

Chol HaMo'ed Sukkot

חול-המועד סוכות

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God's blessing, the Torah, and Salvation

השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 33:12-34:26

הפטרה: Ezekiel 38:18-39:16

הברית: -

החדשה

Triennial cycle: --

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This week's reading for Chol HaMo'ed Sukkot (חול-המועד סוכות) is taken from the end of Parashat Ki Tisa (*Shemot / Exodus 33:12-34:26*). Moshe has asked the Lord God to forgive the sins of the Children of Yisrael (*וְעַתָּה אִם-תְּנֶנְנִיא נִי אֲמַר הַרְאֵנִי נָא אֶת-*) (*חַטָּאתָם*). Moshe asks the Lord to reveal Himself and His glory (*כִּבְדְּךָ*). The Lord commands Moshe to make two stone tablets like the previous ones (*נִי אֲמַר יְהוָה אֵל-מִי שָׂה פָסַל-לְךָ שְׁנֵי-לַחַת אֲבָנִים כָּרְאֵשׁ נִים וְכַתְבְּתִי עַל-הַלַּחַת אֶת-*) (*חַטָּאתָם*) and He will write on them the words that were on the previous set of Tablets. Moshe demonstrates for us this week the importance of knowing God according to His ways in his statement *וְעַתָּה אִם-נָא מְצַאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ הוֹדַעְנִי נָא אֶת-דְּרָכֶיךָ וְאֶדְעֶךָ לְמַעַן אֲמַצְא-חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וּרְאֵה כִי עִמָּךְ הִגֹּוֹי הַזֶּה* meaning *'Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.'* (NASB) Moshe asks the Lord God stating that "If I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You and find favor in Your sight." (*אִם-נָא מְצַאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ הוֹדַעְנִי נָא*) (*אֶת-דְּרָכֶיךָ וְאֶדְעֶךָ*) In this Hebrew Sentence, we find a chiasitic literary structure where there appears to be an inversion in the phrase or clause on the order of words with respect to the first clause or phrase. *"Now if I have found favor in your eyes → let me know your ways → so that I might find favor in your eyes."* Having found favor in God's eyes, Moshe desires to know God in a more intimate way. This text shows us the order of obedience; we have found favor in God's eyes because He loves us, now we obey the Lord so that we can walk in His favor, His love, and His blessing. This week is a time of great blessing for it is the harvest festival. According to the Scriptures, we are to remember Sukkot for this is the time God's Holy Word came down and tabernacled among us in Yeshua the Messiah.

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פְּרֵשֶׁת כִּי תִשָּׂא סֵפֶר שְׁמוֹת פָּרֶק לִג פְּסוּק יב-טז

יב נִי אֲמַר מִי שָׂה אֵל-יְהוָה וְהָרְאֵה אֶתְּהָ אִמֵּר אֵלֵי הָעַל אֶת-הָעַם הַזֶּה וְאֶתְּהָ לִּי אֵהוּדְעַתִּי אֶת אֲשֶׁר-הִנְשַׁלַּח עִמִּי וְאֶתְּהָ אֲמַרְתָּ יִדְעַתִּיךָ בְּשֵׁם וְגַם-מְצַאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ יג וְעַתָּה אִם-נָא מְצַאתִי חֵן

Shemot / Exodus 33:12-16

33:12 Then Moses said to the Lord, 'See, You say to me, 'Bring up this people!' But You Yourself have not let me know whom You will send with me. Moreover, You have said, 'I have known you by name, and you have also found favor in My sight.' 33:13 'Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too, that this nation is Your people.' 33:14 And He said, 'My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.' 33:15 Then he said to Him, 'If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here. 33:16 'For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?' (NASB)

בְּעֵינֶיךָ הוֹדַעְנִי נָא אֶת-דְּרָכְךָ וְאִדְעֶךָ לְמַעַן אֲמַצֶּא-חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ וְרָאִהָ כִּי עֲמַךְ הַגּוֹי הַזֶּה: יד
 וַיֹּאמֶר פְּנֵי יְלִכּוּ וְהִנֵּחַ תִּי לְךָ: טו וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהֵי אִם-אֵין פְּנִיךָ הַ לְכִים אֶל-תַּעֲלֵנוּ מִזֶּה: טז וּבְמַדָּה |
 יוֹדַע אֲפּוֹא כִּי-מִצְאָתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ אֲנִי וְעַמְּךָ הָלוֹא בְּלִכְתָּךְ עֲמָנוּ וּנְפָלֵינוּ אֲנִי וְעַמְּךָ מִכָּל-הָעַם אֲשֶׁר עַל-
 פְּנֵי הָאָדָמָה:

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Sukkot (סוכות, Tabernacles) is an 8 day festival and is one of three major festivals required by God to observe and to travel to Jerusalem to present one's self before the Lord. This is the seventh and final feast given to Yisrael during the year that is observed from the 15th to the 22nd of the month of Tishri. At this time each family is to construct a sukkah, a small hastily built hut in which meals are eaten during the festival. This festival is used to remind us of the huts that Yisrael dwelled in during their forty year journey in Bamidbar (the wilderness) after having left Mitzrayim (Egypt). In the Promised Land, this festival later became known as the festival of ingathering (Chag Ha'Asif, חַג הָאֲסִיף, Harvest Festival, see *Shemot / Exodus 34:22*). During the first and last day of Sukkot, no normal work is permitted according to *Vayikra / Leviticus 23:39* (אַךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עֶשְׂרִי יוֹם לַח' דָּשׁ הַשְּׂבִיעִי בְּאֶסְפְּכֶם אֶת-תְּבוּאֵת הָאָרֶץ תָּחֹגוּ אֶת-חַג-יְהוָה שְׁבַעַת יָמִים בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן (שְׁבַתוֹן וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׂמִינִי שְׁבַתוֹן)). The intervening days of the festival of Sukkot (סוכות) are called "Chol Ha'Moed" (חול-הַמוֹעֵד) "half-holidays" during which normal work activities are permitted.

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From an agricultural perspective, Sukkot (סוכות) in ancient Yisrael was the harvest time whereas Pesach (Passover) was the planting season. One planted their crops in spring and then rejoiced during the harvest in acknowledging the blessing that God has provided. From a Spiritual perspective, Sukkot (סוכות) corresponds to the joy of knowing our sins are forgiven and so we recall (remember) God's provision and love to deliver Yisrael from bondage in Mitzrayim (Egypt) *Vayikra / Leviticus 23:43*, and our deliverance from the bondage of sin in Yeshua the Messiah. In addition to this, the festival of Sukkot (סוכות) has a prophetic aspect on the ingathering of the harvest which prefigures the ingathering of all peoples to worship the Lord in Jerusalem in the last days according to *Zechariah 14:16-17* וְהָיָה כָּל-הַגּוֹי וְחָרַג מִכָּל-הַגּוֹי וַיָּבֹאוּ עַל-יְרוּשָׁלַם וְעָלוּ מִדֵּי שָׁנָה בְּשָׁנָה לְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְמֶלֶךְ יְהוָה צָבָא וְלָחֹג אֶת-חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת: וְהָיָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יַעֲלֶה מֵאֶת מִשְׁפַּח וְהָאָרֶץ אֶל-יְרוּשָׁלַם לְהַשְׁתַּחֲוֹת לְמֶלֶךְ יְהוָה צָבָא וְלֹא אֶעֱלִיָּהֶם יְהוָה הַגּוֹיִם: *14:16 Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. 14:17 And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, there will be no rain on them. (NASB)* The absence of rain is synonymous with God's blessing. Those who do not worship the Lord will not receive rain, the blessing of God. This week let's remember God's great provision and presence in our lives in Yeshua the Messiah as we begin another year of living for the Lord.

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As we remember God's great provision and commit ourselves to another year of living for the Lord, I ask the question how can I live my life for the Lord in a way that honors God, glorifies His Name, brings His blessing, and establishes

His Word authoritatively in my life? How can I apply God's Word to my life in a new way in this coming year? The portion of Scripture to be read during this week, *Shemot / Exodus 33:12-34:26*, sheds some light on these questions.

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פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לד פסוק יא-יז

יא שָׁמַר לְךָ אֶת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה אֲנִי גֹרֵשׁ מִפְּנֵיךָ אֶת-הָאֱמֹרִי וְהַכְּנַעֲנִי וְהַחִתִּי וְהַפְּרִזִּי וְהַחִוִּי וְהַיְבוּסִי: יב הַשְׁמֵר לְךָ פֶּן-תִּכְרַת בְּרִית לְיוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אִתָּה בְּאֵלֶיהָ פֶּן-יִהְיֶה לְמוֹקֵשׁ בְּקִרְבְּךָ: יג כִּי אֶת-מִזְבְּחֵי תָם תִּתֵּן צִוּן וְאֶת-מִצְבֵּי תָם תִּשְׁבְּרוּן וְאֶת-אֲשֵׁרֵי תִכְרֵת תִּתֵּן: יד כִּי לֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל אֲחֵר כִּי יִהְיֶה קִנְאָה שְׁמוֹ אֵל קִנְאָה הוּא: טו פֶּן-תִּכְרַת בְּרִית לְיוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ וְזָנוּ | אֲחֵרֵי אֵלִי הֵיחָם וְזָבְחוּ לְאֵל הֵיחָם וְקָרְאוּ לְךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ מִזְבְּחוֹ: טז וְלִקְחֹתָ מִבְּנֵי תְיֹוֹ לְבָנֶיךָ וְזָנוּ בְּנֵי תְיֹוֹ אֲחֵרֵי אֵלִי הֵיחָן וְזָנוּ אֶת-בְּנֵיךָ אֲחֵרֵי אֵלִי הֵיחָן: יז אֵל הֵי מַסְכָּה לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה-הָ לְךָ:

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Here in *Shemot / Exodus 34:11-17*, the Lord God says שָׁמַר לְךָ אֶת אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ observe the Mitzvot (commands) that I am commanding you this day. Behold I (הֲנִנִּי) will drive out the Amorite from before you (גֹרֵשׁ מִפְּנֵיךָ) and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Parizzite, and the Jebusite. The Lord is commanding the people to be careful to observe the Mitzvot (commands) when they enter the land. As we seek to understand how to apply God's Word to our lives according to the Torah, I ask the question is the command to observe of the mitzvot here in *Shemot / Exodus 34:11-17* causative (effective in producing a desired outcome)? Specifically, does observing the Mitzvot cause the Lord God to drive out the nations from before the people of Yisrael? The Lord continues in His warning to watch to not make a covenant with those who dwell in the land you are about to take (הַשְׁמֵר לְךָ פֶּן-תִּכְרַת בְּרִית לְיוֹשְׁבֵי הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אִתָּה בְּאֵלֶיהָ פֶּן-יִהְיֶה לְמוֹקֵשׁ בְּקִרְבְּךָ) or they will become a snare (trap you into sin). The specific sin that is mentioned here is the sin of worshipping other gods by the command to tear down their altars and to smash their sacred pillars (כִּי אֶת-מִזְבְּחֵי תָם תִּתֵּן צִוּן וְאֶת-מִצְבֵּי תָם תִּשְׁבְּרוּן וְאֶת-). The Hebrew word here is to literally cut them down (תִּכְרַת תִּתֵּן) so that the people do not worship their gods (כִּי לֹא תִשְׁתַּחֲוֶה לְאֵל אֲחֵר). According to these Scriptures, the reason for keeping the mitzvot was to prevent the falling into sin and the worshipping of other gods.

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The next set of verses from *Shemot / Exodus 34:18-26*, the Lord commands the people to observe Sukkot (סוכות), Pesach (פסח, Passover), the command to redeem the first born, to observe the Shabbat, to appear three times a year in Jerusalem before the Lord, and to be sure to eat the Pesach festival with unleavened bread.

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פרשת כי תשא ספר שמות פרק לד פסוק יח-כו

יח אֶת-חַג הַמִּצּוֹת תִּשְׁמֵר שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצּוֹת אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתְךָ לְמוֹעֵד חֹדֶשׁ הָאָבִיב כִּי בַח דָּשׁ הָאָבִיב יֵצְאֵת מִמִּצְרָיִם: יט כָּל-פֶּטֶר רֶחֶם לִי וְכָל-מִקְנֶיךָ תִּזְכֹּר פֶּטֶר שׁוֹר וְשֶׂה: כ וּפֶטֶר תְּמוֹר תִּפְדֶּה בְשֶׁה וְאִם-לֹא תִפְדֶּה וְעַרְפָּתוֹ כֹּל בְּכוֹר בְּנֵיךָ תִפְדֶּה וְלֹא-יֵרָאוּ פְנֵי רִיקָם: כא שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תַּעֲבֹד וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי תִשָּׁבֵת בְּחֻרֵישׁ וּבִקְצִיר תִשָּׁבֵת: כב וְחַג שְׁבַעַת תַּעֲשֶׂה לְךָ בְּפוּרֵי קִצִּיר חֲטִיִּם וְחַג הָאֲסִיף תִּקּוּפַת הַשָּׁנָה: כג שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה יֵרָאֶה כָּל-זְכוּרְךָ אֶת-

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Shemot / Exodus 34:11-17
34:11 'Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, and the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite. 34:12 'Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, or it will become a snare in your midst. 34:13 'But rather, you are to tear down their altars and smash their sacred pillars and cut down their Asherim 34:14 for you shall not worship any other god, for the Lord, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God 34:15 otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, 34:16 and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons also to play the harlot with their gods. 34:17 'You shall make for yourself no molten gods. (NASB)

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Shemot / Exodus 34:18-26

34:18 'You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread. For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in the month of Abib you came out of Egypt. 34:19 'The first offspring from every womb belongs to Me, and all your male livestock, the first offspring from cattle and sheep. 34:20 'You shall redeem with a lamb the first offspring from a donkey; and if you do not redeem it, then you shall break its neck. You shall redeem all the firstborn of your sons. None shall appear before Me empty-handed. 34:21 'You shall work six days, but on the seventh day you shall rest; even during plowing time and harvest you shall rest. 34:22 '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. 34:23 'Three times a year all your males are to appear before the Lord God, the God of Israel. 34:24 'For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the Lord your God. 34:25 'You shall not offer the blood of My sacrifice with leavened bread, nor is the sacrifice of the Feast of the Passover to be left over until morning. 34:26 'You shall bring the very first of the first fruits of your soil into the house of the Lord your God. You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.' (NASB)

פְּנֵי הָאָדָן | יְהִי אֵלַי יֵשׁ רָאֵל: כִּד כִּי-אֹרִיִשׁ גּוֹיִם מִפְּנֵיךָ וְהִרְחַבְתִּי אֶת-
גְּבֻלְךָ וְלֹא-יִחַמַּד אִישׁ אֶת-אַרְצְךָ בְּעַלְ תֶּךָ לְרֵאוֹת אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ שְׁלֹשׁ
פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה: כֹּה לֹא-תִשְׁחַט עַל-חַמְצָן דָּם-וְנִבְחִי וְלֹא-יִלְוֶין לְבַקֵּר וְנִבַח חֵג
הַפֶּסַח: כֹּו רֵאשִׁית בְּפוּרֵי אֲדַמְתְּךָ תִּבְיָא בֵּית יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ לֹא-תִבְשֵׁל גְּדִי
בַחֲלֵב אִמּוֹ:

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It is interesting here in *Shemot / Exodus 34:24* that the Lord says כִּי-אֹרִיִשׁ גּוֹיִם מִפְּנֵיךָ וְהִרְחַבְתִּי אֶת-פְּנֵי גְבֻלְךָ וְלֹא-יִחַמַּד אִישׁ אֶת-אַרְצְךָ בְּעַלְ תֶּךָ לְרֵאוֹת אֶת-פְּנֵי יְהוָה אֵלֶיךָ שְׁלֹשׁ פְּעָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה meaning "For I will drive out nations before you and enlarge your borders, and no man shall covet your land when you go up three times a year to appear before the Lord your God." In these set of verses (*Shemot / Exodus 34:18-26*) is the observing of the mitzvot causative (effective in producing a desired outcome)? Specifically, does observing the Mitzvot of Sukkot, Pesach, the Shabbat, redeeming the first born, and using unleavened bread during the Pesach festival cause the Lord God to drive out the nations from before the people of Yisrael? Was God saying that they were to observe these things so that He "could" drive out the nations? Or, was the Lord God Almighty driving out the nations from before them, and when they enter into the land, they are to observe these things because they are His people? Have you ever wondered whether God was saying here that the children of Yisrael's observance of the Torah maintained their salvation (deliverance from bondage) and place in the Promised Land? Is this what the Lord is trying to say to us according to the Scriptures that Torah observance is how one maintains salvation?

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In Parashat Bechukotai (פרשת בחקותי) find in sefer *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3-13* which says, 26:3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, 26:4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit.

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(NASB) Here we find the Lord saying if you walk in my Statues (אִם-בְּחֻקֵי תֵי תֵלְכוּ) and keep my commands (וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ), the walking תֵלְכוּ and keeping תִשְׁמְרוּ

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are written in the past tense suggest a causative action, that the observing of the mitzvot are effective in producing a desired outcome, the outcome of receiving rain in its season and fruit in their season. The rain and produce (agricultural products, fruit, vegetables, etc) having crops that come in their seasons are all considered an indicator of God's provision and blessing upon both the people and the land. The question I have on this command to observe the Mitzvot though in sefer *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3* is, what is the nature of the desired outcome of observing the mitzvot? The desire outcome was to remain in the land and continue to receive a blessing from God. The reason being that the land could be corrupted by sin just as our lives can become corrupted by sin. The land was promised to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, the people were purchased and saved out of bondage and delivered from slavery in Mitzrayim (Egypt) (see Parashat Ha'azinu). These things, the promises, the purchasing, and the deliverance have been paid for by God. Torah observance was what followed a holy and sanctified people who are living in the promises and blessing of God.

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The reading for this week from *Shemot / Exodus 33 and 34*, the outcome of observing the mitzvot is to prevent falling into sin and worshipping other gods in idolatry.

26:3 'If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, 26:4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. 26:5 'Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land. 26:6 'I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. 26:7 'But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword; 26:8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword. 26:9 'So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. 26:10 'You will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. 26:11 'Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. 26:12 'I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. 26:13 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you would not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect. (NASB)

פרשת בחקתי ספר ויקרא פרק כו פסוק ג-יג

180 ג אם-בְּחַקִּי תִי תֵלְכוּ וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ יִתֵּם אֶתֶם: ד וְנָתַתִּי גִשְׁמֵיכֶם בְּעִתָּם וְנָתַתְּהָ הָאָרֶץ יְבוּלָהּ וְעֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה יִתֵּן פְּרִי: ה וְהִשְׂיֵג לְכֶם דִּישׁ אֶת-בְּצִיר וּבְצִיר יִשְׂיֵג אֶת-זֶרַע וְאֶכְלֶתֶם לְחֻמְכֶם לֶשׁ בַּעַ וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם לְבִטָּח בְּאֶרְצְכֶם: ו וְנָתַתִּי שְׁלוֹם בְּאֶרֶץ וּשְׁכַבְתֶּם וְאִין מִחְרִיד וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי חַיָּה רָעָה מִן-הָאָרֶץ וְחָרֵב ל' א-תַעֲבֹר בְּאֶרְצְכֶם: ז וּרְדַפְתֶּם אֶת-אֵי יְבִיכֶם וּנְפְלוּ לְפָנֵיכֶם לְחָרֵב: ח וּרְדְפוּ מִכֶּם חֲמֻשָּׁה מֵאָה וּמֵאָה מִכֶּם רַבְבָּה יֵרֵד פּוּ וּנְפְלוּ אֵי יְבִיכֶם לְפָנֵיכֶם לְחָרֵב: ט וּפְנִיתִי אֵלֵיכֶם וְהִפְרִיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִרְבִּיתִי אֶתְכֶם וְהִקְיֵמָה תִי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם: י וְאֶכְלֶתֶם יִשְׁן גּוֹשֵׁן וְיִשְׁן מִפְּנֵי חֲדָשׁ תּוֹצִיאוּ: יא וְנָתַתִּי מִשְׁכְּנֵי בְּתוּכְכֶם וְל' א-תַגְעַל נַפְשֵׁי אֶתְכֶם: יב וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי בְּתוּכְכֶם וְהִייתִי לְכֶם לְאֵל הַיּוֹם וְאַתֶּם תִּהְיוּ-לִי לְעַם: יג אֲנִי יְהוָה אֵל הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם מִדֵּי תִלְהֶם עַבְדִּים וְאַשְׁבֵּר מ' ט ת עֲלֵכֶם וְאוֹלֶךְ אֶתְכֶם קוֹמְמִיּוֹת:

190 Here in this section of verses from *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:3-13*, we read the Lord commanding the people to observe the mitzvot (commands) saying that He will send rain (גִּשְׁמֵיכֶם) in its seasons, the land will give its produce and the trees of the field will give its his fruit (וְנָתַתְּהָ הָאָרֶץ יְבוּלָהּ וְעֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה יִתֵּן פְּרִי), the product of the land will be great and that they will eat until full (יִשְׂיֵג אֶת-זֶרַע וְאֶכְלֶתֶם לְחֻמְכֶם) and that they will live (דwell) in the land in security and peace (לֶשׁ בַּעַ וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם) and that they will live (דwell) in the land in security and peace (לֶשׁ בַּעַ וְיִשְׁבַּתֶּם), the Lord will eliminate harmful beasts from the land and no sword will pass through the land. The people will chase their enemies and their enemies will fall before the people by the sword (-וּרְדַפְתֶּם אֶת-). Most importantly, if the people will walk in God's statutes and keep to do the mitzvot (אם-בְּחַקִּי תִי תֵלְכוּ וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ וְעָשׂוּ יִתֵּם אֶתֶם) the Lord will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you. It is interesting here that the Lord God says in *Vayikra / Leviticus 26:9* -אֶת- "and I will confirm/establish/rise-up my covenant with you." Note how this section of verses are written, if one keeps the mitzvot (commands, מִצְוֹתַי) of the Lord and walk in His statutes (בְּחַקִּי תִי תֵלְכוּ) then God's blessing will come upon one's life. The observance of the Torah was not meant for us to keep, maintain, or establish our salvation; God said that "I will confirm my covenant with you" (וְהִקְיֵמָה תִי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם). According to the torah we walk in His ways not in order to maintain salvation, but to walk in his love and blessing because the scriptures say "I will make my dwelling in your midst."

205 When the people complained to Moshe about their not having bread or meat to eat in the desert (see *Bamidbar / Numbers 11*) Moshe went doubtfully before the Lord and the Lord replied saying "Is the Lord's hand short? Now you shall see whether My word will come true for you or not." וַיִּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵל-מֹשֶׁה וְנִשְׂאָה (Bamidbar / Numbers 11:23) In all of these verses we have looked at, is the Lord God asking our help to save us from our sins? In Parashat Ha'azinu, Moshe did not write in *Devarim 32:6* that the Lord our Father has purchased us (אָבִיךָ קָנָךְ הוּא) and that He has established (עָשָׂךְ גַּי וְיָכַן נֶנְךְ) us (לכונן) with the Lord is based on our hearts being just (בְּשִׁפְט) and righteous (צְדִיקָה)

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before God. Does He (God) need our help to fulfill His Word? The Lord does not ask us to save ourselves from our sins similarly to how He is not asking the people here in *Shemot / Exodus 34* to observe Torah so that He will be able to drive out the people. The purpose of the mitzvot was to be made aware of sin and to stay clear of it.

In addition to this, in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18* it says that we are to remember the Lord our God, that He gives us the ability (power) to work so that He can establish (confirm) the covenant that He swore to our fathers in this day

(וְזָכַרְתָּ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי הוּא הֵנִיחַ לְךָ כֹּחַ לַעֲשׂוֹת וְתָחִיל לְמַעַן הִקְיָם אֶת-בְּרִיתוֹ אִשְׁרָךְ-גִּשְׁבֵּעַ (לְאָבִי תָיִךְ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה)). What is interesting is that God gives us the ability so that "HE" can establish His covenant with us. The way this is worded, it is not "so that we can establish or confirm the covenant" but so that "HE" can establish and confirm the covenant. The Torah always points us to the Lord and to Yeshua the Messiah as our light and our salvation. *Tehilim / Psalms 27* says אֲרוֹרִי וְיִשְׁעִי | יְהוָה יְהוָה "the Lord God (YHVH) is my "light" and my "salvation." It does not say that the Torah is my light and my salvation. God is our light and our salvation. Our first love is the Lord God almighty because it is out of a love for God we draw near to Him and place our faith in Him and in Yeshua the Messiah. The Lord God Almighty is also our last love because we are the bride of Messiah (bride of Christ). In addition to this, the one who loves, believes, trusts, and holds onto Yeshua, is holding, trusting, believing, and loving the Lord God Almighty who has "established His covenant" in His Word, according to His Word, and by His Word in Yeshua the Messiah. There is nothing that we can do to add merit to our salvation. The Apostle Paul made this point clear in his letter to the *Romans* chapters 6 and 7.

There is a significant point here to understand the place of Torah observance in our lives, the Temple service, and Yeshua the Messiah. It is interesting that when the Word of God came and made His dwelling place among us (*John 1:1-14*) in Yeshua the Messiah, Yeshua laying down his life (dying for our sins) and taking his life up again (the resurrection) shortly afterwards the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed (70 AD). The destruction of the Temple created a crisis for the first century Jewish leadership who did not accept or understand who Yeshua was and what His purpose was for coming. With the destruction of the temple, the Jewish leaders wondered how was their understanding of Judaism going to continue in the absence of the Temple. Instead of recognizing that the temple service, all of the offerings, all pointed and looked forward to the Messiah, the Jewish leadership developed a new version of Judaism centered on the synagogue service. The reality of the restoration of our relationship with God in Yeshua the Messiah was ignored by the Jewish leadership. How do these things relate to us today? The question today is that if the temple in Jerusalem had remained standing, how significantly would Yeshua's death, burial, and resurrection, and its effectiveness in restoring our relationship with God be missed? The Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed because, 1) it was prophesied by Yeshua himself, but also, 2) there was a danger of observing the Torah under the idea that one could do these things outside of faith in Yeshua. This may be why God had allowed the temple to be destroyed shortly after Yeshua's death and resurrection.

The same danger is occurring today, of observing Torah, placing the Torah over and above our faith and love for God and His Messiah, the one in whom the Torah looks forward too. People say that I have a love for Torah and believe this is synonymous with having a love for God. What is forgotten is that Love for God comes first, and we live out of faith like Abraham because of our love for God. The greatest error in one's understanding occurs when it is believed that one is saved if and only if one observes the mitzvot in the Torah. We have studied only a few verses in the Torah in this week's Parashah, on the reason behind God's command to keep and to do, and to walk in His ways. What we have found is God proclaiming that He will establish and rise up the covenant that He has made. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18* is a testimony to that saying that *we are to remember the Lord our God, that He gives us the ability (power) to work so that "He" (God) can establish (confirm) the covenant that HE swore to our fathers in this day* (זָכַרְתָּ אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ כִּי הוּא הֵבִיאוֹךָ לְךָ כִּי חָלַעַשׂוֹת חָיִל לְמַעַן הַקּוֹים) (אֶת-בְּרִיתוֹ אֲשֶׁר-נִשְׁבַּע לְאַבְרָהָם בְּיָוֶם הַהוּא). God gives us the ability to work, to take care of our families, to worship Him, to observe Torah, all of these things so that "HE" can confirm/establish/rise-up His covenant with us. The way this is worded, it is not "so that we can establish / confirm the covenant" but so that "HE" can establish the covenant. The one thing we can be assured of is that Scripture always points and directs us to our Father in Heaven and Yeshua His Son, the Messiah. Everything comes full circle back to the Messiah, because salvation, deliverance, and redemption is in God's hands and not ours, it is for this reason we absolutely must believe in Yeshua the Messiah in order to be saved.

In conclusion, let's look at an example from the Neviim (Prophets) on the Ark of the Covenant (אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית). So Holy and powerful was the Ark that when Uzziah reached out to steady the Ark, he touched it and died instantly. This illustrated the holy and powerful nature of the Ark, and the reason the Ark was out amongst the armies of Yisrael was because it was known that when the Ark of God was present, God was present and could save the people in battle. In *1 Samuel 4* וַיְהִי דְבַר-שְׂמוּאֵל לְכָל-יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיֵּצֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל לְקָרְאֵת פְּלִשְׁתִּים לְמַלְחָמָה וַיַּחֲזוּ עָל-הָאֲבָנִים הָעֵזָר וּפְלִשְׁתִּים חָזוּ בְּאֶפְקָי: ב וַיַּעֲרֹכוּ פְּלִשְׁתִּים לְקָרְאֵת יִשְׂרָאֵל וַתִּשָׁשׂ הַמַּלְחָמָה וַיִּגְּפָה יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים וַיָּכּוּ בַמַּעְרָכָה בְּשָׂדֵה פְּאַרְבַּעַת אֲלָפִים אִישׁ: ג וַיָּבֹא הָעָם אֶל-הַמַּחֲנֶה וַיִּאֲמְרוּ זִקְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לָמָּה נִגְּפָנוּ יְהוָה הַיּוֹם לִפְנֵי פְּלִשְׁתִּים נִקְחָה אֵלֵינוּ מִשְׁלַח אֶת-אֲרוֹן בְּרִית יְהוָה וַיְבִיאוּ עֵד-גִּרְוֹן נִכּוֹן וַיִּשְׁלַח, 2 Samuel 6:6-7 and יְהוָה וַיָּבֹא אֶבְרָתָם וַיִּשְׁעֲנוּ מִכַּף אִיִּבְיָנוּ: עֲזָה אֶל-אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּאֲחָז בּוֹ כִּי שָׁמְטוּ הַבְּקָר: ז וַיִּחַר-אַף יְהוָה בְּעֲזָה וַיִּכְהוּ שֵׁם הָאֱלֹהִים הַיּוֹם: Yisrael was defeated in *1 Samuel 4:1-3* and brought the Ark of the Covenant from Shiloh to the camp. They brought the Ark out to battle the Philistines. They took the Ark from Shiloh to the battle but Yisrael was defeated because they forgot one most important thing. They had forgotten that God was not going to give them His power without their obedience to His commands but most importantly, they thought that they could live their lives as they pleased in opposition to God's instruction and make use of the Ark for their own purpose. So what does this mean? Does one observe Torah with the understanding that he/she is confirming the covenant of God in them doing these things? Or are these things done with the understanding that God confirms the covenant? My question for Torah Observant believers today is what purpose does one choose to observe the Torah? According to some, the purpose is in

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315 order to be saved. But, doesn't this become the same sin like Yisrael in *1* and *2 Samuel*, using these things for *"their own purpose."* Is Torah observance being used for your purpose, to save yourself? Shouldn't Torah observance be performed out of faith purely for the glory of God because we are His people and He literally dwells in our midst, the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) dwells within us? If observing the Torah is being done for one's own purposes (to maintain salvation) then the observance is performed out of pride. With pride follows being raised up higher emotionally (arrogance) by observing more of the letter of the law than someone else; this presents a serious problem. Can you imagine, standing before God and Him saying, depart from me and you say *"look what all I did in observing the Torah"* and God says *"depart from me you worker of lawlessness, I never knew you."* But you say "wait one second, I am not lawless, I observe the Torah." Because these things are not done out of faith, they were done for your own purpose, to save yourself, this is the antithesis of faith. How harshly have you judge others because they did not observe the Torah as you saw fit? Murder lies in your heart because of the hatred for your brother. Did your observance facilitate in your heart justice (מִשְׁפָּט) and righteousness (יְדִיטָה) before God and before others in love and peace? This is the meaning of *"worker of lawlessness"* because what was done in the body was not done from the heart being led by faith.

335 Studying the Torah, the purpose of observing Torah was because we are a holy people and not for the purpose of adding merit to our salvation. It is the Lord God who confirms His covenant with us. All of Scripture direct us to the Lord, gives testimony to the Lord, and glorifies the Lord, not to ourselves. He (God) has established His covenant in Yeshua; so that out of love, and in faith, we obey God, and not out of the reason to be saved because God has saved us in His Son Yeshua by faith and we need to trust and believe that He did just that. God is looking for obedience, that is where the Torah factors in, but it is not meant as a means for adding merit for our salvation. God enables us to live for Him, so that "HE" can establish His covenant that He swore to our Fathers according to His Word and He is glorified. With this in mind, now we can understand what Paul meant when he said in *1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13:13 But now faith, hope, love, abide (remain) these three; but the greatest of these is love. (NASB)* Faith, hope, and love remain, because it is in the hope that we have, out of faith and love for God, that we live the way we do for His glory.

355 Considering the Torah text on the deliverance of the children of Yisrael, we see in scripture, how God has delivered them from bondage, he was consistently delivering them in the wilderness, and he was going to deliver them, into the Promised Land. Today, God has delivered us from the bondage of sin (salvation), He is delivering us each day, and he will deliver us at a future time and we will receive new glorified bodies. Yeshua is described in Revelation 1:8 saying Ἐγώ εἰμι τὸ Ἄλφα καὶ τὸ ω, λέγει κύριος ὁ θεός, ὁ ὢν καὶ ὁ ἦν καὶ ὁ ἐρχόμενος, ὁ παντοκράτωρ. 1:8 'I am the Alpha and the Omega,' says the Lord God, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.' (NASB) The parallelism here is amazing, the Torah text, the prophets, the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) all of these point us to the Lord God Almighty as the one

who saves, and how He saves is by faith in His Word through His Son Yeshua the Messiah. So as we remember God's great provision and presence in our lives in
365 Yeshua the Messiah and begin another year of living for the Lord, remember also what and awesome God we serve who has delivered us, saved us, redeemed us, and establishes/confirms/rises-up His covenant so we know without a doubt that His Word has come true, God has delivered us according to His Word in Yeshua the Messiah. Halleluiah, Praise the Lord! Let's Pray.

370 Heavenly Father,

Help me to understand and apply all that I have learned this week from the Scriptures. Most importantly Lord everything that I do I want to do for You, for
375 Your glory and not my own. Help me to know without a doubt, that You Lord have purchased me, established me, and confirmed Your covenant because of Your mercy and love for me. Please come and write Your Word on my heart Lord. Deliver me and save me from my sins, not because of what I have done, but because what You have done in Yeshua the Messiah. I believe in Yeshua who
380 was delivered on account of my transgressions and I believe that You Lord raised Yeshua from the dead on account of my justification. Thank You Lord for making the truth of Your Son known to me today; I believe that the atonement You have provided is an absolute necessity for me to receive forgiveness for my sins. Help me to serve You Lord according to Your will that is led by faith.
385 Please come and work in my life daily and help me to hear Your voice. Thank You Lord for everything You have done for me. I give You all of the glory, the honor, and the praise forever and ever.

390 In Yeshua's (Jesus') Name I pray! Amen!

What to pray:

- *Ask the Lord to help you to grow, to know, and to apply all of the Torah principles that are found within the text of the Bible.*
- *Ask the Lord to help you see, trust, and obey Him and His Word. Ask the Lord to help you "to hear His voice" and "to hold fast to Him."*
- *Thank the Lord for lifting the burden of sin and revealing His truth in your heart.*

Be Blessed in Yeshua, Christ our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever