

TORAH portions – Book 2

Exodus

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Exodus 1 verse 1 to 6 verse 1 (Shemoth).

The name of this week's Torah portion is Shemoth, meaning 'going out.' We commence in Exodus (Transliterated in Hebrew as Shemoth) 1 verse 1 through 5; we are again given the names and numbers of Jacob's sons who went to Egypt. We read in verse 6 that whilst they were living in Egypt, Joseph died and all his brothers and all their generation died. However, we read in verse 7, that the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly, and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.

Several Pharaoh's ruled and died meanwhile. The next one mentioned in Scriptures after Joseph's time did not know Joseph at all. In fact we can deduce from what he said in verse 9 & 10, that he disliked the Israelites, as follows: ***'Behold, the people of the sons of Israel are more and mightier than we. (10) Come, let us deal wisely with them, lest they multiply and in the event of war, they also join themselves to those who hate us, and fight against us, and depart from the land.'*** During the enormous famine that spread throughout the entire world, Joseph was at the centre of it all. However, after the famine ended, Joseph's help was no longer required. And over time and after an entire generation passed away, the people in Egypt simply did not know Joseph. It is the same with us today: There are people who helped us enormously in the past. Whilst they assisted us, we might have been very grateful and even told them so. But as time went on, it was just not normal to continue to shower them with gratitude. However, we should not forget to 'now and then' inform them how much we appreciate their selfless way of life. Friends will appreciate such 'out of the blue' expressions of appreciation beyond words. Thirty four years ago, I was called into Elohim's work by the magazine of a man who since then taught me about 80% of what I know, and I will be ever thankful for what YHVH has done for me through that man.

As time elapsed the Israelites were lured from their farms and pastures to construction jobs. Soon they realized that they

were tricked into forced labor. The Egyptians hoped that in these miserable circumstances their numbers would dwindle, but the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and the more they spread out, so that they were in dread of the sons of Israel. The Egyptians compelled the sons of Israel to labor rigorously and they made their lives bitter with hard labor in mortar and bricks, and at all kinds of labor in the field. All the hard treatment failed to reduce the numbers of the Israelites. Therefore the cruel Pharaoh decreed that all Hebrew midwives would be expected to kill baby boys born of the Israelites. Failure to obey was punishable by death. However, the midwives had no intention to commit murder. When Pharaoh heard about this he called them to come and explain. We read in verse 19 of Exodus 1, how the midwives answered Pharaoh, as follows: ***“Because the Hebrew women are not as the Egyptian woman; for they are vigorous, and they give birth before the mid wife’s can get to them.”*** Because the midwives feared Elohim, He established households for them. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people saying (as we read in verse 22 of Exodus 1): ***“Every son who is born you are to cast into the Nile and every daughter you are to keep alive.”***

Next we read about the birth of Moses in Exodus 2: 1 & 2, as follows: ***‘Now a man from the house of Levi went and married a daughter of Levi. (2) And the woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was beautiful, she hid him for three months.’*** Then because she knew the authorities were suspicious, she put the baby in a pitch-smearred basket and set him afloat in the nearby river, trusting that Elohim would send someone to find him who would keep him safe. But the baby’s sister stood nearby to see what will happen to her brother. Later Pharaoh’s daughter came to the river to bathe and found the basket with the little baby in it. We read in verse 6 of Exodus 2, ***‘When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the boy was crying. And she had pity on him and said, “This is one of the Hebrews’ children.”’*** In verse 7, the baby’s sister comes up to Pharaoh’s daughter, saying: ***“Shall I go and call a nurse for***

you from the Hebrew woman, that she may nurse the child for you.” Pharaoh’s daughter approved, whereupon the girl raced off to the nearby home of her parents and told her mother what happened. The baby’s mother immediately went out to Pharaoh’s daughter, who asked her to take care of the baby. So the woman took the child and nursed him.

The child grew and his mother brought him to Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she named him Moses, saying that she drew him out of the water. Moses was educated by the best teachers in the nation; he grew up to attain fame and a high rank in Egypt. By the time he reached the age of forty Moses became more interested in the affairs of his fellow Israelite kinsmen. He became angered by the brutality with which the Egyptians treated his people. One day Moses saw an Egyptian guard beating an Israelite and in trying to save the life of the Israelite, he accidentally killed the guard. Later Moses learned that two fellow Israelites witnessed the fight and that Pharaoh and his men were seeking to arrest him. We read in verse 15 of Exodus 2, ***‘When Pharaoh heard of this matter, he tried to kill Moses. But Moses fled from the presence of Pharaoh and settled in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well.’*** The Midianite Priest had seven daughters and they came to draw water for their father’s sheep. Moses befriended them by helping them to draw water for their sheep. When they returned to their father, he asked them why they were back so soon. So they told him about the Egyptian who helped them to water their flock.

Reuel (also called Jethro) their father told them to bring Moses back to his camp, to have something to eat. Reuel soon found Moses to be an intelligent and educated man. He offered Moses work as a shepherd. Moses accepted. As time passed Moses became very fond of Zipporah, Reuel’s daughter. They eventually married and had two sons. In the meantime, conditions in Egypt became much worse for the Israelites living there. We read in verse 23 - 25 of Exodus 2, ***‘Now it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died. And the sons of Israel sighed because of the***

bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to Elohim. (24) So Elohim heard their groaning; And Elohim remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (25) And Elohim saw the sons of Israel, and Elohim took notice of them. Herein lies another valuable lesson for us. YHVH the Elohim of the Israelites hears and answers our prayers. If we call on YHVH our Elohim, reminding Him of our current position in exile, He will answer our prayers and ensure that we get back to the land which He promised us, through our forefathers. It reminds me of an account that happened a few years ago. A young American girl, the daughter of a millionaire was kidnapped by a group of terrorist demanding millions to return her alive to her family. The account carried on for several weeks, even months, with the Terrorists demanding ever more money as the time went on. Even though in the beginning of the situation, was dire, the terrorists treated the girl harshly, but as time went on, she became used to her abductors and she started working with them against the authorities and family. This is almost the same with us Israelites, as we have been in captivity for so long, we are beginning to co-operate with Satan our abductor. Even if we are told in magazines and newspapers that Xmas and Easter are pagan festivals, we have become so accustomed to serving Satan, that we have begun to co-operate with him fully. We participate in the pagan revelry almost believing that it is the truth, even knowing that it is harmful to us and our relationship with our heavenly Father. Instead of co-operating with Satan, we need to start doing what YHVH wants us to do. It is only by so doing that we will be saved from our current position of exile, when Yahshua returns to rule the world from Jerusalem. We need to do as Yahshua told us in Matthew 24: 14, saying: ***“And this gospel (good news) of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world for a witness to all the nations, and then the end shall come.”***

Moses had been in Midian for almost forty years when one day on a mountain, he saw a strange sight. There was a bush burning like a torch, but even though it continued to burn, no

part of it was burnt up. When he got close to the sight, Moses said (in verse 3 of Exodus 3): ***“I must turn aside now, and see this marvelous sight, why the bush is not burnt up.”*** When YHVH saw that Moses turned to look at the occurrence. Elohim called Moses from the bush, and said (in verse 4): ***“Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.”*** In verse 5 & 6 of Exodus 3, Elohim said to Moses: ***“Do not come near here: remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.”*** (6) ***He said also, I am the Elohim of your father, the Elohim of Abraham, The Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob.” Then Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at Elohim.*** YHVH tells Moses that He was going to deliver the suffering Israelites from their Egyptian task masters. YHVH also tells Moses that He wants him (Moses) to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go from Egypt.

We read Moses' response to Elohim in verse 11 of Exodus 3, as follows: ***“Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?”*** In the next few verses we see YHVH telling Moses His personal name and assuring that He will be with Him. We read the conversation recorded in verses 12 - 22 of Exodus 3, as follows: ***‘And He said, “Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship Elohim at this mountain.”*** (13) ***Then Moses said to Elohim, “Behold, I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, ‘The Elohim of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?”*** (14) ***And Elohim said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM¹”; and He said, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘I AM² has sent me to you.’”***(15) ***And Elohim, furthermore, said to Moses. “Thus you shall say***

¹ The footnote against I AM in the New American Standard Bible states that I AM is related to the Name of Elohim, YHVH, rendered LORD, which is derived from the verb HAYAH, to be.

² The literal translation of the Name YHVH in English is the Eternal.

to the sons of Israel, 'YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, the Elohim of Isaac, and the Elohim of Jacob, has sent me to you.' This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations. (16) "Go and gather the elders of Israel together, and say to them, 'YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, has appeared to me, saying, "I am indeed concerned about you and what has been done to you in Egypt. (17) "So I said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt to the land of the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, to a land flowing with milk and honey.'" (18) "And they will pay heed to what you say; and you with the elders of Israel will come to the king of Egypt, and you will say to him, "YHVH, the Elohim of the Hebrews, has met with us. So now, please, let us go a three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to YHVH our Elohim.' (19) "But I know that the king of Egypt will not permit you to go, except under compulsion. (20) "So I will stretch out My hand, and strike Egypt with all My miracles which I shall do in the midst of it; and after that he will let you go. (21) "And I will grant this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be that when you go, you will not go empty-handed (Here YHVH is saying that He will cause the Egyptians to contribute liberally to the Israelites, when the Israelites leave Egypt). (22) "But every woman shall ask of her neighbor and the woman who lives in her house, articles of silver and articles of gold, and clothing; and you will put them on your sons and daughters. Thus you will plunder the Egyptians."

When Moses asked how he could prove that he had been sent to help his people to gain their freedom, Elohim displayed how He will allow Moses to perform some startling miracles before Pharaoh. However, Moses objected that he should not be the one to speak to Pharaoh, because he could not speak very well. Even when Elohim told Moses that He will give him the ability to speak well, Moses still thought that the task was too much for him. This is when Elohim told Moses that He would

send Aaron, Moses' brother to do most of the speaking for him. Moses was glad, since his brother Aaron was much more articulate. As a final excuse Moses reminded YHVH that he was wanted in Egypt for murder. But YHVH told him that the authorities who had sought him had all died, Moses finally agreed to go. Moses went home to tell his father-in-law that he was leaving to free the Israelites. However, just prior to leaving, Elohim warned Moses that Pharaoh would at first refuse to let them go. He was told that if Pharaoh continued to refuse, Elohim would bring terrible things on the Egyptians, including eventually taking the life of the king's first-born son.

Moses and his family set out for Egypt. At the beginning of their journey YHVH met Moses and sought to put him to death, because he did not circumcise his son. Then Zipporah took a flint and cut off her son's foreskin and threw it at Moses' feet, telling him that he is a bridegroom of blood. At the same time YHVH told Aaron to meet Moses in the wilderness. So he went and met him at the mountain of Elohim and he kissed him. Moses told Aaron what Elohim expected them to do. Together they went to Goshen, where most of the Israelite leaders lived. They explained to the Israelite leaders what YHVH planned to do through them. Then Moses and his brother went to Pharaoh and told him what YHVH the Elohim of Israel said, as follows: ***'Let My people go that they may celebrate a feast to Me in the wilderness.'*** However, as YHVH warned, Pharaoh did not want to listen. Instead he made the task of the Israelites working in the land much more difficult. Then Moses returned to YHVH saying in verses 22 & 23 of Exodus 5: ***"O YHVH, why hast Thou brought harm to this people? Why didst Thou ever send me? (23) Ever since I came to Pharaoh to speak in Thy name, he has done harm to this people; and Thou hast not delivered Thy people at all."*** We conclude the Torah portion, where YHVH said to Moses in Exodus 6: 1, saying: ***"Now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh; for under compulsion he shall let them go, and under compulsion he shall drive them out of the land."***

Exodus 6 verse 2 to 9 verse 35 (Va'era).

This week's Torah portion is called Va'era, meaning '*and I appeared*'. We commence in Exodus 6: 2, also reading verse 3, as follows: ***'Elohim spoke further to Moses, and said to him, "I am YHVH; (3) and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as Elohim Almighty, but by My name, YHVH I did not make Myself known to them."*** Most of us know that as quoted here, verse 3 of Genesis 6 presents a problem, for those of us, who insist upon both using and honoring the Set-apart name of YHVH our Elohim.

True worship of YHVH goes hand in hand with using His correct Name. But, the reverse is also true: We cannot use the true name of YHVH, if we are not worshipping Him in accordance with the instructions in His word. If we are keeping feast days such as Xmas and Easter, which are not ordained by YHVH, we dishonor His name. In addition, if we are keeping scripturally ordained Feast Days at the incorrect times, we are dishonoring His name, as may be read in Malachi 2: 1 – 8. We should therefore not insist upon using the Name of YHVH, if we are keeping different feast days to the ones ordained by Him in Leviticus 23. We read in Exodus 20: 7, ***"You shall not take the name of YHVH your Elohim in vain, for YHVH will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain."*** The Hebrew word for vain is '*shavah*', meaning to bring to naught. As used in the third commandment it means that we shall not bring the name of YHVH to naught, by hiding, refusing to use or purposely misspelling His name.

There are Nazarene/Messianic Israelites/Jews and other like-minded believers, who even though they keep the Sabbath, the Set-apart Days given in Leviticus 23 and kosher laws given in Leviticus 11 (and elsewhere in Torah), they absolutely refuse to use the Set-apart Names of YHVH and Yahshua. Many interpret the third commandment to say that we should never use the name of YHVH, but use such titles as '*the LORD*' and '*G-d*' instead. However, by so doing they are in fact disobeying this very commandment. Others, who refuse to use

the Set-apart Names, use Exodus 6: 3 as their excuse. In the New American Standard Bible, Exodus 6: 3 reads as follows: ***“and I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as G-d Almighty, but by My name, LORD³, I did not make Myself known to them.”*** The question is: Is this translation of the Scriptures correct? Having studied the Torah portions in Genesis and Exodus over the past 13 weeks, we know that it cannot be right. We recall having read a number of verses before Exodus 6: 3, which seem to contradict the way this version states it. For example, we read previously in the last part of Genesis 4: 26, ***“Then men began to call upon the name of YHVH⁴.”*** We further read in Genesis 12: 8 and Genesis 13: 4 that Abram called on the name of YHVH, even before he entered into the covenant with YHVH where his personal name was changed to Abraham. In addition we also read in the last part of Exodus 3 where YHVH told Moses His name, saying: ***“This (YHVH) is My name forever, and this is My memorial – name to all generations.”***

The reason for these seemingly contradictory scriptures is that Paleo (or ancient) Hebrew did not use any punctuation marks such as commas, full stops, question marks, etc. The only way, therefore to understand ancient texts (written in Paleo Hebrew), is to take into account the context of the events being discussed. Considering the scriptures that we have quoted here, Exodus 6: 3 is actually a rhetorical question? We read this in “The Scriptures” published by ‘INSTITUTE FOR SCRIPTURE RESEARCH (PTY) LTD’ of South Africa, as follows: ***“And I appeared to Abraham, to Yitshaq, and to Ya’aqob, as El Shaddai. And by My Name יהוה, was I not known to them?”*** As can be seen here, this version of The Scriptures uses the Hebrew translation of the Tetragrammaton YHVH (יהוה). With this correct understanding of Exodus 6: 3

³ The footnote against ‘LORD’ in The New American Standard BIBLE reads: Heb., YHVH, usually rendered LORD.

⁴ Even though The New American Standard BIBLE uses LORD here, we know from an explanation in its foreword and the footnote above, that they replaced the name of YHVH with the title LORD, to as they put it, ‘avoid confusion’.

we see that there is no contradiction in the scriptures mentioned. In fact it actually serves to affirm the other texts in Genesis showing that all Yahweh's children before Moses knew, used, and called upon His name.

Continuing on in Exodus 6: 6 – 7, we read: ***“Say, therefore, to the sons of Israel, ‘I am YHVH, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from their bondage, I will also redeem you with an outstretched arm and with great judgments. (7) Then I will take you for My people, and I will be your Elohim; and you shall know that I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians.’”*** Encouraged by these words Moses and his brother Aaron went to inspire their people. But the sons of Israel were so miserable that they did not listen to them. Soon afterwards YHVH reminded Moses and Aaron that they had a responsibility that has to be done. In verses 29 & 30 of Exodus 6, YHVH spoke again to Moses, saying, ***“I am YHVH; Speak to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I speak to you.”*** (30) ***But Moses said before YHVH, “Behold I am unskilled in speech; how then will Pharaoh listen to me?”*** In Exodus 7: 1 YHVH answers Moses, as follows: ***“See I made you as Elohim to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.”*** YHVH also tells Moses that he will harden Pharaoh's heart so that He may multiply His signs and wonders in the land of Egypt. In verses 4 & 5 of Exodus 7, YHVH tells Moses: ***“When Pharaoh will not listen to you, then I will lay My hand on Egypt, and bring the sons of Israel, from the land of Egypt by great judgments. (5) And the Egyptians shall know that I am YHVH, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the sons of Israel from their midst.”***

Reading on we see that when Moses and Aaron came before Pharaoh, Aaron threw his staff down before Pharaoh and his servants and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh called his sorcerers, and each of them also threw down his staff and they turned into serpents. However, we see that Aaron's staff

swallowed up their staffs. Yet Pharaoh's heart was hardened and he did not listen to them. Then again YHVH spoke to Moses telling him to go and inform Pharaoh that because he did not want to let the Hebrews go, He is going to change all the water in Egypt into blood. The fish in the river will die and the river will become foul. Then YHVH said to Moses in verse 19 of Exodus 7, ***“Say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and stretch out your hand over the waters of Egypt, over their rivers, over their streams, and over their pools, and over all their reservoirs of water, that they may become blood; and there shall be blood throughout all the land of Egypt, both in vessels of wood and vessels of stone.’”*** But we read that the magicians in Egypt did the same with their secret arts; and Pharaoh's heart was hardened once again.

In Exodus 8 YHVH again tells Moses to tell Pharaoh to let His people go. YHVH also tells Moses that if Pharaoh refuses again, he will smite Egypt with an influx of frogs. However, after Aaron stretched his staff over the waters of Egypt and frogs came and covered the land, Pharaoh's magicians did the same with their secret arts. But at this time Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and said in verses 8, ***“Entreat YHVH that He remove the frogs from me and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to YHVH.”*** So, Pharaoh agreed that the Israelites may go and Moses cried out to YHVH to remove the frogs from Pharaoh and his people and that the frogs only be left in the Nile river. We see that YHVH did according to their prayer, the frogs died, The Egyptians piled the dead frogs in heaps and the land became foul. But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart again and refused to let the Israelites go. Then YHVH again spoke to Moses, telling him to tell Aaron to strike the dust of the ground, that it becomes gnats on man and beast. So Aaron did as YHVH told Moses and all the dust of the earth became gnats through all the land of Egypt. This time Pharaoh's magicians could not bring forth gnats. So the magicians told Pharaoh, as we read in verse 19 of Exodus 8, ***“This is the finger of Elohim.”*** But Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not listen to them, as YHVH had said.

YHVH again summoned Moses and Aaron, saying to Moses in verses 20 – 23, that the next time He is going to send swarms of insects on Pharaoh and his people, but other than with the three previous plagues, YHVH will separate the Israelites from the Egyptians and the insects will only attack the Egyptians. Then YHVH allowed swarms of insects into the homes of Pharaoh and the Egyptians, and their homes were laid waste because of the swarms of insects. So Pharaoh called Moses and Aaron and told them to go and sacrifice to their Elohim, but within the borders of Egypt. In verses 26 & 27, we read Moses' answer to Pharaoh, as follows: ***"It is not right to do so, for we shall sacrifice to YHVH our Elohim what is an abomination to the Egyptians. If we sacrifice what is an abomination to the Egyptians before their eyes, will they not then stone us? (27) We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness and sacrifice to YHVH our Elohim as He commands us."*** Again Pharaoh agrees to the request and asks Moses to also pray for him. Immediately Moses makes supplication asking YHVH to remove the swarms of insects from Pharaoh and his people. But again as soon as the insects left, Pharaoh hardened his heart and did not let the Israelites go.

We read in Exodus 9 verses 1 – 5, ***'Then YHVH said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh and speak to him, 'Thus says YHVH, the Elohim of the Hebrews, "Let My people go, that they may serve Me. (2) For if you refuse to let them go, and continue to hold them, (3) behold, the hand of YHVH will come with a severe pestilence on your livestock which are in the field, on the horses, on the donkeys, on the camels, on the herds, and on the flocks. (4) But YHVH will make a distinction between the livestock of Israel and the livestock of Egypt, so that nothing will die of all that belongs to the sons of Israel." (5) And YHVH set a definite time, saying, "Tomorrow YHVH will do this thing in the land."*** So YHVH did as He said He will do the next morning. The fifth plague struck before most Egyptians knew what was happening. Within hours the land was strewn with dead cattle, horses, camels, sheep, goats and donkeys. The sudden, fatal

disease wiped out the Egyptian livestock, whilst the animals belonging to Israel were untouched. This was indeed a serious blow to the Egyptians, to whom many kinds of animals were seen as sacred. It was difficult for them to understand why their idols would allow their animals from which the animals were copied, to die.

Despite the tremendous loss to his people, Pharaoh remained stubborn and was even more intent on keeping the Israelites as a work force to build the Egyptian cities. Then YHVH said to Moses and Aaron that they should take for themselves handfuls of dust from a furnace and let Moses throw it into the air in Pharaoh's sight. The fine dust will spread over the land of Egypt and become boils breaking out with sores on all the people and the animals in all the land of Egypt. So Moses and Aaron did as YHVH told them, and it happened as He said. The magicians of Egypt tried to replicate this plague, but could not do the same. And the boils were on all the Egyptians, including the magicians. But, YHVH hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he did not listen to them. Again YHVH spoke to Moses in verses 13 – 19 of Exodus 9, saying: ***“Rise up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says YHVH, the Elohim of the Hebrews, ‘Let My people go, that they may serve Me. (14) For this time I will send all my plagues on you and your servants and your people, so that you may know that there is no one like Me in all the earth.”*** (Wow, do we believe YHVH when He says that there is no one like Him on the earth: The other day like normally over the silly season, the South African blood bank asked for donors to please come forward, as their supply of blood for emergencies due to accidents, were running low. The announcer also added that no one is able to make blood; science is not able to help in such emergencies and their only source of blood is obtained from healthy human donors. As I listened to the radio, I recalled how YHVH turned all the water in Egypt into real blood.) (15) ***“For if by now I had put forth My hand and struck you and your people with pestilence, you would then have been cut off from the earth. (16) But, indeed, for this cause I have allowed you to remain, in***

order to show you My power, and in order to proclaim My name through all the earth. (17) Still you exalt yourself against My people by not letting them go. (18) Behold, about this time tomorrow, I will send heavy hail, such as has not been seen in Egypt from the day it was founded until now." (Let me tell you hail can be very scary. I am not talking about the type of hail that we sometimes see at the coast - the size of small pebbles: I am talking about hail that I have never seen before. Once during an eight year stay in Gauteng, there was a storm with hail stones the size of tennis balls and as hard as rocks; Every car in the vicinity were dented; most windows, including many windscreens of vehicles were destroyed. Damage ran into millions of Rand and to us who were not used to it, it looked like Armageddon.) (19) **"Now therefore send, bring your livestock and whatever you have in the field to safety. Every man and beast that is found in the field and is not brought home, when the hail comes down on them, will die."** Can you believe it, here YHVH warns those who will listen to him, to go indoors, or die. Do we listen to warnings of YHVH recorded for us in His Torah – do we observe the Sabbath; do we keep the ordained Set-apart days; do we eat only kosher food; things that are for our good. Similar to in this case: If the Egyptians remained indoors during this plague, they would have been alive; we could have eternal live, if we remain obedient to the word of Elohim.

We see that again only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived there was no hail. Elsewhere wherever the hail struck in the field throughout the land of Egypt, man and beast as well as all plants of the field were shattered. Pharaoh again asked Moses and Aaron to ask YHVH to forgive him and his people. He also acknowledged that he and his people were the wicked ones and that YHVH is the righteous one. So again Moses ask YHVH to stop the lightning and the hail, but saying to Pharaoh, that he knows that he and his people do not fear YHVH the Elohim of Israel, yet. Before continuing, I would like you to notice in the time of the year during which the hailstorm occurred. We read in verses 31 & 32 of Exodus 9: **'Now the**

flax and the barley were ruined, for the barley was in the ear and the flax was in the bud. (32) But the wheat and the spelt were not ruined for they ripen late.' From these two verses we are able to see that the hailstorm happened very close to the month of Aviv, which is Springtime in the northern hemisphere.

We conclude this Torah portion in verse 35, where we read: **'And Pharaoh's heart was hardened, and he did not let the sons of Israel go, just as YHVH had spoken through Moses.'** Many will at this time think that this was sheer stupidity on the part of Pharaoh. However, even the hardening of Pharaoh's heart was Elohim's doing. It is like with our Jewish brothers: YHVH has for the time being blinded the righteous Jews to the identity of the Messiah, until all of the so-called Gentiles (the Israelites who think that they are gentiles) have come in, then all Israel shall be saved. We read this in Romans 11 and especially in verse 32, where it says about them: **"For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all."** Similarly YHVH has blinded Christianity at this time, not to understand His gospel truth, as He is only calling a remnant (a relatively small percentage of the population) to become kings and priests during His coming kingdom. These first-fruits will be resurrected at the return of Yahshua to come and rule us from Jerusalem (this is known as the first resurrection). The rest of the dead will only be resurrected after the millennium. They will be the second harvest of people into the kingdom of Elohim. At that time YHVH will open their minds to the Scriptures, as we are told in Isaiah 25: 7 – 9, as follows: **'And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. (8) He will swallow up death for all time** (this will only happen after the Great White Throne Judgment, as we read in Revelation 20: 15), **And YHVH Elohim will wipe away tears from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; for YHVH has spoken. (9) And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our Elohim for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is YHVH for whom we have**

waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.” Yes, there will be those who have sinned with full knowledge, like those amongst us who were called by YHVH into His truth, but continued living in disobedience to His word. They, as well as some of those who will be shown the way of Elohim after the second resurrection, but refuse to repent and accept Yahshua as their Savior, will become ashes under the feet of the righteous as we are told in Malachi 4: 1 - 3⁵.

⁵ *For more information regarding our destiny as human beings, you may request my e-book entitled: “What is our Destiny?” free of charge. However, you will require an Adobe Acrobat reader to access the book in PDF format.*

Exodus 10 verse 1 to 13 verse 16 (Bo).

This week's Torah portion is called Bo, meaning 'to go'. Starting in Exodus 10: 1 & 2 we read: ***'Then YHVH said to Moses, "Go to Pharaoh, for I have hardened his heart and the heart of his servants, that I may perform these signs of Mine among them, (2) and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your grandson, how I made a mockery of the Egyptians, and how I performed My signs among them; that you may know that I am YHVH."*** In the previous Torah portion we discussed why YHVH hardened Pharaoh's heart, but here we see that there were also other reasons for doing so. It is only by studying these annual Torah portions for ourselves that we see what YHVH requires of us. Here YHVH tells Moses, that He also hardened Pharaoh's heart, so that we Israelites tell our sons (children) and grandsons (grand children) how YHVH made a mockery of the then powerful Egyptian nation; how He performed signs among them, so that we may know that He is YHVH our Elohim.

Again Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh what YHVH said and told him that if he refuses to let the Israelites go, there will be a plague of locusts in Egypt. They will cover the surface of the land, so that no one shall be able to see the land. They shall eat everything that was left after the hail, including every tree which sprouts in the field. The locusts will even fill the homes of the Egyptians, something which was never seen before. When Moses left, Pharaoh's servants said to him (as is recorded in verse 7 of Exodus 10): ***"How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve YHVH their Elohim. Do you not realize that Egypt is destroyed?"*** Moses told Pharaoh that YHVH requires that all the Israelites, including their sons and daughters, as well as the animals must be allowed to go and have a Feast to Him (YHVH). This time Pharaoh agrees that they go, but adds that only the men will be allowed to go, At that point Moses and Aaron were driven out from Pharaoh's presence. Then YHVH told Moses to stretch out his hand over the land of Egypt so that the plague of locusts may commence over Egypt. The

locusts came up and consumed every green leaf and plant in the land of Egypt.

Seeing the devastation in Egypt, Pharaoh immediately summons Moses and Aaron to his palace saying (as is recorded in verse 16 & 17 of Exodus 10): ***“I have sinned against YHVH your Elohim and against you. (17) Now therefore, please forgive my sin only this once, and make supplication to YHVH your Elohim, that He would only remove this death from me.”*** Moses went out from Pharaoh asking YHVH to remove this plague from Egypt. So YHVH allowed a strong west wind to drive all the locusts into the Red Sea. But, YHVH hardened the heart of Pharaoh again, and again he refused to let the Israelites go. YHVH again tells Moses to stretch his hand towards the sky, that there may be an intense darkness over the land of Egypt. When Moses did as YHVH requested, a thick darkness covered all the land of Egypt for three days. It was so dark that no one could rise from his bed for three days. Pharaoh again called to Moses, saying in verse 24 of Exodus 10: ***“Go, serve YHVH; only let your flocks and your herds be detained. Even your little ones may go with you.”*** Moses tells Pharaoh that they are required to sacrifice animals to YHVH the Elohim of Israel, and will therefore need to take all their livestock with them. Upon hearing this YHVH again hardened Pharaoh’s heart and he was not willing to let them go. Then Pharaoh chased Moses out, as we read in verse 28, saying: ***“Get away from me! Beware, do not see my face again, for in the day you see my face you shall die!”***

Then YHVH told Moses that He will bring one more plague on Pharaoh and on Egypt, after which he will definitely drive the Israelites out completely. In verse 2 of Exodus 11, YHVH instructs Moses, saying: ***“Speak now in the hearing of the people that each (Israelite) man asks his (Egyptian) neighbor and each woman from her neighbor for articles of silver and articles of gold.”*** Moses also tells Pharaoh that YHVH is going to go in the midst of Egypt in the middle of the night and all the first-born of Egypt shall die. The first-born of

Pharaoh and his people, including the first-born of all the animals that are left in Egypt will die. There shall be great mourning in all the land of Egypt, but not even a dog will bark in Israel, as YHVH will make a distinction between Egypt and Israel. In verse 8 of Exodus 11, Moses added that Pharaoh's servants will come down to him (Moses) and bow themselves before him, saying, **“Go out, you and all the people who follow you.” And after that I will go out.** As Moses left, YHVH told Moses that Pharaoh will again refuse to let the Israelites go, in order that His wonders may be multiplied in the land of Egypt.

In ancient societies, the firstborn son was given very special treatment, receiving the greatest portion of an inheritance, and became the head of the family after the death of his father. In a monarchy, like Egypt when the Pharaoh died, it was his firstborn son who ascended the throne. The firstborn was usually the most loved and respected in the family. So for all the firstborn in the land to die was a great tragedy to the Egyptians. Even though YHVH said this plague would be on every family living in the land of Egypt, YHVH gave the Israelites a way to escape. YHVH through Moses told the Israelites that on the tenth day of the first month (Aviv), each family was to choose from among their flocks a male lamb, under a year old and without any blemishes. We read in verse 6 of Exodus 12: ***‘And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel is to kill it at twilight.’*** The term ‘twilight’ is better explained in this verse in the King James Version, as follows: ***‘And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.’*** In Hebrew ***‘in the evening’*** is transliterated as *‘erev*, as used in *‘erev Shabbat’*. In other words, they were to kill the lamb immediately after sunset at the beginning of the fourteenth of Aviv, and mark the doorposts of their houses with the blood of the lamb. Inside their houses that night, the Israelites were to roast and eat the lamb and be ready to quickly leave Egypt.

When the death angel came at midnight of the same night (the fourteenth of Aviv), he passed over any house that had the blood on its doorposts, and spare the firstborn members of that family. We read about this in Exodus 12: 13, ***“And the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you live; and when I see the blood I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.”*** It was their obedience – striking the blood of the lamb on their doorposts – that saved the firstborn of the Israelites from death in Egypt.

When the Israelites partook of that very first Passover they did not realize that the Passover sacrifice was a ***type*** or forerunner of the sacrifice of Yahshua many years in the future. We read about this in the last part of 1 Corinthians 5: 7: ***“For Messiah our Passover also has been sacrificed.”*** And in 1 Peter 1: 18 - 19: ***“knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers. (19) but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Messiah.”*** Egypt is sometimes used in the Scriptures as a symbol of sin. When we sin, we bring upon ourselves the penalty of eternal death, as is recorded in Romans 6:23. Since we all have sinned, we are all under the death penalty. In John 1: 29, John the Immerser referred to Yahshua as the Lamb of YHVH, which takes away the sins of the world. Yahshua qualified to do this because He lived a perfect, sinless life as a ‘human being’. He never brought upon Himself the penalty for sin, which is death. And since He was YHVH in the flesh, His one life was more valuable than all other human lives combined. Yahshua was therefore able to pay the penalty of death for all mankind.

YHVH the Father wants us to live forever as His ‘helpers’ or children, but because all of us have sinned, we brought the death penalty upon ourselves. But by dying in our stead, Yahshua paid the penalty for our transgressions. When YHVH calls a person, and that person decides with all his heart to

begin living the way of life of YHVH, to keep His Torah and avoid sinning, that is called *repentance*. If he repents, he can be immersed in the saving name of Yahshua and, with the laying on of hands he receives a portion of the Set-apart Spirit (as per Acts 2:38 and Acts 8: 16 & 17). When a person is immersed, YHVH forgives him by applying the sacrifice of Yahshua to his past sins. He is then no longer under the death penalty that hung over his head.

In Exodus 12 the Israelites were commanded to observe the Passover by actually killing and eating an unblemished lamb. But when Yahshua came to the earth, He replaced the sacrifice of a lamb at Passover with new symbols. On the evening before His crucifixion, Yahshua and His disciples observed the Passover in a way different than the ancient Israelites had been commanded to do. Let's notice how Yahshua changed the way His disciples were to observe the Passover from that time forward. Only those members of the ecclesia who are circumcised in both heart and flesh (only applies to male descendants or heirs of Abraham), may partake of the annual Passover today. Circumcision of the flesh is the requirement given in Exodus 12: 48 & 49, as follows: ***“But if a stranger sojourns with you, and celebrates the Passover to YHVH, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near to celebrate it; and he shall be like a native of the land. But no uncircumcised person may eat of it. (49) The same law shall apply to the native as to the stranger who sojourns among you.”*** Even though circumcision was the only requirement to partake of the original Passover, those who partake of the memorial Passover, commemorating Yahshua's death, should also be immersed in His saving name, The rationale for this requirement, is explained in the following: To begin, let's turn to Colossians 2: 9 – 13 where we read: ***‘For in Him (Yahshua) all the fullness of Deity (Elohim) dwells in bodily form, (10) and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority; (11) and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the***

body of the flesh by the circumcision of Messiah; (12) having been buried with Him in immersion, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of Elohim, who raised Him from the dead. (13) And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions.'

We see here that immersion is the 'circumcision of Messiah'. We also read in Galatians 3: 27 – 29, ***'For all of you who were immersed into Messiah have clothed yourselves with Messiah. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Messiah Yahshua. (29) And if you belong to Messiah, Then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.'*** This promise was part and parcel of an eternal covenant that YHVH made with Abraham and his offspring. The covenant that YHVH made with Abraham is recorded in Genesis 17 and especially verse 12: ***"And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations..."*** The conditions of the covenant are recorded in verse 8 of Genesis 17 as follows: ***"And I will give to you and to your descendants after you, the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their Elohim."*** It is therefore clear, that the covenant of circumcision has nothing to do with salvation, but it has to do with living in the land of Canaan.

Even though we have learnt that immersion is the new (or rather renewed) covenant circumcision (or the circumcision of Messiah), we notice that circumcision of the heart was already mentioned in Deuteronomy 10: 16, as follows: ***"Circumcise then your heart and stiffen your neck no more."*** This is also confirmed in Deuteronomy 30: 6 in this way: ***"Moreover YHVH your Elohim will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live."***

We who are called during this age and who know that Yahshua is the Rock of our Salvation are according to 1 Peter 2: 8 & 9 , a chosen race (the Israel of Elohim), a royal priesthood, a Set-apart Nation, a people for Elohim's own possession. We read in Ezekiel 44: 7 to 9, '**When you brought in foreigners, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, to be in My sanctuary to profane it, even My house, when you offered My food, the fat and the blood; for they made My covenant void – this in addition to all your abominations. (8) And you have not kept charge of My Set-apart things yourselves, but you have set foreigners to keep charge of My sanctuary.**' (9) '**Thus says YHVH Elohim, "No foreigner, uncircumcised in heart and uncircumcised in flesh, of all the foreigners who are among the sons of Israel, shall enter My sanctuary.'**' This quote from Ezekiel is a thought provoking end-time prophecy, as may be deduced when reading in Ezekiel 44: 1, where mention is made of the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces the east and was shut. In verse 2 we read: "**And YHVH said to me, "This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it, for YHVH Elohim of Israel has entered by it; therefore it shall be shut."**" In verse 3 it mentions the prince (Yahshua) who shall enter by way of the porch of the gate, and shall go out by the same way. This is a scene of the future when Yahshua will have already returned. These verses in Ezekiel 44 make it abundantly clear that the priests, who will serve in the Temple in the coming kingdom of Elohim, will need to be circumcised in both heart and flesh. However, it is just a matter of which comes first: We have seen that our father Abraham was circumcised in heart, first. His obedience and faith in YHVH preceded his fleshly circumcision. But, when YHVH gave him that requirement – when He said, "cut off your foreskin, you and all your males for all generations", Abraham didn't quibble.

We read in John 13: 4 – 7 that foot washing is one of the new symbols that Yahshua instituted for the Passover. After taking a towel and pouring water into a basin, Yahshua washed the feet of each one of the disciples. Yahshua explained His

actions in John 13: 13 – 17, as follows: ***“You call me Teacher and Master; and you are right, for so I am. (14) If I then, your Master and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. (15) For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. (16) Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. (17) If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”*** Yahshua was illustrating to His disciples that He had come to earth to serve mankind. Shortly afterward, He proved the extent of His extreme service for this world when He gave His very life for the sins of all mankind. Foot washing depicts the attitude of *humility* and *service* to others that Yahshua always exhibited, and which He desires that every Nazarene Israelite should strive to imitate.

What other *new* ways of observing the Passover did Yahshua institute during that Passover before His crucifixion? One very important symbol Yahshua introduced during the Passover meal concerned the meaning of the unleavened bread they ate that evening. In Matthew 26: 26, we read, ***‘And while they were eating, Yahshua took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, and said, “ Take, eat; this is my body.”’*** Yahshua said the broken bread symbolized His body. Before Yahshua was crucified, He was severely beaten and whipped. Even for a hard-working carpenter, this was an exhausting and terrible beating. It was so severe that the skin was torn from His bones, and many were no longer able to recognize Him. This is confirmed in Isaiah 52: 14 ***“Just as many were astonished at you, My people, So His appearance was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.”***

When we break physical health laws we become sick: If we don’t eat proper balanced meals; if we don’t get adequate rest; or if we don’t get proper exercise we eventually become sick. Sickness is the penalty we pay for breaking physical health laws, just like the second death is the penalty for breaking the Spiritual laws (Torah) of YHVH. However, YHVH wants us to

live happy, full, abundant and healthy lives. Yahshua inspired John to write in 3 John 2, ***“Beloved, I pray that in all respects you may prosper and be in good health, just as your soul prospers.”*** Because of His great love for each of us, Yahshua allowed Himself to be beaten and suffer intense pain even though He didn’t break any physical health laws. He paid the physical penalty for us so if we become ill or suffer an accident, we can be healed. This is confirmed in 1 Peter 2: 24: ***‘ and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.’*** We read accordingly in James 5: 14 & 15 ***‘Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the ecclesia, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of Yahshua; (15) and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and Yahshua will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.’*** YHVH promises to heal us. That is part of the meaning of the Passover. However, we should also remember that there is also a reason why their righteous people die. We see in Isaiah 57:1, that: ***‘The righteous man perishes, and no man takes it to heart; And devout men are taken away, while no one understands. For the righteous man is taken away from evil (to come)’***.⁶

Another very important part of the Passover service is the wine, which is symbolic of the shed blood of Yahshua. We read in Matthew 26: 27 - 28, ***‘And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; (28) for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins”*** From that time forward, each year during the Passover service, the people of YHVH drink a small amount of wine after they have eaten the unleavened bread. This wine is symbolic, and a reminder of the shed blood of Yahshua. It reminds the people of YHVH that when they repent of their sins, it is the death of Yahshua – His shed blood – that frees them from the penalty of eternal death resulting from the sins they have

⁶ The KJV adds words ‘to come’.

committed. Though the people of YHVH strive to obey the Torah, they are not yet perfect, and still sin sometimes. But if they repent of their sins, YHVH will forgive them. So the wine replaced the blood of the lamb as a symbol of the blood of Yahshua which was shed for the forgiveness of our sins. After the death and resurrection of Yahshua, His disciples continued to follow His example in keeping the Passover, as well as all the other festivals. Rav Shaul, around 55 A.D., continued to instruct the Nazarene Israelites about the correct way to keep the Passover, following the example set by Yahshua. To the ecclesia in Corinth, Rav. Shaul wrote in 1Corinthians 11: 26 - 27, ***“For as often as you eat this bread, and drink this cup, you proclaim the Master’s death until He come. (27) Therefore whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Master in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Master”*** The Word of YHVH clearly shows that the people of YHVH will continue observing the Passover as an annual memorial of His death.

Immediately following the Passover is the second of the festivals of YHVH, i.e. the Days of Unleavened Bread. The instructions from YHVH concerning the Passover and the Days of Unleavened Bread are found in Leviticus 23:5 - 8: ***“In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at twilight is (YHVH)’s Passover. (6) Then on the fifteenth day of the same month is the Feast of Unleavened Bread to YHVH: for seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. (7) On the first day you shall have a Set-apart convocation; you shall not do any laborious work. (8) But for seven days you shall present an offering by fire to YHVH. On the seventh day is a Set-apart convocation; you shall not do any laborious work.”*** The Feast of Unleavened Bread is seven days long. It begins and ends with a Set-apart day – the first two annual Set-apart days of the year. These Set-apart days, or Sabbaths, are days of rest from our physical labors that we routinely do during the week. They are days set aside by YHVH as Set-apart time. This First Day of Unleavened Bread is especially important, as it is used in determining what day

Pentecost, the next Set-apart day after the Days of Unleavened Bread, is to be observed on the Hebrew calendar.

The process of overcoming sin takes time – it does not happen all at once. That is why the Feast of Unleavened Bread is not just one day long. YHVH made it seven days to show us that it takes time to put away sin. What does YHVH say we should eat during these seven days? We read in Exodus 12: 15, ***“Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses; for whoever eats anything leavened from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.”*** Leaven is an ingredient used in baking such foods as bread, cakes and biscuits. The leavening agent in them causes them to rise. Leaven *“puffs up”* bread, just the way sin will puff us up and spread throughout our lives if we allow it to. It is like a teenager who smokes: Teenagers smoke, because they believe that is a grown-up thing to do. Perhaps it is the bad example(s) that they see in the world. Have you seen how they act all puffed up and proud when smoking in public away from their parents. It seems that they think out aloud saying, “Well, nobody’s going to tell *me* what to do.” That is the type of attitude that leads to sin, which is the transgression of the Torah of YHVH. YHVH has told us very clearly in His Scriptures what we must do and how we must live a prosperous and fulfilled life. He gave us His *laws* that, if followed, *produce* contentment. When we sin, we are essentially contradicting the word of YHVH.

There is another lesson about sin we can learn from leaven. It only takes a very little bit of leaven to make a whole loaf of bread rise. We read accordingly in 1 Corinthians 5: 6, where Rav. Shaul told the Corinthians, ***“Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump of dough?”*** We should not tolerate *any* sin in our lives, no matter how “large” or “small” it may be. YHVH inspired Rav Shaul to write in verses 7 - 8 of 1 Corinthians 5, ***“Clean out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, just as you are in fact unleavened. For Messiah our Passover also has***

been sacrificed. (8) Let us therefore celebrate the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." The Corinthians were not to allow sin to remain in their midst. Before the Days of Unleavened Bread, we are to remove leaven and any leavened products from our homes. This helps to remind us that we must be striving to remove sin entirely from our lives and to live the way of life that Yahshua lived. It would be impossible, however, to put away sin and keep Torah without the gift of the Set-apart Spirit – the divine nature of Elohim.

Returning to the time just before the Israelites left Egypt, on the morning after the Passover meal, the Egyptians were more than happy to let the Israelites go free. They hoped that the terrible plagues would stop. All day long the Israelites gathered their possessions, along with the gold, silver and clothing which were given to them by their Egyptian masters. That night, the night of the fifteenth of Aviv, the Israelites under the full moon began their journey out of the land of Egypt.

In Exodus 12: 42 YHVH said that ***"It is a night to be observed for YHVH for having brought them out from the land, this night is for YHVH, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations."*** The Israelites greatly rejoiced that evening – the beginning part of the first annual Set-apart day – an evening that commemorates their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. Just as the power of YHVH overcame the Egyptians, enabling the Israelites to leave that land, so the Set-apart Spirit will enable His people today to overcome sin and keep His Torah.

We are also told in Exodus 13: 8 – 10 that we are responsible to tell our children that we observe the Passover and days of Unleavened Bread, because YHVH brought us out of Egypt (in our case sin) with a powerful hand. We read further that it is an ordinance which we shall keep at its appointed time from year to year. YHVH led the Israelites around the way of the wilderness to the Red Sea, in order to avoid war with the Philistines. We see also that Moses took the bones of Joseph

with him, as he made the Israelites swear that they will carry his bones from Egypt. YHVH was going before the Israelites in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. We conclude this Torah portion, reading verse 22 of Exodus 13, as follows: ***'He (YHVH) did not take away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.'***

Exodus 13 verse 17 to 17 verse 16 (Beshalach).

The transliterated Hebrew name for this week's Torah portion is Beshalach, meaning 'when he let go'. We commence reading in Exodus 13: 17, as follows: ***'Now it came about when Pharaoh had let the people go, that Elohim did not lead them by the way of the land of the Philistines, even though it was near; for Elohim said, "Lest the people change their minds when they see war, and they return to Egypt."*** YHVH knows the human frame – that most of us can only take a little opposition at a time. Like with new believers, YHVH is protecting the Israelites whilst they are so 'new in the faith'. He therefore will never allow us to be tempted beyond our capacity. We read accordingly in 1 Corinthians 10: 13, ***'No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and Elohim is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.'***

Finally Israel left Egypt and having left on the 15th of Aviv, they were now in the Days of Unleavened Bread. YHVH went before them in a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The Israelites were free from their task masters. As they began their journey, they must have felt on top of the world. But most of them wondered what will happen next. Some must have recalled what YHVH said to Moses in the last part of Exodus 3: 12, ***'when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship Elohim at this mountain*** (Mount Sinai where YHVH spoke to Moses from the burning bush).⁷ The nation of Israel was meant to go to Mount Sinai, where they will be given the Torah. They were to receive the Torah, their instruction manual to guide them in the way of Elohim throughout history. From Mount Sinai the Israelites were supposed to enter the Promised Land, but we see that because of their unbelief, they took a detour which caused them to wander in the desert for the next forty years.

We read in Exodus 14: 1 - 4, ***'Now YHVH spoke to Moses saying, (2) "Tell the sons of Israel to turn back and camp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea; you shall camp in front of Baal-zephon, opposite it, by the sea. (3) For Pharaoh will say of the sons of Israel, 'They are wandering aimlessly in the land; the wilderness has shut them in. (4) Thus I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he will chase after them; and I will be honored through Pharaoh and all his army, and the Egyptians will know that I am YHVH." And they did so.'*** At this point in time Pharaoh realized that the Israelites fled, he took his chariot and his army and he chased after the Israelites, with horses and chariots. Eventually they overtook the Israelites, whilst they were camping by the sea. When the children of Israel saw the Egyptians approaching, they were very afraid and cried out to YHVH. Then in verses 11 and 12 of Exodus 14, they complaint to Moses, ***"Is it because there were no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? Why have you dealt with us in this way, bringing us out of Egypt? (12) Is this not the word that we spoke to you in Egypt, saying, 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians?' For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness."*** Next Moses gave the Israelites advice which all of us should remember in our daily struggles in life. We read in Exodus 14: 13 & 14, ***'But Moses said to the people, "Do not fear! Stand by and see the salvation of YHVH which He will accomplish for you today; for the Egyptians whom you have seen today, you will never see them again forever. (14) YHVH will fight for you while you keep silent."*** The word salvation as used in verse 13, transliterated in Hebrew is 'yeshuat', which hints at the name of our Savior, Yahshua. Few people today realize that there is a duality principle which runs throughout the plan that YHVH is working out on the earth: Moses is here not only re-assuring the Israelites that YHVH will supernaturally save them from the Egyptians, but is also alluding to the future promised salvation through Yahshua our Messiah.

YHVH through Moses tells the Israelites that He will split the sea, allowing them to go through the midst of the sea on dry land. Even though the Egyptians will follow after them, YHVH will make their chariots drive with difficulty. Moses will lift his staff and stretch his arm over the sea and it will split, allowing the Israelites to pass through. Then he will again stretch his hand over the sea and the sea will return to normal, drowning the Egyptians. We read in verse 31 of Exodus 14, ***'And when Israel saw the great power which YHVH had used against the Egyptians, the people feared YHVH, and they believed in YHVH and His servant Moses.'*** The people were so excited by the way in which YHVH saved them from the Egyptians that they sang the song recorded for us in Exodus 15, known as the song of Moses. Again throughout this song we see references to Yahshua. In verse 2 we read about YHVH, ***'And He has become my salvation.'*** In verse 6 we read: ***'Thy right hand, O YHVH, is majestic in power, Thy right hand, O YHVH, shatters the enemy.'*** And in verse 12 we read: ***"Thou didst stretch out Thy right hand, The earth swallowed them."***

The right hand and holy arm of YHVH is associated with salvation. The author of Psalm 98 was inspired to proclaim the association of the arm of YHVH with salvation in verse 1 & 2, as follows: ***'O Sing to YHVH a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. (2) YHVH has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations.*** Our Jewish brothers are at this time purposely blinded to the identity of Yahshua. We read accordingly in Romans 11: 7, 8, 25 - 26 and 32: ***"What then? That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened; (8) just as it is written, "Elohim gave them a spirit of stupor, Eyes to see not and ears to hear not, Down to this very day." (25) 'For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles have come in; (26) and***

thus all Israel will be saved just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob." (32) 'For Elohim has shut up all in disobedience that He might show mercy to all.' YHVH hides the fact that His right hand and Holy arm brings salvation (yeshuat), as we be read in Isaiah 45: 15, **'Truly, Thou art an Elohim who hides Himself, O Elohim of Israel, Savior!** He hides the fact that He personally, is our Savior! How can we know this arm? Only if we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us through His word, the Scriptures and believe what we read, will we get to know this truth. Isaiah declares in chapter 53: 1 **"Who hath believed our message? And to whom is the Arm of YHVH revealed?"** By reading the rest of Isaiah 53 and comparing it to Scriptures in the Brit Chadasha (Renewed Covenant), we are able to identify the right hand of YHVH as non other than Yahshua. The right hand of YHVH has been revealed to us, the remnant of the house of Israel in the latter days. The "Right hand or Arm of YHVH" is the One Who became salvation to Israel in the day when Israel was delivered out of Egypt. The "Arm of YHVH" is the One who delivered David from all of His trials and problems. The "Arm of YHVH" is the Savior of Israel, the Salvation of all peoples, Yahshua the Messiah of Nazareth.

The Israelites were full of the joys of life, but as soon as they reached the next obstacle, they grumbled again. We read in verses 22 - 24 of Exodus 15, **'Then Moses led Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. (23) And when they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah, for they were bitter, therefore it was named Marah. (24) So the people grumbled at Moses saying, 'What shall we drink?'**" Herein lies a lesson for us: We, the modern day Israelites are no different from our ancient counterparts. We are selfish and concerned only for ourselves. Like ancient Israel we have seen many miracles in our lives; many of us have witnessed how YHVH personally intervened in our lives in times of trouble or medical problems, yet we are always complaining about one

thing or another. If anything goes wrong in our personal lives, we immediately start grumbling - Instead we should place our trust in YHVH. After all He told us through Moses, to **'stand still, and see the salvation of YHVH.**(Exodus 14: 13 KJV). Let's determine to stop grumbling and take YHVH at His word. If we trust and obey, we will make it to the Promised Land⁷.

Continuing on in our Torah portion, we see that Moses cried out to YHVH about the bitter water. YHVH showed him a tree, which he threw into the bitter water and it, became sweet. We read in the last part of verse of 25 and 26 of Exodus 15, **'There He (YHVH) made for them a statute and regulation, and there He tested them. (26) And He said, "If you will give earnest heed to the voice of YHVH your Elohim, and do what is right in His sight, and give ear to His commandments, and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have put on the Egyptians; for I YHVH am your healer⁸.**' If we only become conscious of the fact that YHVH is All-Mighty and able to save us from whatever condition we may find ourselves in, we will learn to trust Him fully. After the water was made sweet, the Israelites moved on and camped in Elim, where there were twelve springs of water and seventy date palms.

But, when they moved again they arrived in the wilderness of Sin, between Elim and Mount Sinai, where there was no food. Consequently, the whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron, saying in verse 3 of Exodus 16, **"Would that we had died by (YHVH)'s hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."** Next YHVH introduces the Israelites to His Sabbath. We read

⁷ The kingdom of Elohim.

⁸ One of the titles of YHVH, some of these are: YHVH-Ropheka – YHVH our Healer(Exodus 15: 26); YHVH-Yireh – YHVH our Provider (Genesis 22: 14); YHVH-Nissi – YHVH our Banner (Exodus 17: 15); YHVH-Tsidkenu – YHVH our righteousness (Jeremiah 23: 6).

in verses 4 – 7 of Exodus 16, ***‘Then YHVH said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction. (5) And it will come about on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily. (6) So Moses and Aaron said to the sons of Israel, “At evening you will know that YHVH has brought you out of the land of Egypt; (7) and in the morning you will see the glory of YHVH, for He hears your grumblings against YHVH; and what are we that you grumble against us? In our previous Torah portion I showed that the word twilight as used in Exodus 12: 6, simply means ‘in the evening’: We read in the first part of Exodus 16 verse 8, ‘And Moses said, “This will happen when YHVH gives you meat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning.”’*** Comparing this with Exodus 16 verses 11 to 13, twilight is positively confirmed as being ‘at evening’, in this manner: ***‘And YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, (12) I have heard the grumblings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, “At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know I am YHVH your Elohim.”(13) So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.’***

Allowing the Scriptures to interpret the Scriptures, we understand twilight of the 14th of Aviv, to commence in the evening of the 14th as the 13th draw to a close. We therefore follow our Master Yahshua, in keeping the Passover 24 hours before the first Day of Unleavened Bread, as we are told by Rav Shaul in 1 Corinthians 11: 1 & 23 – 25, as follows: ***‘Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Messiah. (23) For I received from the Master that which I also delivered to you, that the Master Yahshua in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said, “This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”’ (25) ‘In the same way He took the cup also, after supper, saying, “This cup is the***

new covenant in My blood; do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” We keep the Passover in remembrance of Yahshua’s death until He comes.

We see in verse 14 of Exodus 16, that when the dew evaporated, there was a fine flake-like substance on the ground. The children of Israel, did not know what it was and asked (in verse 15): ***“What is it?”*** Apparently the English translation for the Hebrew word manna is *‘what is it?’* Moses answered them saying ***“It is the bread which YHVH has given you to eat.”*** Moses also tells the children of Israel that they should only collect what they are able to eat, as whatever is left over will breed worms and become foul. On the sixth day the children of Israel gathered twice as much as they required and Moses tells them in verse 23 of Exodus 16, ***‘Tomorrow is the Sabbath observance, a Set-apart Sabbath to YHVH, Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning.’*** On the Sabbath Moses told them to eat what they gathered on the sixth day, as they will not find any food in the field on the Sabbath. As we read on, we see that some of the Israelites did not obey the Sabbath command and were reprimanded by Moses. We are told in verse 31 that the manna was like coriander seed, white; and its taste was like wafers with honey. In verse 33 of Exodus 16, Moses instructed Aaron to take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it and told him to place it before YHVH throughout their generations. We see further that the Israelites ate the manna throughout the forty years that they wandered in the desert.

Continuing on in Exodus 17 verse 1, we see that the Israelites moved on from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of YHVH, and camped at Rephidim, and there was no water to drink. The people started quarreling with Moses about the fact that there was no water. So Moses again cried out to YHVH for water. YHVH tells Moses to take his staff and some of the elders of Israel and (in verse 6 of Exodus 17) He says to Moses: ***“Behold, I will stand before you there on***

the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.’ Once again YHVH provided for His people. So, Moses named the place Massah and Meribah because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested YHVH saying: ***“Is YHVH among us or not?”***

We conclude this week’s Torah portion, when Amalek came against Israel at Rephidim. Moses told Joshua to choose men to go out and fight against Amalek. He also said to Joshua that he (Moses) will station himself on the top of the hill with the staff of Elohim in his hand. So it came about the next day, when Moses held up his hand; the Israelites prevailed against Amalek. But as soon as his hands became too heavy, Amalek prevailed. Then they took a stone and put it under Moses, and he sat on it and Aaron and Hur supported Moses’ hands. His hands remained steady until the sun went down and Joshua overwhelmed Amalek with the edge of the sword. We read the conclusion in verse 14 -16 of Exodus 17, as follows: ***‘Then YHVH said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial, and recite it to Joshua that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” (15) And Moses built an altar, and named it YHVH is My Banner (YHVH-Nissi); (16) and he said, “YHVH has sworn; YHVH will have war against Amalek from generation to generation.”***

Exodus 18 verse 1 to 20 verse 23 (Yitro).

This week's Torah portion is called Yitro, meaning 'abundance'. Commencing in verse 1 of Exodus 18, we read: **'Now Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, heard of all that Elohim had done for Moses and for Israel His people, how YHVH had brought Israel out of Egypt.'** How can this be? You might ask. How is it possible for a Midianite priest to recognize YHVH? We must never be conceited to think that YHVH cannot change the minds of people who currently believe differently to what we do. I have personally heard of leaders from other religions, which came to the knowledge of the truth and 'converted' to the way of Elohim.

From reading chapter 18 of Exodus, we understand that Jethro, Moses' father in law, was an intelligent man, with insight and wisdom. We see that even though he was not an Israelite, it was clear from his confession in verses 10 & 11 of Exodus 18, that He recognized YHVH as the one and only true Elohim. Because of his insight, he is also recognized as the first Organization and Methods official⁹ in the world. We see in verses 19 – 23 of Exodus 18 that he advised Moses to govern the Israelites from the top down in a hierarchical fashion. This ensured the delegation of tasks and division of labor to able men who fear Elohim, men of truth, those who hate dishonest gain, as leaders of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens. These men were to judge the people at all times; every major dispute they had to bring to Moses, but every minor dispute they themselves had to deal with. This would make Moses' task much easier as these men would bear the burden with him.

An important lesson for us in this Torah portion is that Moses a man of Elohim, was willing to be taught by someone considered to be spiritually inferior to him. We should learn

⁹ *Most Text books used by people who study and practice Organization & Method Study refer to Jethro as the first person to practice Organization & Method Study in 'the workplace'.*

from this that we do not have all the answers and that we can also learn from others. We read further in Exodus 18 that Jethro brought Moses' wife Zipporah and her two sons, Gershom (meaning an alien in a foreign land) and Eliezer (meaning Elohim is my helper) back to Moses where he camped at the mount of Elohim. When in Egypt Moses send his family back to his father in law due to the pressure of his duties to get Pharaoh to let the Israelites go. Moses told his father-in-law what YHVH had done to the Egyptians for the sake of Israel and how YHVH delivered them from the trouble that they came across on the way. Therefore Jethro rejoiced about the good things that YHVH had done for Israel. The Egyptians, like the Arab nations of today, wanted to push the Israelites into the sea, but were themselves drowned in the sea.

We also understand from Moses' 'job description', as he explained to Jethro, that the Law existed prior to YHVH giving it to Moses on Mount Sinai, as follows: ***"When they have a dispute, it comes to me, and I judge between a man and his neighbor, and make known the statutes of Elohim and His laws."*** We see at the end of Exodus 18, that Moses bid his father-in-law farewell and Jethro went his way into his own land. We see in Exodus 19 that the Israelites came to the wilderness of Sinai, during the third month since they left Egypt. Continuing in verse 3 – 6 of Exodus 19, we read: ***'And Moses went up to Elohim, and YHVH called to him from the mountain saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel; (4) You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself. (5) Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the people, for all the earth is Mine; (6) and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel.'*** As mentioned in a previous Torah portion YHVH wanted Israel to be His model nation, to show the rest of the world, how to obey and serve Him. The same applies to those of us that are called out of the

world today. We read accordingly in 1 Peter 2: 9 & 10, ***'But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR Elohim's OWN POSSESSION, 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, but now you are THE PEOPLE OF ELOHIM; you had NOT RECEIVED MERCY, but now you have RECEIVED MERCY.'*** YHVH wants us to be an example to the world, as we are told by Yahshua in Matthew 5: 14 – 16, as follows: ***"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house. (16) Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."***

Moses called the elders of the people and set before them all these words which YHVH had commanded him and the people agreed to all that YHVH had spoken. When Moses brought the words of the people back to YHVH, He said to Moses, the words recorded in verse 9 of Exodus 19, ***"Behold, I shall come to you in a thick cloud, in order that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe in you forever."*** It is vital that we remember these last four words to Moses. Christianity believes that the so-called 'Old Testament' has been done away with or has been superseded by the 'New Testament'. However, we know that Yahshua said in Matthew 5: 17 & 18, ***"Do not think that I came to abolish the Law (Torah) or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill (reading from verse 21 to the end of Matthew 5, we see that Yahshua in fact made it more binding). (18) For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished."*** In addition we read in John 5: 46 & 47, Yahshua saying: ***"For if you believe Moses you would believe Me; for he wrote of Me. (47) But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?"*** The reason why Christianity as well as many Nazarene Israelites

deny (or contradict) Yahshua, the word of Elohim, is because they do not believe in Moses (or those who seated themselves in the chair of Moses) any longer.

Before YHVH gave Moses the commandments, He told Moses to tell the people to consecrate themselves and wash their clothes. YHVH also told Moses that no one whether man or beast shall go near the mountain or touch it. Moses also told the people to be ready for the third day and not to touch a woman during that time. Then on the third day there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that the people trembled. Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet Elohim at the foot of the mountain. Then the sound of the trumpet grew louder and YHVH answered Moses with thunder. YHVH came down on Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. Again YHVH tells Moses to warn the people not to break through to gaze at YHVH and perish. Then YHVH told Moses to go down and bring Aaron with him and gave Moses the Commandments, statutes and judgments recorded in Exodus 20 to Exodus 24: 4

The two tablets of stone that Moses received from Elohim's own hand at Mount Sinai contained His covenant which He commanded us to perform; that is the Ten Commandments, according to Deuteronomy 4: 13. Each of the tablets contains five of the Ten Commandments. The first five commandments are precepts between man and Elohim and the second five, between man and his equal. Yahshua explained in Matthew 22: 35 – 40 that everything written in the Torah and the Prophets, take place under two main headings; namely love toward YHVH and love toward our neighbor. He emphasized that the Torah and the Prophets define what the relationship between us and our Creator and between each other should be. The Ten Commandments are not only regulations or suggestions and those who see them in that light misunderstand Elohim's intent in giving His commandments. YHVH tells us that all His commandments are for our good and that they are a blessing to mankind. When Yahshua himself

was asked which of the commandments is the foremost of all. He answered without hesitation in Mark 12: 29 - 30, ***“The foremost is, ‘Hear O Israel! YHVH our Elohim is One; and you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”***

The main focus of the **first commandment** given in Exodus 20: 3 is as follows: ***“You shall have no other elohim before (or besides) Me”*** The relationship that YHVH wants with us is that of a Father with His children. It is very important for us to understand Elohim’s character, because He wants to create the same character in us. We read accordingly in 2 Peter 1: 2 – 4, ***‘Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of Elohim and of Yahshua our Master; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that by them you might become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.’*** Our Father wants us to develop righteous character so that we may ultimately fulfill our human potential, of becoming His children – who will rule as kings and priests under Yahshua during the millennium and on into eternity. We also read about this in 1 John 3: 1 – 3, ***‘See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Elohim; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.’*** It is remarkable to realize what YHVH the creator of the universe has in store for us. He wants us to be his people and to have everlasting life in His eternal

Kingdom. Yahshua the word of YHVH, who according to John 1: 1 – 3 created the universe, stated in Matthew 6: 33 that our highest priority should be, to: (***“But) seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you.”***) Our Father gives us a period of about seventy years to establish a relationship with Him, so that we may receive eternal life in His kingdom, as His people. We read about this in Revelation 21: 3 ***‘And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold the tabernacle of Elohim is among men, and He shall dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and Elohim Himself shall be among them.”’*** YHVH alone is our Elohim and we should honor, obey and serve Him with all our being. We should make sure that we understand and believe that He (YHVH) is the only One and that there is no elohim besides Him! In Hosea 13: 4 we read: ***“Yet I have been YHVH your Elohim since the land of Egypt; And you were not to know any elohim except Me, for there is no savior besides Me.”*** There is no Savior except YHVH; this means that Yahshua the Messiah is none other than YHVH in the flesh.

The **second commandment** specifies that we should not make any likeness of anything in heaven, or on earth or in the waters beneath the earth, and worship it. Even though we are made in the image of Elohim, we need to realize that our creator is a living Elohim and not a statue or a picture. He cannot be limited in any way and He does not want us to limit or distort Him in our own minds. It is easy for us as Nazarene Israelite believers to think that we do not make images and worship them. However, we need to consider this command carefully. Do you spend more time in front of the one eyed god called TV, or playing golf or washing your car, than what you do worshipping YHVH? Are you drinking or eating too much? What are our excesses? Be very careful, that too may develop into an idol or god.

The **third commandment** focuses on showing YHVH proper respect. It has to do with the name of YHVH as we read in Exodus 20: 7 ***“You shall not take the name of YHVH your***

Elohim in vain, for YHVH will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.” What does the word vain mean? The Hebrew for vain is ‘*shavah*’, meaning to destroy or bring to naught the name of YHVH your Elohim. It could also mean to use lightly, i.e. You are not to use lightly, destroy or bring to naught, the name of YHVH your Elohim, by hiding, refusing to use, or purposely misspelling His name. Also notice the word take or use. There are so many ways in which we can use the name of YHVH in vain. If for example, we keep non-scriptural festivals like Xmas, we twist scripture to fit doctrines of men. No-where in the Scriptures do we find the birth date of our Messiah given, let alone stated as the 25th of December - by keeping the Messiah’s birthday we propagate a lie and use the name of YHVH in vain. Another way to use the Name of YHVH our Elohim in vain is by our conduct. We who call ourselves by the Messiah’s name must be very careful how we conduct ourselves in public. We must not be hypocrites and behave like believers on the Sabbath, but continue to practice sin during the week. We read about this in Romans 2: 21 – 24 ***‘you, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that one should not steal, do you steal? You who say that one should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? You who boast in the Law, through your breaking the Law, do you dishonor Elohim? For “The Name of Elohim is blasphemed among the gentiles because of you,” just as it is written.’*** We, who claim to be the Almighty’s people, should know His name as stated in the first part of Isaiah 52: 6 ***“Therefore My people shall know My name”***. However, we should be careful not to use His name in everyday language like some people in TV programs do. Perhaps it is a good thing that most people do not know the true name of YHVH, since the generic title ‘G-d’ as used by them, is not His name. The name of YHVH should only be used in prayer, blessings, worship services and teachings. Finally let us also consider the warning to refrain from using the names of pagan gods, in Exodus 23: 13 we read: ***“Now concerning everything which I have said to***

you, be on your guard; and do not mention the name of other gods, nor let them be heard from your mouth."

We read the **fourth or Sabbath Command** in Exodus 20: 8 to 11, as follows: ***"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of YHVH your Elohim; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days YHVH made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore YHVH blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy."*** Do we today, know which day is the Sabbath? Is it possible after so many years after YHVH gave the ten original commandments to His people, to identify which is the Sabbath Day? I would say yes. The Jewish people who are the people of the nation of Judah of the Scriptures are still keeping the original Sabbath day, from Friday evening at sunset to Saturday evening at sunset. This is the Sabbath of YHVH, the seventh day, which YHVH blessed and sanctified after having completed the creation of the heavens and the earth. Only YHVH can sanctify anything - He has declared which are His appointed times in Leviticus 23. We do not have the right as human beings, to proclaim feast days to YHVH. We can read an example where Aaron declared a feast to YHVH in Exodus 32, with dire consequences. In Hebrews 4: 9 we read that: ***"There remains therefore a Sabbath rest for the people of Elohim"***. If we claim to be the people of YHVH, then we better make sure that we are keeping His Sabbath days (weekly and annual Sabbaths).

The **fifth commandment** in Exodus 20: 12 reads: ***"Honor your father and your mother that your days may be prolonged in the land which YHVH your Elohim gives you."*** Although this commandment appears to belong in the category between man and man, it teaches us to appreciate that our parents are the connection between us and our Creator. Just as parents withhold that which they believe is

not good for their children, from them, similarly YHVH withholds from each of His children that which may not be in their best interest, spiritually. If we understand this, then we will never feel envy towards our neighbors. This commandment is the first commandment with a promise to those who obey it; the promise is a prolonged life in the land which YHVH our Elohim gives us. The fifth commandment also sets the scene for the last five. It teaches the importance of treating each other with respect and honor. Learning to obey the fifth commandment helps children establish a pattern of respecting rules, laws and traditions. YHVH places the responsibility for teaching children the basic principles of life, on the parents of such children. Parents should also think of themselves as children. Yes, children of perhaps now elderly or deceased parents, but also children of YHVH our Elohim. It is just as important for us to obey and honor our heavenly Father as it is for our children to obey and honor us. We and our children should also be sure not to neglect honoring our grandparents. We should make opportunities to spend time with grandparents. Ask them questions about our origins. Children, who honor and respect their grandparents, also show respect to other older people.

The **sixth commandment** is the prohibition against murder. There is an integral relationship between the sixth commandment and the first commandment. Only by acknowledging that there is a Creator who fashioned every human being in His image, can we explain rationally why eating steak and swatting flies is any different from killing fellow human beings. Without knowing this distinction, we should all be either vegetarians or serial killers. Human life has become very cheap today. Criminals do not only steal people's possessions, but also the lives of their victims. Many people view unwanted pregnancy as an inconvenience and millions of unborn babies are being killed monthly. Our papers are full of crime and violence and the murder of the day is usually the first topic featured in newspapers and TV programs. Random killings by gangsters are threatening many communities around the world. It is ironic that despite our fear of death, we

are fascinated by stories of murder and bloodshed. These are the stories that sell newspapers and make for many so-called 'good' movies and TV shows. Violence is so inter-woven into the fabric of society that it is glamorized into most of our modern day entertainment. We need to stop teaching ourselves and our children to make war. Stop watching violence! We need to start by controlling what we watch. In addition, we need to watch our tempers. Road rage has become a major problem, especially in South Africa. We need to repent and return to Torah. Elohim's mercy and forgiveness remains available for sinners, including murderers. But He wants us to repent and forsake our evil ways. We need to overcome evil with good. If we want to be called sons (and daughters) of Elohim, we need to become peacemakers, as mentioned in Matthew 5: 9.

The **seventh commandment** forbids adultery. Adultery is a violation of the marriage covenant by willfully participating in sex with someone who is not your spouse. YHVH intended men and women to be together from the very beginning. Marriage is ordained by our Father and He hates divorce. YHVH created sex, because He wants us to enjoy a stable sexual relationship within marriage. There are many warnings against adultery in the Scriptures. One such warning appears in Proverbs 6: 32, as follows: ***'The one who commits adultery with a woman is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it.'*** In 1 Corinthians 6: 18 & 19: Rav Shaul writes: ***'Flee immorality. Every other sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Set-apart Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own?'*** Adultery is linked to Idolatry (the second commandment) - Adultery is about unfaithfulness to ones partner; as Idolatry is about unfaithfulness to Elohim. By staying with your married partner, we are showing YHVH our Father that once we agreed to follow Him (after He has called us); we will remain loyal to Him, for ever. So if and when someone like our husband or wife offends us, we must think twice, before

making them jealous with someone else, or before we spite them by not talking to him or her for a day or longer. Think about your own character development, before you make these ridiculous decisions to spite your partner. Marriage is an institution which helps us to build character – which will last into eternity. Broken homes are very costly to human society. The majority of economically disadvantaged people are from broken homes. Homes headed by single parents are a leading factor in subsequent criminal activity. To this must be added the cost of legal fees, the reduction in productivity and income of divorced parents. It also results in the frequent loss of homes and other belongings. Divorce often results in long custody battles with devastating effects on the children. Society suffers because we have neglected to treat our partners the way that YHVH intended from the beginning. Most human beings desire and need the benefits that come from a stable marriage. We need to return to the way that Elohim intended and give marriage the respect that it deserves.

The **eighth commandment** forbids theft. Theft is the result of the greedy, often lustful way of life that most human beings have grown accustomed to in modern society. The Almighty placed everything in this world for our use, conditional only upon recognizing that everything comes from Him. To misuse His name is to fail in that recognition, rendering all benefits from the material world the equivalent of theft. The eighth commandment ensures every human's right to legitimately obtain and own property. YHVH wants us to honor and protect that right. YHVH wants to bestow upon us physical blessings and He wants us to enjoy that. He wants us to be thankful for what He gives us and wants us to use what He gives us with wisdom. However, He does not want us to make wealth our major interest. YHVH wants us to be charitable and let generosity and not greed motivate our choices. YHVH wants us to earn our living and not steal from others. YHVH wants those who stole, stop stealing, and start working for an income (see Ephesians 4: 28). There are many forms of stealing from someone. Today there are many sophisticated scams used to swindle money out of poor and defenseless people. Untrue

advertisements have the same effect. Workers who claim more hours than what they worked for, is another example. There are also those people who borrow from their friends and never return. YHVH is willing to help us serve others, when we replace greed with a dedication to serve. Rav Shaul puts it as follows in 2 Corinthians 9: 7 – 8 ***'Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under compulsion; for Elohim loves a cheerful giver. And Elohim is able to make all grace abound to you, that always having all sufficiency in everything; you may have abundance for every good deed.'*** YHVH wants us to learn true values and build character traits that will endure beyond the grave.

The **ninth commandment** forbids bearing false witness (known in Hebrew as Lashon Hara) against your neighbor. It tells us not to tell lies about other people. We need to make sure that whatever we say is true. What is truth? In John 17: 17 Yahshua said: ***'Sanctify (set-apart) them in the truth; Thy word is truth.'*** In psalm 15: 1- 3 David wrote: ***'O YHVH, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy Set-apart hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. He does not slander with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor takes up a reproach against his friend.'*** Yahshua the visible image of the invisible Elohim reflected the perfect character of Elohim. Yahshua said in answer to a question from Thomas in John 14: 6 ***"I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me."*** To be disciples of Yahshua, we need to speak the truth on an on-going basis. Deceitfulness has become an accepted way of life today. We read about our society in Isaiah 59: 4 ***'No one sues righteously and no one pleads honestly. They trust in confusion, and speak lies; They conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.'*** May I pose a blatant question here: Do we lie? Or are we put off by lying? Ask yourself these questions and answer it truthfully on your own. Yahshua said about Satan in John 8: 44: ***'he is a liar, and the father of lies.'*** We have a choice – do we follow Yahshua who being the

word of YHVH is truth, or do we follow Satan who is a liar? Most people find it almost impossible to abandon all lies, until they surrender their lives to Elohim and seek His help. We know that Rav Kepha (the apostle Peter) had a similar problem, in that He denied Yahshua and also lied during the night when Yahshua was betrayed. We need to ask our Father to help us if we have this problem. He will certainly help us, if we repent and return to studying His word. YHVH wants us to commit ourselves to truth and show it in all that we do and say.

The **tenth commandment** is against coveting. Coveting is a major problem in most of our lives. Our transgressions of Elohim's Torah begin in our hearts. We read this in Mark 7: 21 – 23, as follows: ***'For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed the evil thought, fornications, thefts, murders, adulteries, deeds of coveting and wickedness, as well as deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride and foolishness. All these evil things proceed from within and defile a man.'*** We know that the heart is the seat of desire. Desire is another word for crave or covet, especially when it is improper or excessive. Coveting is a longing for something which is not yours. It also include wanting something that belongs to others. Our natural inclination is to see what we can get, rather than what we can give; whereas YHVH our Elohim's way is the way of giving and sharing. Coveting, when put above self and Elohim becomes idolatry. Rav Shaul warns in Colossians 3: 5 – 6, as follows: ***'Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed which amounts to idolatry. For it is on account of these things that the wrath of Elohim will come.'***

We need to steer our desires in the right direction. A desire to excel in our life's pursuits is an appropriate ambition. YHVH wants us to excel and He approves of our gaining knowledge and skills for our advancement in life. However, YHVH wants us to have concern for others and if He blesses us with wonderful gifts, then He wants us to bless the less fortunate with similar blessings. Charity starts at home and we may start

by blessing our own families and fellow believers who are less fortunate. In Hebrews 13: 16 we are reminded to do good as follows: ***‘And do not neglect doing good and sharing; for with such sacrifices Elohim is pleased.’*** In His teachings in Deuteronomy 30: 19 YHVH admonished us to make the right choices, as follows: ***“I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live and your descendants.”*** Yes, fellow believers, the commandments are for our own good. In addition we read in the book of James that we show our faith by our deeds. A second witness to this is found in Romans 2: 13: ***"for not the hearers of the Law are just before Elohim, but the DOERS of the Law will be justified."***

To conclude this Torah portion we read in verse 18 of Exodus 20 that the people perceived the thunder and lightning and the sound of the trumpet and trembled and stood at a distance. They told Moses to speak to them and they will listen, adding, not to let Elohim speak to them lest they die. Moses assured them, telling them not to fear as Elohim has come to test them, so they stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where Elohim was. We end in verses 22 & 23, of Exodus 20, where Elohim said to Moses: ***“Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘You yourselves have seen that I have spoken to you from heaven. (23) You shall not make other elohim besides Me; elohim of silver or elohim of gold, you shall not make for yourselves.’”***

Exodus 21 verse 1 to 24 verse 18 (Mishpatim).

After the people committed themselves to keep the Ten Commandments at Sinai, YHVH proceeded to give Moses the rest of the ordinances of the Torah, saying: ***“Now these are the ordinances*** (Mishpatim, meaning Judgment or Right Rulings) ***which you are to set before them*** (Israel).”

The Mishpatim are the laws or rules by which we are supposed to live our daily lives. They spell out how we should relate to fellow human beings. These right rulings are not negotiable and include how to deal with murderers, thieves, sorcerers and disorderly people. They also include judgments, telling us how to settle charges and claims, how to observe Elohim’s annual Sabbaths and even how to handle vicious animals. If kept by all human beings, these laws will unify the human race and there will be peace and justice for all. Yet many, even among us Nazarene Israelites, want to keep these laws selectively: some want to pick and choose which ones they should obey and which ones they may argue away. Many read these rulings, believing that Yahshua has done away with them. However, when reading Matthew 5, from verse 17 on, we realize that Yahshua actually made it more binding. Whereas people from other religions might interpret the right rulings given in this Torah portion as being a little harsh or even cruel, the principle behind these laws is simply that the *‘repayment (or retribution) should fit the crime’*. The first judgment given, applies to a Hebrew slave. Hebrew was the language which our forefathers, the ancient Israelites spoke before the lost ten tribes were taken captive by the Assyrians between 721 and 718 BCE. In previous Torah portions, we have proven that most of us are bloodline Israelites, who have lost our language, our faith as well as our Identity. It is therefore important that we understand why YHVH has appointed the Jews as the nation to preserve the Oracles of Elohim for the rest of Israel. The Oracles include the Hebrew language, the covenants, the Torah, the (timing of the) temple services and the promises.

Since the giving of the Torah, most people have chosen not to obey YHVH. They have been deceived to believe that man's ways are better as well as easier than the way of Elohim. But in hindsight we are today able to see that man is incapable of leading a long and contented life without obeying Elohim's physical and Spiritual laws. Millions of people have never even heard about YHVH our Elohim, because they were deceived to believe in the pagan gods of their forefathers. This resulted in six thousand years of suffering, poverty and unhappiness for the majority of all the people who ever lived. Even though there are at this end time better opportunities available to find out about the one and only true Elohim, than what there were in the past, pagan beliefs are like they were in the past, increasingly mixed with Christianity, the believe system that was supposed to have been started by the Savior of mankind. The Scriptures state that false ministers will spring up to hide the truth by falsehood. Rav Shaul mentioned this in Acts 20: 29 & 30, in this way: ***"I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; (30) and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. A second witness to this is given in 2 Peter 2: 1, as follows: 'But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying ('arneomai' in Greek also meaning, to contradict) the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.'***

We have been deceived to believe that the laws of YHVH as well as circumcision have been done away with, by our Master and Savior Yahshua Messiah. Christianity teach correctly that Yahshua (the one they call J*e*s*u*s*) died to redeem us from our sin. However, they also incorrectly teach that He nailed the Law to the cross. We know that this is an incorrect interpretation of Colossians 2: 13 & 14 which reads correctly as follows: ***'And when you were dead in your transgressions and the un-circumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having cancelled our certificate of***

debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. It is clear from this that Yahshua nailed the certificate of our debt and not the Torah to the cross. From studying Galatians 3, we understand that the (Sacrificial) Law was added four hundred and thirty years after Abraham, because of the transgressions of the Israelites during the golden calf incident. Yahshua the lamb of Elohim became the Sacrifice required by the law to pay for our indebtedness for breaking the law.

When Yahshua became the sacrifice, He introduced the new Priesthood, effectively doing away with the sacrificial requirements of the Law in respect of sin. However, it is also clear from the Scriptures, that even though YHVH does not require sin offerings any longer, righteous sacrifices will again be offered in the future, during the millennium and possibly on into eternity. We read accordingly in Psalm 51: 16 – 19, "***For You do not desire slaughtering, or I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. The slaughterings of Elohim are a broken spirit, A Heart broken and crushed, O Elohim, These You do not despise. Do good in Your good pleasure to Tsiyon; Build the walls of Yerusalayim. Then You would delight in slaughterings of righteousness, In burnt offering and complete burnt offering; Then young bulls would be offered on Your altar.***" So we are only really talking here about the sacrificial system, as it applied to sin and righteous sacrifices will still have its place in the world tomorrow.

Reading verse 2 of Exodus 21 once again, it is essential that we understand that the term '*Hebrew slave*' applied to anyone who became part of the community of Israel, as the word '*Hebrew*' refers to '*one who crossed over*', like Abraham did. Abraham was the first one who was called by YHVH to leave his relatives and country of origin to the land which YHVH showed him. The covenant of circumcision was made between YHVH and Abraham and his descendants. YHVH promised that Abraham's descendants will inherit the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession, provided they are circumcised. We

read in Galatians 3: 29, ***'And if you belong to Messiah, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise.'*** As Abraham's offspring we will inherit the land promised to Abraham and his offspring, provided we (the male offspring), honor the covenant agreement with YHVH and be circumcised. The covenant between YHVH and Abraham was never part of the sacrificial system, and is therefore still applicable. We are today called slaves of Yahshua our Messiah, according to Romans 6: 16 – 18, ***'Do you not know that when you present yourselves to someone as slaves for obedience, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or of obedience resulting in righteousness? (17) But thanks be to Elohim that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, (18) and having been freed from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.'*** In addition Yahshua our Messiah was our perfect example, showing us the way of Elohim. Yahshua our Messiah was both circumcised and immersed.

The reason for letting the Hebrew slave or in our case the called out slave go during the seventh year, is that the seventh year is the land Sabbath, during which the land remains uncultivated and no work is required. The land Sabbath comes every seventh year and like the weekly Sabbath, points to the thousand year rule of Yahshua during the coming millennium. The Hebrew slave, who continually expresses the desire to remain with his master, is taken by his master before the judges, after which he takes him to the door and pierces his ear with an awl. This symbolizes the slave's willingness to serve his master, until death them part. Note that even if the slave agrees to serve his master 'for ever', it has to be established in the official courts. This applies to our loyalty and service to YHVH: As the doorpost was the place where the blood of the Passover lamb was applied and where we inscribe the words of the Schema contained in a Mezuzah, we begin our relationship with YHVH, acknowledging that He is the One and only Elohim.

We read in Exodus 22: 28, that: ***“You shall not curse Elohim, nor curse a ruler of your people.”*** This applies to political and other rulers in our communities. But it also includes the religious leaders in Judah, since YHVH confirmed many times in the Scriptures, that ***“Judah is My scepter”***¹⁰ (or lawgiver) (quoted from the last part of Psalm 60: 7).’ Many continue to contradict the words that Yahshua used in Matthew 23: 2 & 3, saying, ***“The scribes and the Pharisees have seated themselves in the chair of Moses; (3) therefore all that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things, and do not do them.”*** Our Jewish brothers have been given the Oracles of Elohim, and we may argue about it until we are blue in the face, they have the authority to set the timing of the annual Set-apart Days of YHVH, provided that these occur in their seasons (KJV). Those who believe that Yahshua did not mean what He said in Matthew 23, usually quote the present day leader of the Karaite Jews in Israel, who wrote a book in this regard, despite the fact that he does not believe in Yahshua (I attach an article written by Tim Hegg in PDF-format, refuting the assertion made in this book). We need to accept their authority, but must not convert to Rabbinical Judaism (the modern day Pharisees), as Yahshua said to them in verse 15 of Matthew 23, ***“Woe to you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you travel about on sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.”*** He was saying this to the Pharisees of His day, because they knew who He was: They knew all the prophecies about Him from the Tanach and saw the miracles that He performed in their midst, but denied Him. They like Satan sinned with full knowledge. It is like when those of us who are called at this time to be first-fruits when Yahshua returns, fall away from the faith, as we read in Hebrews 6: 4 – 6, ***‘For in the case of those who have once***

¹⁰ In Genesis 49: 10 we read: *‘The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes, And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.’*

been enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Set-apart Spirit, (5) and have tasted the good word of Elohim and the powers of the age to come, (6) and then have fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of Elohim, and put Him to open shame.’ However, most of the Jews who ever lived and are now living are according to Romans 11, blinded to who Yahshua is.

Let’s for the moment get back to the concept ‘in their seasons’, mentioned earlier. We read in Exodus 23: 16 & 17, ***“Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field. (17) Three times a year all your males shall appear before YHWH Elohim.”*** Here we see that Scriptures require that the Feast of Tabernacles, commemorating the second and great harvest of human beings, at least reach the beginning of autumn in the Northern Hemisphere. We read a second witness to this in Exodus 34: 22, as follows: ***“And you shall celebrate the Feast of weeks, that is, the first fruits of the wheat harvest, and the Feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year.”*** What is the ‘turn of the year?’ The Hebrew word transliterated ‘turn’ is ‘tequfah’, meaning ‘*revolution, circuit or end.*’ It is used specifically for the equinoxes or solstices. The Feast of Tabernacles should therefore be within the autumn harvest season, as much as the Passover, should be during spring (Aviv in Hebrew). My wife and I have been keeping the Feast Days of Elohim for 34 years and studied the same for five years before. The Last Great Day of the Feast at the end of the Feast of Tabernacles, may according to the Gregorian calendar, be from as early as the 27th of September and as late as the 26th of October in any year. However, it was never according to my memory as late as the 4th of November, like some groups kept their Last Great Day two or three years ago. This mistake is usually made due to misinterpreting the command to offer a first-fruits offering around Passover. Many

have been misled to believe that this offering was of *'ripe grain'* rather than of *'first-fruits of green ears'*. This resulted in the use of an erroneous method, determining the timing of the Passover and other Feast Days according to the practice of Jeroboam, who caused Israel to keep the Feast of Tabernacles during the eighth month (after Israel and Judah became two separate nations). According to Leviticus 23: 2 & 4, YHVH said to Moses: ***"Speak to the sons of Israel, and say to them, '(YHVH)'s appointed times which you (Moses or those who have seated themselves in the chair of Moses) shall proclaim as Set-apart convocations – My appointed times are these."*** This is repeated in verse 4 of Leviticus 23, after informing Moses about the weekly Sabbath.

In Exodus 23: 28 – 33 (paraphrased) YHVH tells Moses that the Israelites will be confronted by idol-worshipping nations, near the land of Canaan, but assured Moses that He will weaken their armies with swarms of hornets, so that they will move to the land bound by the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea, the desert of Arabia and the Euphrates River. YHVH also promised that He shall free the Israelites from sickness and disease; cause their woman to bear many children and their flocks and herds to multiply greatly. In addition YHVH said that he will not allow other peoples to remain in their land, lest they mingle with them and serve their gods. Moses directed the building of an altar on a slope of mount Sinai. They placed twelve large stones around the altar to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The young men prepared animals as peace offerings on wood on the altar. Moses took half of the blood from the animals and sprinkled it over the wood. As flames crackled through the wood, he read aloud the newly-written agreement, as recorded in Exodus 24: 7 & 8 before the people, as follows: ***"Then he (Moses) took the book of the covenant and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, 'All that YHVH has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!' So Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, and said, 'Behold the blood of the covenant, which YHVH has made with you in accordance with all these words.'"*** Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Hur, Aaron's two

oldest sons and several elders, later went up Mount Sinai. Part way up, as they paused to rest, the guiding cloud lowered to envelop the upper part of the mountain. An alarming darkness resulted, out of which grew a strange light. The climbers looked above to take in an awesome sight. The cloud had vanished, leaving a sapphire-like expanse flecked with beautiful beams of light. We read accordingly in Exodus 24:10, ***“and they saw the Elohim of Israel; and under His feet there appeared to be a pavement of sapphire, as clear as the sky itself.”*** The men fell on their faces when they realized they were staring up at a radiant Being in that blue translucency! YHVH has come down to humanity and astonished onlookers could scarcely believe their eyes.

At first the men were afraid, but gradually such a relaxing exhilaration came on them they were able to rest and even eat in the presence of the One who had created the universe. This was a very special privilege few men have experienced. Most people fail to realize it is also a special privilege to talk to the Creator, something that can be done simply by a proper attitude and prayer. After a while the view faded and the cloud reappeared to cover the peak of the mountain. The voice of YHVH rumbled out of the cloud, telling Moses to come on up to receive the tablets of stone on which YHVH had written the Ten Commandments to take to the people. Realizing he might be gone for quite a while, Moses told the men to wait until a certain time and then go back down if he had not returned. He chose Joshua to continue upward with him. Farther up, their progress was stopped by the increasing density of the cloud, through which strange, flickering beams of light could be seen.

The covenant agreement made at Mount Sinai between YHVH and Israel was nothing to be taken lightly. It was later referred to in the Scriptures as a sacred marriage contract between YHVH, as the husband, and Israel as the bride. It was a binding promise that YHVH would always take care of His wife, Israel, who would always be faithful and never have anything to do with the false gods of other nations. The rules of the

marriage covenant were the Ten Commandments and the civil laws later given on Mount Sinai. The terms were that Israel was to remain faithful by obeying the laws of YHVH to insure happiness, good health, many children and prosperity. Unfaithfulness would mean misery, disease, poverty and possible divorce. To better understand about the original covenant, it is necessary to jump ahead in the chain of events and divulge that Israel failed to live up to its terms. The covenant was broken and the house of Israel (who split from her sister nation Judah) was punished and divorced and sent out of the Promised Land. We read accordingly in Jeremiah 3: 6 – 10, ***“Then YHVH said to me in the days of Josiah the king, ‘Have you seen what faithless Israel did? She went up on every high hill and under every green tree, and she was a harlot there. (7) And I thought, ‘After she has done all these things, she will return to Me’; but she did not return, and her treacherous sister Judah saw it. (8) And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also. (9) And it came about because of the lightness of her harlotry that she polluted the land and committed adultery with stones and trees. (10) And yet in spite of all this her treacherous sister Judah did not return to Me with all her heart, but rather in deception,” declares YHVH.’***

Centuries later, when Yahshua came to earth, He drew up terms for a new marriage agreement with Israel. He became the mediator or agent of the renewed covenant, much as Moses was the agent or go-between of the original covenant. The renewed covenant will not be completed until Yahshua returns to rule the world as we see in Hebrews 8: 8 - 11, ***“For finding fault with them (the people not the covenant), He says, ‘BEHOLD, DAYS ARE COMING, SAYS YHVH, WHEN I WILL EFFECT A NEW COVENANT WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AND WITH THE HOUSE OF JUDAH; (9) NOT LIKE THE COVENANT WHICH I MADE WITH THEIR FATHERS ON THE DAY WHEN I TOOK THEM BY THE HAND TO***

LEAD THEM OUT OF THE LAND OF EGYPT; FOR THEY DID NOT CONTINUE IN MY COVENANT, AND I DID NOT CARE FOR THEM, SAYS YHVH. (10) FOR THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS YHVH: I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS. AND I WILL BE THEIR ELOHIM, AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE.” After proposing the renewed covenant, Yahshua died, thus freeing Israel from the first marriage contract. Even though Yahshua divorced Israel, the nation was still bound to Him until His death.

As mentioned before, many today teach that because the original covenant was broken, the Torah is dead and need not to be obeyed, any longer. Nothing could be further from the truth. Belief in that lie has caused much misery to mankind. The Ten Commandments and Judgments and Right Rulings, were the basis of the original covenant. They are living, unchanged spiritual laws, staying in effect as does the physical law of gravity, regardless of what anyone has to say about it. The physical and spiritual laws set in motion by YHVH are meant for all men in all nations down through the ages. The breaking of the covenant did not lessen their effect, as they were in existence before the original covenant was made with Israel. They are the main spiritual laws of the renewed covenant. Yahshua had to die because they were broken. As mentioned before the ceremonial and sacrificial laws that were added after the original covenant agreement, to remind the Israelites of their sins, was not part of the original covenant. We read accordingly in Jeremiah 7: 22 , **“For I did not speak to your fathers, or command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices.”** and Galatians 3: 19 **“Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made.”**

For six days Moses and Joshua waited in the heavy vapor. There were times when they had the urge to try to return to the valley, but they patiently waited for whatever YHVH expected of them. On the seventh day a voice called for Moses to proceed upward. Moses asked Joshua to wait for him, and disappeared into the mist, which opened just enough to show the way. We conclude this Torah portion by reading verse 18 of Exodus 24, as follows: ***'And Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.'***

Exodus 25 verse 1 to 27 verse 19 (T'rumah).

This weeks Torah portion is called t'rumah, meaning *'free will offering'*. Commencing in verses 1 – 8 of Exodus 25, we read: ***'Then YHVH spoke to Moses saying, (2) "Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution. (3) And this is the contribution which you are to raise from them; gold, silver and bronze, (4) blue, purple and scarlet material, fine linen, goat hair, (5) rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, (6) oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, (7) onyx stones and setting stones, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. (8) And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them."*** The Hebrew word for Sanctuary is Mikdash, meaning Set-apart place, temple or tabernacle.

Ever since the creation of mankind, our Creator wanted to dwell with us, His children. To be able to come and dwell among Israel, YHVH instructed Moses to let the children of Israel build a dwelling place for Him where He could come and meet with them. The purpose of the building is clearly not to provide a shelter for Elohim, but to provide a means for mankind to have Elohim in their lives. If we recall the words of YHVH to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3: 12, saying, ***"Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship (or serve) Elohim at this mountain."*** Two events had to occur before the Israelites could worship Elohim at Mount Sinai: They had to receive the Torah and they needed to build a Sanctuary. YHVH required that the Israelites clean themselves up according to His teachings (Torah) and then to build a Tabernacle for Him to come and dwell with them. The condition for living in our midst is as specified in Deuteronomy 23: 14 ***"Since YHVH your Elohim walks in the midst of your camp to deliver you and to defeat your enemies before you, therefore your camp must be holy; and He must not***

see anything indecent among you lest He turn away from you.” If we do not clean up our lives, then we cannot expect YHVH to be amongst us, or to protect us.

YHVH continues to command Moses telling him in Exodus 25: 40 that the tabernacle, including its furniture must be made **‘after the pattern for them’** that He has shown Moses on Mount Sinai. We see this mentioned again in Acts 7: 44, stating: **“Our fathers had the tabernacle of testimony in the wilderness, just as He who spoke to Moses directed him to make it according to the pattern which he had seen.”** We notice that YHVH puts the emphasis on observing details. Considering the blueprint or pattern of the Tabernacle, we understand how mankind has corrupted, not only the place of worship, but also the way they *‘worship’* Elohim. YHVH wants us to follow Him according to the way that He specifies in His torah and not according to the way that the heathen worship their gods, as may be read in Leviticus 18: 3 & 4, as follows: **‘You shall not do what is done in the land of Egypt where you lived, nor are you to do what is done in the land of Canaan where I am bringing you; you shall not walk in their statutes. (4) You are to perform My judgments and keep My statutes, to live in accord with them; I am YHVH your Elohim.’** Even though we all know that Torah keeping does not earn us salvation, we show our Father that we love Him, by following His teachings faithfully as set-out by Him. Just as much as it is not OK to call YHVH by any old title, so is it not OK to serve Him in any old way. We read a second witness to this in Jeremiah 10: 1 – 5, as follows: **‘Hear the word which YHVH speaks to you, O house of Israel. (2) Thus says YHVH, “Do not learn the way of the nations, And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Although the nations are terrified by them; (3) For the customs of the peoples are delusion; Because it is wood cut from the forest, The work of the hands of a craftsman with a cutting tool. (4) They decorate it with silver and with gold; They fasten it with nails and with hammers So that it will not totter. (5) Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field are they, and they cannot speak; They must be carried,**

Because they cannot walk! Do not fear them, For they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good.”

It does not matter how sincere you are when you are putting up your Xmas tree to celebrate the so-called birthday of a false Messiah who came to do away with his father's laws, you are sincerely wrong. There is only one way to reap the blessings of YHVH and that is to live as He set out in Deuteronomy 28: 1 – 14. In verse 1 of Deuteronomy 28, we read: ***“Now it shall be, if you will diligently obey YHVH your Elohim, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, YHVH your Elohim will set you high above all the nations of the earth.”*** There are 13 verses specifying the blessings that we shall reap, by obeying all the commandments that YHVH gave us through Moses. However, notice from verse 15 of Deuteronomy 28 onward, that there are 68 verses in which the curses are given that will befall us if we do not obey His commandments. In verse 58 & 59 of Deuteronomy 28, we read: ***‘If you are not careful to observe all the words of this law which are written in this book, to fear this honored and awesome name, YHVH your Elohim, (59) then YHVH will bring extraordinary plagues on you and your descendants, even severe and lasting plagues, and miserable and chronic sicknesses.’*** YHVH has given us the pattern or way that He wants us to serve Him in His word. We read accordingly in Deuteronomy 4: 1 & 2, ***“And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the judgments which I am teaching you to perform, in order that you may live and go in and take possession of the land which YHVH, the Elohim of your fathers, is giving you. (2) You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it, that you may keep the commandments of YHVH your Elohim which I command you.”***

We need to be careful to follow the commandments that YHVH gave us through Moses exactly as He specified, and not follow false traditions like Xmas, or any other tradition devised by men, to ‘worship’ Him. We read Yahshua’s answer to the Pharisees regarding their tradition to ritually wash their hands

before eating bread, in Mark 7: 6 – 8, as follows: ***‘And He said to them, “Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, ‘THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. (7) BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.’ (8) “Neglecting the commandment of Elohim, you hold to the tradition of men.”*** Yes, it is necessary for health reasons to wash our hands before meals. But, when we come to understand the significance of true worship, it becomes supremely relevant to our lives and to our ultimate destiny: For example, true worship of Elohim honors His command concerning His Sabbaths: Sunday worship does not have Elohim's authority, neither has a Sabbath or annual Feast Day which starts at a different time to which He ordained through Moses. These have the authority of man and not that of Elohim. The question that must be answered, is whether Elohim accepts such worship when His clear commands regarding the timing of His Sabbaths are ignored? Satan is the master counterfeiter; he changed every command that YHVH gave us, by teaching just the opposite through his agents in the world. These agents are not only the churches of the world, but also those amongst us who are contradicting everything we read in the word of Elohim. We read in Isaiah 24: 4 & 5 ***‘The earth mourns and withers, the world fades and withers, the exalted of the people of the earth fade away. (5) The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, and broke the everlasting covenant.’*** Changing the Sabbath to Friday or Sunday is breaking the everlasting covenant.

We know that when YHVH gave the Torah to Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai, He came to dwell amongst His people Israel. The dwelling place of YHVH our Elohim moved from its place in heaven to the Tabernacle. Then again in Ezekiel we see that the Glory of Elohim moves from its dwelling place in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Ark of the Covenant, which was the dwelling place of Elohim, was never recovered for the Second Temple. The Shekinah presence of YHVH never filled the second Temple in Jerusalem, as it did the first Temple.

However, in the book of Acts, in chapter 2, we see an extraordinary thing occurring on the day of Pentecost. The believers in Yahshua were gathered in the second Temple, and in the same way as the fire and wind that appeared at Mount Sinai and in Ezekiel's vision, The Presence of Elohim returned to the Temple to take up residence. But instead of entering the Holy of Holies as in the first Temple, He takes up residence in the bodies of the believers present on the day of Pentecost.

The message was clear. The first century believers have become the Temple of Elohim. In 1 Corinthians 3: 16 & 17 Rav Shaul explains it as follows: ***'Do you not know that you are a temple of Elohim, and that the Spirit of Elohim dwells in you? If any man destroys the Temple of Elohim, Elohim will destroy him, for the temple of Elohim is Set-apart, and that is what you are.'*** In 1 Corinthians 6: 19 & 20 Rav Shaul therefore admonish us, as follows: ***'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Set-apart Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify Elohim in your body.'*** We read a marvelous prophesy about what is busy happening before our eyes today in Jeremiah 3: 14 – 15, as follows: ***'Return, O faithless sons,' declares YHVH; 'For I am a master to you, And I will take you one from a city and two from a family, And will bring you to Zion.'*** (15) ***"Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding.*** YHVH is calling out a people today, who will obey Him fully. We are to be the first fruits of His creatures, as we read in James 1: 18 ***'In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures.'*** It is clear that we are the Temple of Elohim today and it is for that reason necessary for us to ensure that we clean out the Temple on a regular basis. If you can recall, whilst the Shekinah of YHVH lived in the Holy of Holies inside the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Priest went inside once a year on the day of Atonement, to make atonement for the sins of the people. The

sins were 'covered' by the sacrifice that the Priest made on that day. We read therefore in Hebrews 9: 13 & 14 as follows: ***'For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, how much more will the blood of Messiah, who through the eternal Spirit offered up Himself without blemish to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim?'***

Yahshua had to die for the Set-apart Spirit to come. We read fittingly in John 16: 7, Yahshua saying: ***"But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper (mentioned in John 14: 26 as being the Set-apart Spirit) shall not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you."*** Without having the Spirit of Elohim indwelling us we cannot inherit the Kingdom of Elohim. We also cannot clean up our minds unless we have the Spirit of YHVH to help us. It is also true that we cannot receive the Ruach HaKodesh until we repent. It is therefore important for each one of us to clean up our minds and bodies, the Temple of Elohim, by repenting and returning to Torah. We need to stay close to YHVH and ask Him on a continuous basis to give us more of His Set-apart Spirit. His Spirit will eventually lead us into all truth: If we respond to what the Set-apart Spirit shows us to change, YHVH will lead us into more truth. However, we are only responsible for what we know, but as we are lead into more truth, we are required to correct our previously incorrect actions and return to full Torah observance. Repentance is a lifelong process: Because we are human, we are bound to sin daily. We therefore need to continue to repent of our sins during our daily prayers, if we want the Set-apart Spirit to continue to guide us. The Set-apart Spirit is likened to olive oil in the Scriptures, and it is for this reason that YHVH instructed Moses (at the start of the next Torah portion) in Exodus 27: 20, saying: ***"And you shall charge the sons of Israel, that they bring you clear oil of beaten olives for the light, to make a lamp burn continually."***

YHVH instructed the children of Israel in the desert to build a model of His home on earth. The Tabernacle that they constructed comprised of three areas, namely: the Courtyard; the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The bronze laver stood in the Courtyard, where those entering the Tabernacle washed their hands and feet, slaughter the animals and offered on the Altar of Burnt Offering. This was the 'physical' area of the Tabernacle where the resources of the physical world were offered in man's service of Elohim. The Holy Place housed the golden menorah; the golden table with showbread; and the altar of incense. The Holy of Holies was the abode of the Ark of the Covenant. The High Priest entered the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement, once a year. The children of Israel built the first prototype following the instructions given to Moses at Mount Sinai. When the final pillar, tapestry and partition had been fixed in position, Elohim made His presence dwell in the Tabernacle, empowering the nation of Israel to replicate its three domains in the three chambers of our lives, namely: our Bodies, Souls and Spirits. YHVH is concerned with the details of building the Tabernacle, because He sees His people through the material that they donated. This is further explained in Ezekiel 43: 10 & 11, as follows: ***"As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities; and let them measure the plan. (11) And if they are ashamed of all they have done, make known to them the design of the house, its structure, its exits, its entrances, all its designs, all its statutes, and all its Laws. And write it in their sight, so that they may observe its whole design and all its statutes, and do them."*** If we remind ourselves that Elohim is so concerned with the details of the Temple, then we will be thoroughly embarrassed by the detail in which we transgress His Torah. We should be very concerned with keeping Torah in detail. I am able to recall some of the details of the times when I transgressed the Torah, in that I did not give attention to the detail required. Let's aim to obey YHVH our Elohim in the smallest stroke and letter of the Law.

The strangest thing about the Tabernacle is the fact that YHVH tells us that He hates idols. He similarly wants us to hate idols. He tells us in Exodus 20: 4 “ ***You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.***” However, He tells the Israelites to make two golden figurines with wings and put them on the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. What may I ask is the difference between His two commandments in this case? The two Cherubim had to be made out of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. We read in verse 22 of Exodus 25, “***And there I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel.***” The difference between the second commandment and this instruction of YHVH is that He commanded the Cherubim to be made. He tells us that He will talk to us between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony. We also read Hezekiah’s prayer to YHVH in Isaiah 37: 16, as follows: “***O YHVH of hosts, the Elohim of Israel, who art enthroned above the cherubim, Thou art the Elohim, Thou alone of all the kingdoms of the earth. Thou hast made heaven and earth.***” We need to do whatever He requires of us, no matter what. The word Elohim is a plural noun, but it is not because there are more than one Elohim, but to indicate how truly majestic YHVH is. When Yahshua himself was asked which of the commandments is the foremost of all. He answered without hesitation in Mark 12: 29 - 30, “***The foremost is, ‘Hear O Israel! YHVH our Elohim is One; and you shall love YHVH your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ (The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.)***” In substantiation of this we read in Deuteronomy 4: 35, “***To you it was shown that you might know that YHVH He is Elohim; there is no other besides Him.***” Knowing this should motivate us to want to obey and do

every detail of what YHVH the one and only Elohim requires from us.

Exodus 27 verse 20 to 30 verse 10 (Tetzaveh).

YHVH instructs Moses in Exodus 27: 20, to receive pure olive oil from the children of Israel to raise an everlasting flame upon the menorah, which Aaron is to kindle every day from evening till morning.

The next 43 verses of this Torah portion contain Elohim's instructions to Moses regarding the making of priestly garments for Aaron and his sons, who will perform priestly duties in the sanctuary. Eight different types of garments are to be made: All the priests (Kohanim) should wear linen tunics, linen (pants) breeches, linen caps (or turbans), and linen sashes (or girdles). In addition the high priest (or Kohen Gadol) should wear a blue cloak over his tunic, an ephod (apron), a breastplate and a crown. We read in verses 6 – 8 of Exodus 28, that: ***“They shall also make the ephod of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen, the work of skillful workman. (7) It shall have two shoulder pieces joined to its two ends, that it may be joined. (8) And the skillfully woven band, which is on it, shall be like its workmanship, of the same material: of gold, of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen.”***

The ephod looked like an apron, worn backward, in order to cover the back of the wearer from the waist down to the ankles, and overlapped in the front. A belt (or sash) tied in the front with the two bands extending up the wearer's back over his shoulders. At the end of the two bands Elohim tells Moses to place two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: six on the one stone and six on the second stone. Next Moses is instructed to make the breastplate of judgment. The breastplate shall be made from gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen. It shall be doubled into a square: a span shall be its length, and a span shall be its width, with four rows of setting stones in it: The first row shall be a Ruby, a Topaz and an Emerald; The second row shall be a Turquoise, a Sapphire and a Diamond; The third

row shall be a Jacinth, an Agate and an Amethyst; and the fourth row shall be a Beryl, an Onyx and a Jasper and they shall be set in Gold. The twelve stones shall be engraved with the names of the tribes of Israel according to their tribal colors and ensigns. A Jewish source also claims that in addition to the names of the tribes, the stones also contained the words: *“Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, righteous tribes (transliterated in Hebrew as Shivtei Yeshurun)”* – in order for the breastplate to contain all 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.

The breastplate of judgment, the Urim and the Thummim shall be over Aaron’s heart when he goes before YHVH. According to a Jewish source, the Urim and Thummim have an inscription of the Name of Elohim, inserted in the folds of the breastplate. It caused the letters inscribed on its stones to light up in response to questions asked by the leader of the community. One such example is recorded in 1 Samuel 23: 9 – 11, as follows: ***‘Now David knew that Saul was plotting evil against him; so he said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod here.” (10) Then David said, “O YHVH Elohim of Israel, Thy servant has heard for certain that Saul is seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city on my account. (11) Will the men of Keilah surrender me into his hand? Will Saul come down just as Thy servant has heard? O YHVH Elohim of Israel, I pray, tell Thy servant.” And YHVH said, “He will come down.”’*** When Joshua was to take over from Moses, YHVH gave specific instructions how Joshua was to communicate with Him in Numbers 27: 21, saying: ***“Moreover, he (Joshua) shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire for him by the judgment of the Urim before YHVH. At his command they shall go out and at his command they shall come in, both he and the sons of Israel with him, even all the congregation.”*** This was definitely not a democratic vote, but by inquiring from YHVH via the Urim – this was Theocracy in action.

We see further that the robe of the ephod shall be made of blue and there shall be an opening at the top in the middle of it; around its opening shall be a binding of woven work, to

strengthen it, so that it does not tear. On the hem of the cloak shall be pomegranates of blue and purple and scarlet material, all around the hem, and bells of gold between the pomegranates all around. Aaron shall wear the cloak when he comes to minister, so that the sound of the bells be heard when he goes in to the Holy place before Elohim. We read in Exodus 28: 36 - 38, ***“You shall also make a plate of pure gold and shall engrave on it, like the engravings of a seal, ‘Set-apart to YHVH¹¹.’ (37) And you shall fasten it in a blue cord, and it shall be on the turban; it shall be at the front of the turban. (38) And it shall be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron shall take away the iniquity of the Set-apart things which the sons of Israel consecrate, with regard to all their holy (set-apart) gifts; and shall always be on his forehead, that they may be accepted before YHVH.”*** The ephod, breastplate, cloak and crown are to be worn exclusively by the High Priest. The other four garments are to be worn by all priests: These are the tunics made of pure linen, covering the entire body from the neck to the feet with sleeves reaching to the wrists; the sashes; the caps; and the breeches covering their nakedness, from the waist to the knees. The priests put the breeches on, over which they wore the tunics, and put the caps on their heads and sashes around their waists, with bare feet under the floor-length tunics. The high priest puts on these same garments, then, over the tunic and sash he drapes the cloak of blue. Over the cloak he ties the ephod and breastplate. The crown is placed on his forehead and fastened over the turban.

An article published by Biblesearchers.com¹² explains that the sanctity of the office of the priests was elevated by the garments that they wore. The garments worn by Aaron and the

¹¹ Written in Hebrew as follows:- קדש ליהוה

¹²Information obtained from an article published in May, 2003 by Robert Mock MD, entitled: ‘The Garments of the Priests, Levites and the High Priest.’ BibleSearchers.com is an excellent source of information for factual studies and sermons and many bible students are thankful for web pages such as these.

priests were for the atonement of the sins of the children of Israel, as follows:

- The turban or caps of linen atoned for haughtiness or pride – **this makes one wonder why many believers (ladies and men) in our Nazarene Israelite community, refuse to wear head coverings during worship services, despite the fact that we are told in the Renewed Covenant in 1 Peter 2: 9 and Revelation 1: 6 that we are already a kingdom of priests;**
- The girdle or sash atoned for a sinful heart, improper thoughts and theft;
- The fine linen tunic atoned for killing;
- The breeches atoned for sexual sins.

The additional four garments worn by the High Priest were for the following additional acts of atonement:

- The breastplate atoned for partial verdicts and errors in judgment;
- The ephod atoned for idolatry;
- The robe of the ephod and the golden bells atoned for evil speech; and
- The crown or golden plate atoned for arrogance of attitude.

The Torah states that these garments were made for both honor and beauty. The tailors of these garments were Spirit filled people inspired by Elohim, as we read in Exodus 28: 3, ***“And you shall speak to all the skillful persons whom I have endowed with the spirit of wisdom, that they make Aaron’s garments to consecrate him, that he may minister as priest to Me.”***

In Exodus 29 Moses is instructed to initiate Aaron and his sons into the priesthood. Prior to officially erecting the Tabernacle, Aaron and his sons had to undergo a seven-day training period. Moses himself had to assume the role of a priest, to offer a succession of sacrifices which Aaron and his sons were

to bring on each of the seven days during which Moses trained them. This was additional to the daily offerings which were offered every morning and evening upon the altar.

The final few verses of this Torah portion describe the altar of burnt offering, not included in the description of the other furniture used in the Tabernacle mentioned in the previous Torah portion, as follows (Exodus 30: 1 -10): ***“MOREOVER, you shall make an altar as a place for burning incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. (2) Its length shall be a cubit, and its width a cubit, it shall be square, and its height shall be two cubits; its horns shall be of one piece with it. (3) And you shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides all around and its horns; and you shall make a gold molding all around for it. (4) And you shall make two gold rings for it under its molding; you shall make them on its two side walls – on opposite sides – and they shall be holders for poles with which to carry it. (As with the other Temple furniture, the altar of burnt offering should have rings and carrying poles to transport it.) (5) And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. (6) And you shall put this altar in front of the veil that is near the ark of the testimony, in front of the mercy seat that is over the ark of the testimony, where I will meet with you. (7) And Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps. (8) And when Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. There shall be perpetual incense before YHVH throughout your generations. (9) You shall not offer any strange incense on this altar, or burnt offering or meal offering; and you shall not pour out libation on it. (10) And Aaron shall make atonement on its horns once a year; he shall make atonement on it with blood of the sin offering of atonement once a year throughout your generations. It is most holy to YHVH.”***

One day each year, the golden altar served another function: On the Day of Atonement or Yom Kippur, the High Priest sprinkled the blood of the day's special offerings on its 'horns', to make *'atonement once a year throughout your generations.'*

Moses and Aaron were appointed by YHVH to mold the nation of Israel into a people who would serve Elohim as His model nation, in order to show the other nations of the world how to live in obedience to YHVH. At the beginning of this Torah portion the people are called upon to raise an ever-burning lamp. The lamp was to shed its light from evening to morning, within the world, in which darkness and light alternate. Yahshua also told us to be examples in a world filled with both good and evil in Matthew 5: 14 & 15, as follows: ***“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. (15) Nor do men light a lamp, and put it under the peck-measure, but on the lampstand; and it gives light to all who are in the house.”*** We conclude this Torah portion with Yahshua advising us in verse 16 of Matthew 5, in this way: ***“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”***

Exodus 30 verse 11 to 34 verse 35 (Ki Tisa).

This week's Torah portion is called Ki Tisa, meaning 'when you elevate'. Starting in verses 11 to 16 of Exodus 30, we read: **'YHVH also spoke to Moses saying, (12) "When you take a census (elevate in Hebrew) of the sons of Israel to number them, then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to YHVH, when you number them, that there may be no plague among them when you number them. (13) This is what everyone who is numbered shall give: half a shekel according to the shekel of the sanctuary (the shekel is twenty gerahs), half a shekel as a contribution to YHVH. (14) Everyone who is numbered, from twenty years old and over, shall give the contribution to YHVH (at the age of twenty a young man was considered old enough to fight for the nation of Israel). (15) The rich shall not pay more, and the poor shall not pay less than the half shekel, when you give the contribution to YHVH to make atonement for yourselves. (16) And you shall take the atonement money from the sons of Israel, and shall give it for the service of the tent of meeting, that it may be a memorial for the sons of Israel before YHVH, to make atonement for yourselves."**' We see here that Moses was commanded to take a census of the people of Israel, requiring them to give an offering of half a shekel. The question on every ones' lips is: Why a half a shekel? Why not a full shekel or even more? A Rabbinical explanation for this is, that we being human, do not see or understand the whole picture, such as for example the significance of the priestly garments or the temple furniture, when we read the specific section in the Scriptures. It is often necessary for someone to explain the significance of certain things to us before we understand more fully.

A case in point is explained by Rav Shaul in Romans 10: 13 – 14, in this way: **'for "WHOEVER WILL CALL UPON THE NAME OF YHVH (THE LORD)¹³ WILL BE SAVED."** (14) **How**

¹³ In the page after the preface of the New American Standard Bible, entitled: 'Principles of Translation', the Editorial Board (THE LOCKMAN FOUNDATION),

then shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed? (How will those who do not know or believe in the Name of YHVH call upon His name – not realizing that His Name is not G-d? Will He overlook their ignorance?) ***And how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?*** Yes, we all need teachers to teach us the basics and to train us in righteousness. This is why YHVH is at this time calling out first fruits to learn to become teachers (kings and priests) under Yahshua during the millennium. At this time Yahshua is choosing His disciples (or students), in the same way that He chose His first century disciples. He wants us to get to know Him as our Master (or Rabbi): We understand that He is our Savior, but by studying what He taught His first century disciples, He will also become our Master. If we truly want to learn from our Master Yahshua, we need to commit our lives as disciples under Him; study what He taught and then follow His example. We read Yahshua's warning in this regard in Luke 6: 46, as follows: ***“And why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”*** We read that Yahshua taught in local synagogues in Luke 4: 16, in this way: ***‘And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath and stood up and read.’*** It is evident from the first four books of the Renewed Covenant, known as the Gospel (or Good News) that Yahshua taught in the Temple courts during Sabbath and the annual Feast Days. Yahshua's ministry started after His immersion, when He was about thirty years of age. He was a Jew, born into the faith. Most of us

informs the reader that the word G-d is translated from the Hebrew word Elohim and that the Tetragrammaton YHVH is consistently pronounced and translated as LORD, by them. However, most Hebrew scholars is aware that the first two letters of the Tetragrammaton is pronounced: Yah, as in HalleluYah (hallelujah), meaning to praise Yah; the third letter ‘Vav’ is pronounced double u as in oo; and the last letter ‘He’, being the final letter is quiet (soft in Hebrew) and pronounced as e. Therefore YHVH is pronounced Yah-oo-e or as it sounds to the English ear: Yahweh. Nevertheless the Set-apart Name of YHVH should only be used in teachings, worship services and prayer. That is how we will call on His Name when the day of YHVH comes, spoken about in Joel 2: 32, where the section quoted by Rav Shaul in Romans 10 is derived from.

were not born into the faith and it takes many years of studying and living the way of Elohim, before we are able to teach fellow believers.

When we are new to the faith, we should not teach new believers, as we are like the blind leading the blind, as Yahshua taught His disciples in Luke 6: 39 – 49, ***‘And He also spoke a parable to them: “A blind man cannot guide a blind man, can he? Will they not both fall into a pit? (40) A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”***’ The Rabbi-disciple method of teaching Torah and the way of Elohim from one generation to the next, as used by Yahshua, was instituted by Moses, when he taught Joshua. The teachers of each generation were delegated to raise-up disciples and future teachers for the next generation. This is also in agreement with the commission that Yahshua gave His disciples, and by extension us (His modern day disciples) in Matthew 28: 18 - 20, saying: ***“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. (19) Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them in the name (singular) of the Father and the Son and the Set-apart Spirit, (20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*** Do we need a special ordination to teach the people of Elohim? I believe that we have been given that ordination by Yahshua himself in the Scriptures already quoted. We read further in Ephesians 4: 11, ***‘And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building of the body of Messiah.’***

However, teachers and elders should more than anyone else, follow the example of Yahshua, as we read fittingly in 1Timothy 3: 1 – 7: ***It is a trustworthy statement if any man aspires to the office of overseer (men responsible to lead the ecclesia, such as Elders or Teachers), it is a fine work he desires to do. (2) An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent,***

respectable, hospitable, able to teach, (3) not addicted to wine or pugnacious (quarrelsome), but gentle, uncontentious, free from the love of money. (4) He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (5) (but if a man does not know how to manage his own house hold, how will he take care of the ecclesia of Elohim?) (6) and not a new convert, lest he become conceited and fall into condemnation incurred by the devil. (7) And he must have a good reputation with those outside the ecclesia, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.'

Does being a teacher make you a better person than your fellow believers? The answer is a resounding No! It only means that you have been in the faith longer than your fellow believers. In addition the age old saying: *'that you are never too old to learn'*, remains ever true. Even teachers need teachers and I get two to three Torah teachings on a weekly basis from other teachers. However, it is as Rav Shaul puts it in Hebrews 5: 12, saying: ***"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of Elohim, and you have come to need milk and not solid food."*** This is talking about people who are forever arguing about the basic principles of the Oracles of Elohim, such as when to start keeping the Feast Days of Elohim; However it also implies that if you have been obeying Torah for a number of years, you should be able to teach new believers to observe all that Yahshua commanded us to do.

We have the assurance that if we follow Yahshua and His discipleship program, we will know and trust our teachers, as they will have been trained by others in the faith before them. As a result, we will not easily be lead astray by people who did not go through the same training themselves. Self study is essential, but it is certain that even if you read the Scriptures through many times, without guidance you will not understand much, on your own. This is described in Isaiah 28: 9 – 13: ***"To whom would He teach knowledge? And to whom would He interpret the message? Those just weaned from milk?***

Those just taken from the breast? (10) “For He says, ‘Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there.’ (11) Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue, (12) He who said to them, “Here is rest, give rest to the weary,” And, “Here is repose,” but they would not listen. (13) So the word of YHVH to them will be, “Order on order, order on order, Line on line, line on line, A little here, a little there,” That they may go and stumble backward, be broken, snared, and taken captive.” Without teachers we will go back into captivity where we came from. After our immersion into Yahshua’s saving Name, we need to grow in grace and knowledge (as we read in 2 Peter 3: 18), else we will be backsliding. As prophesied in Jeremiah 16: 19, we need to repent from being deceived, into believing the falsehoods that we were taught in the past, in this way: **‘O YHVH, my strength and my stronghold, And my refuge in the day of distress, To Thee the nations will come From the ends of the earth and say, “Our fathers have inherited nothing but falsehood, Futility and things of no profit.”’** Yes, knowing the truth is profitable for us: It is for our own good and will set us free. The point is that YHVH has an educational system and He calls people who obey Him. YHVH does not reveal His teachings to those who refuse to cooperate with Him. In addition He does not exalt a novice who may use His education unwisely. However, there are those who set themselves up outside of the education system of Elohim, being deceived themselves, and deceiving new comers in our faith, to be enslaved into falsehood once again. But, because we are human and since there is not currently any one group who has all the truth, even the *‘teachers’* amongst us are able to learn from others, as we have learnt in Torah portion Yitro.

Speaking to all of us, but specifically to teachers of Torah, Rav Shaul admonished us in 2 Timothy 4: 1 – 5, saying: **“I solemnly charge you in the presence of Elohim and of Messiah Yahshua, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: (2) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season** (during the

Feast Days of YHVH and other times); **reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.** (3) **For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in according to their own desires;** (4) **and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths.** (5) **But you be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

The next important point to consider is in verses 19 to 21 of Exodus 30, as follows: **“And Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet from it (the laver of bronze); (20) when they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water, that they may not die; or when they approach the altar to minister, by offering up in smoke a fire sacrifice to YHVH. (21) So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they may not die; and it shall be a perpetual statute for them, for Aaron and his descendants throughout their generations.”** YHVH requires that those who serve Him be Set-apart. The priests had to wash their hands and feet before they enter the tent of meeting, because they used their hands in service to Him and since they served Him in their bare feet, they also had to wash their feet. By washing their hands and feet the priests showed obedience to YHVH, but also showed that their walk before YHVH was pure. YHVH instituted health laws for all His servants to serve and obey Him.

It is not usually necessary for Nazarene Jews/Israelites who were born into the faith to be reminded of these health laws, as it should be part of our way of life. However, since YHVH is busy calling people from other faiths to come into the truth and His way of life, it is necessary to explain these laws contained in Torah. The reason being that gentiles do not as a norm believe or study the Torah and Christianity on the other hand, insists that Yahshua (the one they call J*e*s*u*s*) came to abolish His Father’s Law. We also read in 2 Corinthians 6: 14 - 18 **‘Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what**

fellowship has light and darkness? (15) Or what harmony has Messiah with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? (16) Or what agreement has the temple of Elohim with idols? For we are the temple of the living Elohim; just as Elohim said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their Elohim, and they shall be my people. (17) Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says YHVH. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. (18) "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to me." Says YHVH Almighty.' Yes, we should not touch what is unclean; a leper, discharges from a human body, idols, unclean meats, dead bodies. If we do so by chance, we will be unclean until the evening and should wash our clothes and bodies with soap and water.

We know that many Christian believers obey most of the Scriptural rules without ever reading the Tanak, since they have been taught these rules by their parents. The question that I ask myself many times is why? Some of these rules are common sense, but I am certain that they have learnt some of these laws from their parents by word of mouth, because they learnt it from their forefathers, who were in the very distant past, part of the twelve tribes of Israel. This was the way Torah upon the lips used to be passed on from one generation to the next, in Scriptural times. There might also be many of these rules, which we transgressed, because those amongst us, who come from other religious backgrounds, were taught incorrectly, by deceived parents. We also read in Psalms 24: 3 & 4, as follows: ***'Who may ascend into the hill of YHVH? And who may stand in His holy place? (4) He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul in falsehood, And has not sworn deceitfully.'*** My fellow believers in Yahshua, it is time for us to repent and return to full Torah observance – if we truly want Elohim to come and tabernacle with us again.

In Exodus 31: 12 – 18, YHVH again emphasize the importance of the Sabbath, saying in verse 13: ***"You shall surely***

observe My Sabbaths; for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am YHVH who sanctifies you” Notice that this is talking about the Sabbaths of YHVH. Yes, this is talking about the weekly Sabbath, but also include the annual Sabbaths or Set-apart Days of YHVH, as well as the land Sabbath, which comes along every seven years. In verse 17 YHVH says: ***“It is a sign between Me and the sons of Israel forever; for in six days YHVH made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed. We also read in verse 18 of Exodus 31, ‘And when He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of Elohim.’***

We see in Exodus 32, that when Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people assembled around Aaron and said to him, ***“Come make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man, who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”*** Aaron told them to tear the gold rings off from the ears of their wives, their sons and daughters and to bring it to him. Aaron took all the gold jewelry and fashioned it into a molten calf, saying to them in verse 4 & 5 of Exodus 32: ***“This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.”*** (5) ***‘Now when Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow shall be a feast to YHVH.”’*** This had dire consequences for the nation of Israel. We know that YHVH Set the Sabbath Day apart on the seventh day of the week. Just as much as we do not have the right to change the Sabbath to a Friday or a Sunday, we do not have the right to declare Set-apart Days to worship YHVH on. He has given Moses (or those who sit in the chair of Moses) the authority to determine the timing of the annual Set-apart Days, provided that they are within the correct season, as is confirmed in this Torah portion in Exodus 34: 22.

As a result of the golden calf incident YHVH told Moses that He was angry with the people of Israel, and ask that He be left alone, so that His anger may burn against Israel that He may destroy them. However, Moses begged YHVH saying (in verses 11 – 13 of Exodus 32): ***“O YHVH, why doth Thine anger burn against Thy people whom Thou hast brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? (12) Why should the Egyptians speak, saying, ‘With evil intent He brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth?’ Turn from Thy burning anger and change Thy mind about doing harm to Thy people. (13) Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Thy servants to whom Thou didst swear by Thyself, and didst say to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and all this land of which I have spoken I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.”*** We read further that YHVH changed his mind and Moses turned and went down from the mountain, with the two tablets of the testimony in his hand. When Joshua heard the sound of the Israelites shouting, he told Moses that he heard of war in the camp: not the sound of victory, or the sound of defeat, but the sound of singing. As soon as Moses got near to the camp, he saw the calf and the dancing, and he became very angry and threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them. He also took the golden calf and made it into powder, throwing it over the surface of the water, and made the sons of Israel to drink the water.

Moses asked Aaron why this happened, upon which Aaron relate to him how he took the gold from the people of Israel, threw it into the fire and the golden calf came out. Wow, what an excuse? Moses saw that the people were out of control, so he asked: (in verse 26 of Exodus 32): ***“Whoever is for YHVH, come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered together to him.*** Next Moses instructs the sons of Levi in verse 27, saying: ***“Thus says YHVH, the Elohim of Israel, ‘Every man of you put his sword upon his thigh, and go back and forth from gate to gate in the camp, and kill***

every man his brother, and every man his friend, and every man his neighbor.” We see that the sons of Levi, did exactly as Moses instructed, them and about three thousand men of the people fell that day. This should serve as a warning to us, that we do not have the right to proclaim feast days to YHVH our Elohim. As a result of the golden calf incident, YHVH through Moses temporarily appointed Levi as His firstborn, because they executed judgment on the people of Israel and killed about three thousand men amongst those who worshipped the idol calf. We read accordingly in Numbers 3: 12 ***“Now, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the sons of Israel instead of every firstborn, the issue of the womb among the sons of Israel. So the Levites shall be Mine.”***

In Exodus 33: 1 - 3, YHVH again speaks to Moses saying: ***“Depart, go from here, you and the people whom you have brought up from the land of Egypt, to the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your descendants I will give it. (2) And I will send an angel before you and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. (3) Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in your midst, because you are an obstinate people, lets I destroy you on the way.”*** Upon hearing this, the people went into mourning and none of them put on his ornaments, for the rest of their journey. We read in verse 8 of Exodus 33, that whenever Moses went out to the tent of meeting outside the camp that the people would arise and gaze after him, until he entered the tent. And whenever Moses entered the tent a pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent and YHVH would speak with Moses. At such times the people would arise and worship each at the entrance of the tent. This is where YHVH spoke to Moses, just as a man speaks to his friend. It was also at this time that Moses asked YHVH to show him His glory. However, YHVH told him that no man is able to see His face and live. This is in line with what we read about YHVH in 1st Timothy 6: 16, as follows: ***‘who alone possesses immortality and dwells in***

unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amein.’ However, we read in the first part of Numbers 12: 8, ***‘With him (Moses) I speak mouth to mouth, Even openly, and not in dark sayings, And he beholds the form (or image) of YHVH.’*** Yahshua is according to the first part of Colossians 1: 15, ***‘the image of the invisible Elohim’*** - it is therefore clear that Moses spoke to Yahshua the visible image of the invisible Elohim.

In Exodus 34 YHVH enters a second time into the covenant agreement with Israel, as He did before. However, He tells Moses to write down the words of the covenant that He made with him (Moses) and Israel. We see that He mentions the Sabbaths again and say again in verse 25, ***“You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Passover to be left until morning.”*** YHVH is telling Moses clearly that the Passover should be kept with unleavened bread and not with any old bread as some in Christianity do. In addition He tells Moses that the left over unleavened bread, used at the Passover Seder, should be burned up, after the service. In verse 26 YHVH talks about the first fruit offering to Him, but again mentions that ***‘You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk.’*** As explained previously, this is one of the commandments which some Nazarene Israelite believers choose to argue away. However, with the backing of modern science, we understand that eating meat and milk products together, will lead to cholesterol problems in later life. It is therefore considered prudent that we also obey this portion of Torah.

This time Moses was with YHVH forty days and forty nights, during which time he did not eat or drink anything. Wow, I fast for a day, and being diabetic, almost don’t make it. Let’s face it Moses was a much more devoted man than most of us today. We also see that this time Moses wrote the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments, on the two tablets of stone himself. In conclusion we read in Exodus 34: 29 – 35, that when Moses came down from the mountain, his face shone, because of speaking with Elohim. When Aaron and the people

saw Moses they were afraid to come close to him. He called the elders together and after he spoke to them he put a veil over his face, to speak to the children of Israel. We read also that whenever Moses went to speak to YHVH he took the veil off from his face, but when he in turn spoke to the children of Israel he put the veil over his face.

Exodus 35 verse 1 to 38 verse 20 (Vayakhel).

This week's Torah portion is called Vayakhel, meaning 'assembled'. As the name of this Torah portion indicates, the Israelites gathered around Moses to begin to learn the teachings of Elohim, which he received at Mount Sinai. The first lesson that Moses teaches the Israelites is about the Sabbath, which is among the most significant of the commandments, a cornerstone of our Nazarene Jewish faith¹⁴.

Some contrast this overemphasis of the Sabbath, having been mentioned four times before in the Book of Exodus¹⁵, with the sin of the golden calf. Whereas the golden calf was idolatry at the highest level, the Sabbath as a testimony that YHVH created the world in six days, should serve as an antidote to such idolatry in the future. Moses considers the Sabbath important enough to start his teaching with it, because as we have seen in Exodus 31: 6, it is a perpetual sign between us and YHVH our Elohim. We read in Exodus 35: 2 & 3, ***“For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Set-apart day, a Sabbath of complete rest to YHVH; whoever does any work on it shall be put to death. (3) You shall not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day.”*** We see here a prohibition against work, as well as against the use of fire. We as Nazarene Israelites have a tradition of lighting Sabbath candles before the Sabbath begins. But we should always be mindful that if for some reason we cannot light the candles at least 20 minutes prior to sunset on Friday evening; we should desist from doing so, until the next Friday before Sabbath. We are reminded by Yahshua in Matthew 5: 23 & 24 to do certain things before the

¹⁴ *The initial believers in Yahshua the Messiah were identified as the Jewish sect of the Nazarenes, according to Acts 24: 5 and 14. Rav Shaul was identified as the ring-leader of the Nazarenes. However, since not all of us are Jews by birth, we are also known as Nazarene Israel, because most of us are bloodline Israelites and even if some of us are not, we all become the Israel of Elohim, when we come to believe in Yahshua, owing to the law of inheritance recorded in Galatians 3: 26-29; 4: 31; 6: 16 and Romans 9: 6 & 7.*

¹⁵ *The Sabbath was mentioned before in Exodus 16: 23; 20: 7-10; 23: 12; 31: 13-17.*

commencement of the Sabbath, in this way: ***“If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, (24) leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.”*** Why does YHVH repeat the command about the Sabbath again and again? How do we as human beings learn? How did we start learning when we were in primary school? Remember how you had to repeat the multiplication tables over and over, in order to remember them. This is even today the way we human beings learn. That is also why we attend the Feast Days of Elohim, year after year. Most of us are aware that both the weekly and annual Sabbaths are rehearsals of what is going to happen according to the plan of YHVH in the future. We rehearse the Sabbaths as a reminder of the coming kingdom of Elohim, which will be ushered in when Yahshua returns one day. Yahshua our Messiah has already fulfilled the first three of the seven Feast Days mentioned in Leviticus 23. We know that He will soon come to fulfill the remainder of the Festivals. As we willingly obey Elohim’s annual cycle of *‘mo’edim’*, the Set-apart Spirit will open our hearts and minds to His plan of Salvation for mankind.

Let’s at this point review the concept of creation. In the beginning there was absolutely nothing and then Elohim created the heavens and the earth. From the very beginning YHVH planned to bring forth beings that could become his helpers. These helpers would have the potential to eventually become like Elohim. They would have His character reproduced in them by His Set-apart Spirit. YHVH commenced His plan by reproducing Himself by creating powerful spiritual beings, called angels. These angels were free moral agents, with the ability to choose to go the way of Elohim or the wrong way. For many years they followed the correct way, until one day, a third of them followed the archangel Lucifer in rebellion against YHVH, to take over His throne in the third heaven. They fought against the other two thirds of the angels, still loyal to YHVH, but were overcome and thrown down to earth,

where they are now living as fallen angels or demons (as per Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28). It took six days for Elohim to recreate the earth, after Lucifer (or Satan as he is known today), caused Elohim to destroy and cover everything that Satan had done with water. YHVH Elohim, being an infinite being, exists outside of time; therefore creation marked the beginning of time. Time prior to creation was infinity. The recreation of the earth commenced in the evening of the first day, as we read in the second part of Genesis 1: 5, ***“And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”*** The Sabbath reminds us of the creation, by (YHVH) an infinite Creator. For this reason the Sabbath represents infinity to us: The moment prior to creation was infinity, or the Sabbath, as much as the moment after the creation (on the sixth), is the Sabbath, man’s way to infinity. Mankind therefore has the opportunity to partake of infinity, on the weekly Sabbath. This analogy may assist in understanding why we are commanded not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath. Fire reminds us of the severity of Elohim, as we read in 2 Peter 3: 7, like this: ***‘But the present heavens and earth by His word are being reserved for fire, kept for the Day of Judgment and destruction of ungodly men.’*** This is confirmed in Revelation 20: 14 & 15, ***‘And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire, (15) And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.’*** The first day of the week starts the moment after the Sabbath: As much as Elohim created with fire, saying: ***“Let there be light”***, so man begins the week with fire, to give light and make food during the evening part of the first day of the week, after the Sabbath.

The next topic in this Torah portion is about the actual construction of the Tabernacle. As mentioned before, the need for a Tabernacle was clearly not for Elohim, but for the people to have a meeting place with Him. In the same way that the infinite Elohim does not need to rest, so He does not need a house on earth. The Scriptures confirm this in 1 Kings 8: 27, as follows: ***“But will Elohim indeed dwell on the earth? Behold heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain***

Thee, how much less this house which I have built! After the sin and punishment resulting from the golden calf incident, the people of Israel, were now ready to start building the Tabernacle. Moses interceded for the people and YHVH restrained himself from destroying them completely. However, from this point forward YHVH required the people to rely on priestly mediators, to serve Him. By introducing the Levitical priesthood, YHVH informs the people of Israel that only by the shedding of blood, could they have atonement for their lives. The entire Levitical Priesthood served to prepare the people of Israel for the way of the ultimate sacrifice, which would take place in Yahshua our Messiah. Before we start looking down on the meaning of Elohim's temporary solution of the Levitical priesthood, let us consider what the sacrificial system accomplished. We read in Psalm 32: 1 & 5, ***'How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered! (5) I acknowledged my sin to Thee, And my iniquity I did not hide; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to YHVH"; And Thou didst forgive the guilt of my sin.'*** We see in verse 5 that acknowledging wrongdoing brings forgiveness. In Psalm 51 after David committed sin with Bathsheba, we see a man who knew the true goal of Torah, who sought after forgiveness from his Maker. Even though David did not know the name of Yahshua, he knew that the Torah promised that a Prophet like Moses would come, and that the people will obey Him, as per Genesis 49: 10 and Deuteronomy 18: 15 – 10. The function of the Torah was to point to a day when his sins will be forgiven, never to be remembered by YHVH, as we read in Jeremiah 31: 34, ***"And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know YHVH,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares YHVH, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."***

Returning to the everyday functions of the Tabernacle (and especially in the next Torah portion), we will see that YHVH will also meet with His people via His priestly *'mediators'*. This is why the Tabernacle is also known as the *'Tent of the*

Appointment'. Whereas according to the Levitical Priesthood sacrifices had to be brought year after year, but now, since Yahshua died once for all, we do not need the blood of bulls and goats to take away our transgressions any longer. In addition our sins are not merely covered (atoned), they are removed completely, by Yahshua who is presently our High Priest. We read accordingly in Hebrews 9: 8 -12, ***'The Set-apart Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, (9) which is a symbol for the present time. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper perfect in conscience, (10) since they relate only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until the time of reformation (meaning when the priesthood changed). (11) But when Messiah appeared as a high priest of the good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; (12) and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.'***

Even though the Tabernacle was made after the pattern of the heavenly Tabernacle, it was built from materials that the Israelites plundered from the Egyptians, before they left. Just so are we, called out from paganism to become the Temple of Elohim. We were originally created in the image of Elohim and looked like Yahshua, the image of the invisible Elohim, when He was transfigured in Matthew 17: 2. We were covered in light, but because of sin we became naked and YHVH covered us in an earthly tent called skin. At this point in time, we need the helmet of salvation to cover our sins. We read in Isaiah 59: 17, ***"And He put on righteousness like a breastplate, And a helmet of salvation on His head; And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing. And wrapped Himself with zeal as a mantle"***. We are now not any longer on par with the image of Elohim, Yahshua. But, since Yahshua died for the sins of the world, He is our helmet of salvation and covers our

sins. He is our head or authority as we read in 1 Corinthians 11: 3 ***“Yahshua is the head of every man and the head of every woman is a man”***. This sheds light on what it means to put on the full armor of Elohim. Putting on the full armor is the same as putting on the image of YHVH our Elohim, in which we were originally created. This is the same as being conformed to the image of Elohim. Because our sins caused us to be out of balance with the image of Elohim, we are open to attack by Satan and his demons.

This helps us to better understand the passage of Scripture in 1 Corinthians 11: 10, as follows: ***“Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels.”*** What does this mean? In the Garden of Eden Satan approached Eve alone. She was open to his deception and sinned as a result. Since then YHVH placed her husband in authority over her. To show the Angels and demons (fallen angels) that she is under her husband’s authority, and that they have to go through her husband to get to her, she wears a veil. In the case of the man Yahshua is in authority over us. He is our Hope of Salvation. We put Yahshua on to eventually when He returns; receive back the Esteem which Adam and Eve had before their fall. Nonetheless, He has already made us to be a Set-Apart nation, a chosen race, a royal Priesthood and people for Elohim’s own possession, that we may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness (death) into His marvelous light (Eternal life). (Paraphrased from 1 Peter 2: 9). Ultimately when YHVH has perfected our spirits in Heaven (Hebrews 12: 23) and Yahshua returns to resurrect our bodies and souls we shall be like Him, as is recorded in 1 John 3: 1 & 2, ***“See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of Elohim; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. (2) Beloved, now we are children of Elohim, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.”***

Elohim's lovingkindness is everlasting, as we read in Isaiah 54: 8, ***“In an outburst of anger I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting lovingkindness I will have compassion on you.” Says YHVH your Redeemer.***’ This is confirmed in Psalm 118: 1, as follows: ***‘Give thanks to YHVH, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.’*** YHVH never changes; He is always the same as is recorded in Malachi 3: 6, ***‘For I, YHVH, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed.’*** He practices ‘self-control by limiting his Infinite power in not destroying us, by fire¹⁶. In the first part of Malachi 2: 7 YHVH said through the prophet, ***“From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes, and have not kept them, Return to Me, and I will return to You”*** Just as much as YHVH wanted the Israelites to repent and return to Him, so does He want those of us whom He has called at this time, to repent and return to Him. We are fittingly admonished in Isaiah 55: 6 & 7, ***‘Seek YHVH while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. (7) Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to YHVH (talking about those whom YHVH called, as they must have been serving Him previously, if He wants them to return to Him), And He will have compassion on him; And to our Elohim, For He will abundantly pardon.’***

Continuing in Genesis 36: 1, we read: ***“Now Bezalel and Oholiab, and every skilful person in whom YHVH has put skill and understanding to know how to perform all the work in the construction of the sanctuary, shall perform in accordance with all that YHVH has commanded.”*** How did YHVH give wisdom and understanding to these artisans? YHVH gave them wisdom and understanding through these two men teaching them. In verse 2, we see that Moses summoned these two men and everyone who has a wise

¹⁶ We read in both Deuteronomy 4: 24 and Hebrews 12: 29 that YHVH our Elohim is a consuming fire. This is confirmed in First Timothy 6: 16, in this way: *‘who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.’*

heart, to whom YHVH had given a heart of wisdom, to come near towards the work, in order to accomplish it. We see that the people continued to bring freewill offerings to Moses, until each of the skilled men had to tell Moses to stop the people from contributing more material, as there was more than enough. The rest of this chapter is a repetition of what we read in Exodus 26, but actualized here in chapter 36. As I mentioned before, we learn by repetition, and by reading each verse of this Torah portion, ourselves, we might learn some more of the things that YHVH want us to know.

In conclusion, we see that both the Sabbath and the Tabernacle are about Elohim dwelling in this world. By virtue of the Set-apart Spirit indwelling our lives, helping us to obey the everlasting Sabbath covenant, we, finite human beings, set up an avenue to the infinite Elohim. Yahshua showed us the way by becoming the 'first born' (resurrected) son of Elohim. We read accordingly in Romans 8: 11, ***'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Yahshua from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Yahshua Messiah from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.'*** What a fantastic Elohim do we serve? HalleluYah!

Exodus 38 verse 21 to 40 verse 38 (Pekudei).

The book of Exodus comes to a close with the establishment of the Tabernacle in the desert. The name of the final Torah portion in Exodus is Pekudei, meaning 'accounts', and centers on the accounts of the building of the Tabernacle. We read in Exodus 38: 21 & 22, ***'This is the number of the things for the tabernacle, the tabernacle of testimony, as they were numbered according to the command of Moses, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, the son of Aaron the priest. (22) Now Bezalel, the son of Uri the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made all that YHVH had commanded Moses.'***

Bezalel was Moses' right hand man as far as the construction of the Tabernacle was concerned. As it was pointed out in Exodus 31: 3 – 5, Bezalel was filled with the Set-apart Spirit of Elohim, in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver and in bronze, and in cutting stone for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship. We know that the tabernacle was a unique structure, since it was a copy of the Tabernacle in Heaven and the man who did the construction had to have wisdom from Elohim. The name Bezalel means in the 'shadow of Elohim' and it seems most appropriate for the man who built the Tabernacle. He carried out Elohim's instructions in the minutest details – as was expected from him by YHVH. This is exactly what YHVH requires of us when He calls us. As we grow in grace and knowledge, we need to become more particular in how we follow the way of YHVH.

We also learnt from the quoted verses above, that Bezalel was the son of Uri, the son of Hur. We know that Hur was the man who was one of the select two, who held up the arms of Moses in the battle with Amalekites. The question is why is Hur so important? Hur came from the tribe of Judah, the tribe given the blessing of the scepter by Jacob, from which king David would later come. Many years after Bezalel built the

Tabernacle, David's son Solomon, when he was made king in place of David his father, asked YHVH to also give him understanding, as is recorded in 1 Kings 3: 7 – 9, in this way: ***“And now, O YHVH my Elohim, Thou hast made Thy servant king in place of my father David, yet I am but a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. (8) And Thy servant is in the midst of Thy people which Thou hast chosen, a great people who cannot be numbered or counted for multitude. (9) So give Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people to discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Thine?”*** We know that Solomon was also the king who built the first Temple as a house of YHVH in the land of Israel, just as Bezalel built the Tabernacle in the desert. Both King Solomon and Bezalel were endowed with the same gifts of wisdom, to allow them to complete their tasks.

Many years later the Prophet Isaiah had a vision of the Messiah, who also came from Jesse the father of David in Isaiah 11: 1 & 2, as follows: ***“Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit. (2) And the Spirit of YHVH will rest on Him, The spirit of wisdom and understanding, The spirit of counsel and strength. The spirit of knowledge and the fear of YHVH.”*** The prophet sees this descendant of David who will come to complete the work which was started by Bezalel and Solomon, to build a spiritual dwelling for Elohim on earth. Rav Kepha, in 1 Peter 2: 4 & 5 puts it as follows: ***‘And coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected by men, but choice and precious in the sight of Elohim, (5) you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a set-apart priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Elohim through Yahshua Messiah.’*** This is exactly what Yahshua told Kepha (Peter) in Matthew 16: 18; He (Yahshua) is the rock (foundation stone) upon which He is building His renewed ecclesia; and the grave shall not overpower it, meaning that there will still be some of us alive when He returns, one day. The building blocks are each and every one of the called out ones that were immersed in Yahshua's name.

Now we understand why Bezalel played such an important role in ancient Israel and the building of the Tabernacle.

We continue in Exodus 40: 1 - 3, where we read: ***'Then YHVH spoke to Moses, saying, (2) "On the first day of the month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. (3) And you shall place the ark of the testimony there, and you shall screen the ark with the veil."*** The Tabernacle was set-up on the 1st day of the month, i.e. a New Moon. After the furniture in the Tabernacle was set up, the Tabernacle was dedicated and consecrated; the cloud covered the Tabernacle, and the glory of YHVH filled the Tabernacle. We read in verse 35 of Exodus 40, ***'And Moses was not able to enter the tent of meeting because the cloud had settled on it, and the glory of Elohim filled the tabernacle.'*** The cloud cover was also a sign for the Israelites to remain in the same place or move on, as we read in verses 36 – 38, as follows: ***'And throughout all their journeys whenever the cloud was taken up from over the tabernacle, the sons of Israel would set out; (37) but if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out until the day when it was taken up.(38) For throughout all their journeys, the cloud of YHVH was on the tabernacle by day, and there was fire in it by night, in the sight of all the house of Israel.'***

The glory of Elohim entered the building when it was completed. This also occurred when king Solomon completed the Temple in Jerusalem, as we read in 2 Chronicles 7: 1 & 2, as follows: ***"Now when Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of YHVH filled the house. (2) And the priests could not enter into the house of YHVH, because the glory of Elohim filled (YHVH)'s house."*** A similar thing happened again after Yahshua's resurrection and ascension to heaven, on the day of Pentecost, as we read in Acts 2: 1 – 8, in this way: ***'And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place (namely the synagogue – where Jews normally meet on Pentecost). (2) And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a***

violent, rushing wind, and it filled the whole house (house of YHVH) ***where they were sitting.*** (3) ***And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.*** (4) ***And they were all filled with the Set-apart Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance.*** (5) ***Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men, from every nation under heaven.*** (6) ***And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were bewildered, because they were each one hearing them speak in his own language.*** (7) ***And they were amazed and marveled, saying, "Why are not all these who are speaking Galileans?"*** (8) ***And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?"*** As we can see from verse 8 the miracle that occurred was that each person heard the other speaking to him in his own language – even though the person spoke in another language. The miracle was therefore in the hearing, not so much in speaking in tongues.

We close with this: The Set-apart Spirit of Elohim is given to each one of us at immersion in the name of Yahshua Messiah and the laying on of hands. This is why Rav Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 6: 19 & 20, ***'Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Set-apart Spirit who is in you, whom you have from Elohim, and that you are not your own? (20) For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify Elohim in your body.'*** Amein!

We end this book of Torah, with the blessing: **Chazak Chazak V'Nit Chazak! (Be strong, be strong, and may we be strengthened).**