Remember that water is a symbol of the Torah. Thus by being smitten by the tree, the Spirit was poured out that it might write Torah upon our hearts. The second time Moses was commanded to simply speak to the Rock that water (Torah) might come forth. This was to show that after his crucifixion, we need only ask Messiah and he will give us living water (Luke 11:9-13). By changing the command Moses altered the shadow picture and gave the children of Israel a false image of YHWH'S provision, thus dishonoring the Holy One.

¹⁸ *Korban* is from the Hebrew root *karav* (Kof, Resh, Vet), which means "to draw near."

¹⁹ Lev. 19:16

²⁰ Lev 19:11ff

²¹ Lev. 19:18

²² Lev. 19:17