

## Worshipping the Lord the Way He Wants

In this weeks reading from **Parashat Pekudei** (*Shemot / Exodus 38:21-40:38*), Moshe appears to reiterate the details on the materials and the construction of the Tabernacle (*38:21-31*). He also lists the construction of the priestly garments (*39:1-43*). In *Shemot / Exodus 40:1-33*, we read how the tabernacle was erected after the various parts were constructed כ ביום-ההוא הראשון באחד לחודש תקים את-משכן אהל מועד: *40:2 'On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. (NASB)* The conclusion of the book of Exodus, the last paragraph, describes the glory of the Lord descending upon the Tabernacle (*40:34-38*) indicating the Lord was doing as He had said that He would do, he would dwell in the midst of His people. This awesome moment in history had to both strike fear in the hearts of men, and also provide a sense of security for the people of Israel. The glory of God descending upon the Tabernacle in the wilderness, the Torah describes the glory as a cloud that burned with fire. The *Talmud Bavli Sukkah 11b* states *“Thus, not one but seven clouds descended at Sukkot to envelope and protect the Israelites, one on each of the four sides of the camp, one above and one below, and one which went before them to raise the valleys and lower the mountains. The Israelites were protected against the elements and wild beasts; even their garments did not wear out or become dirty. Eliezer maintained that the Festival of Sukkot commemorated the “clouds of glory” which were considered among God’s special creations in the “twilight” of the first six days.”* This is a picture of the Lord encircling His people with His glory.

The Scriptures for this week describe the Tabernacle as the *“Mishkhan Ha’edut”* (משכן העדות) saying literally, this is the *“Tabernacle of the Testimony.”* The tabernacle was erected specifically ב יום-ההוא הראשון שון באחד לחודש תקים את-משכן אהל מועד: *40:2 'On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. (NASB)* The construction of the Tabernacle and this particular day is a very significant point in Israel’s history that is related to the manner in which we are to worship the Lord God in heaven. Does the Lord care how we worship Him? How important is the way in which we worship the Lord today?

**ספר שמות פרק מ Shemot / Exodus 40:1-9**

א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:  
ב בַּיּוֹם-הַחֲדָשׁ הֵרָאשׁוֹן בְּאַחַד  
לַחֲדָשׁ תִּקְיָם אֶת-מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל  
מוֹעֵד: ג וְשַׂמְתָּ שָׁם אֶת אַרְוֹן  
הַעֲדוּת וְסַכַּת עַל-הָאָרֶץ אֶת-  
הַפְּרָכֶת: ד וְהִבַּאתְ אֶת-הַשְּׁלֶחַן  
וְעֲרַכְתָּ אֶת-עֲרֻכּוֹ וְהִבַּאתְ אֶת-  
הַמְּנִרָה וְהַעֲלִיתָ אֶת-נִרְתִיבָהּ:  
ה וְנִתְּתָה אֶת-מִזְבַּח הַזֹּהֵב  
לְקִטְרֹת לִפְנֵי אַרְוֹן הַעֲדוּת  
וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת-מָסַךְ הַפֶּתַח לְמִשְׁ-  
כָּן: ו וְנִתְּתָה אֶת מִזְבַּח הַעֹלָה  
לִפְנֵי פֶתַח מִשְׁכַּן אֹהֶל-מוֹעֵד: ז  
וְנִתְּתָ אֶת-הַכִּיֹּר בֵּין-אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד  
וּבֵין הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְנִתְּתָ שָׁם מַיִם: ח  
וְשַׂמְתָּ אֶת-הַחֲצֵר סָבִיב וְנִתְּתָ  
אֶת-מָסַךְ שַׁעַר הַחֲצֵר: ט וְלֹא-  
קָחַתְ אֶת-שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וּמִשַּׁחְתָּ  
אֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת-כָּל-אֲשֶׁר-בּוֹ  
וְקִדְשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת-כָּל-כְּלָיו וְהָיָה  
קֹדֶשׁ:

The tabernacle was set up, according to the Torah, ב בַּיּוֹם-הַחֲדָשׁ הֵרָאֵ, 40:2 *‘On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. (NASB)* The construction of the Tabernacle and this particular day is a very significant point in Israel’s history, this is the day Israel was delivered from bondage. It is important to note how these Scriptures are related to *Shemot / Exodus 12*.

**Shemot / Exodus 12:1-8**

12:1 Now the Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, 12:2 *‘This month shall be the beginning of months*

*for you; it is to be the first month of the year to you. 12:3 'Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying, 'On the tenth of this month they are each one to take a lamb for themselves, according to their fathers' households, a lamb for each household. 12:4 'Now if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor nearest to his house are to take one according to the number of persons in them; according to what each man should eat, you are to divide the lamb. 12:5 'Your lamb shall be an unblemished male a year old; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats. 12:6 '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. 12:7 'Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. 12:8 'They shall eat the flesh that same night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. (NASB)*

Moshe said in chapter 12 that this time is to be the beginning of months for the Tabernacle service. The significance of these Scriptures is remembering what the Lord has done, His deliverance of Israel from bondage and the Passover. The Lord asks us to remember Him according to His word, and this is achieved by keeping the Passover and the festivals (the moedim) listed in the Scriptures. This is also related to the manner in which we are to worship the Lord God in heaven.

Rashi states the following concerning the passage regarding the construction of the Tabernacle on this particular day.

***Rashi on Genesis 1:1:1:***

*בראשית IN THE BEGINNING — Rabbi Isaac said: The Torah which is the Law book of Israel should have commenced with the verse (Exodus 12:1) "This month shall be unto you the first of the months" which is the first commandment given to Israel. What is the reason, then, that it commences with the account of the Creation? Because of the thought expressed in the text (Psalms 111:6) "He*

*declared to His people the strength of His works (i.e. He gave an account of the work of Creation), in order that He might give them the heritage of the nations.” For should the peoples of the world say to Israel, “You are robbers, because you took by force the lands of the seven nations of Canaan”, Israel may reply to them, “All the earth belongs to the Holy One, blessed be He; He created it and gave it to whom He pleased. When He willed He gave it to them, and when He willed He took it from them and gave it to us” (Yalkut Shimoni Exodus 12:2).*

Rashi parallels the creation day with the beginning of months, the start of the Tabernacle service and the Passover. Rashi states this is the first commandment given to Israel, in *Shemot / Exodus 12:1* “*This month shall be unto you the first of the months...*” Rashi parallels these two events (creation and the beginning of months) to show the Lord’s strength for Israel and to prove that He has given Israel the heritage of the nations, the Land of Israel belongs to the Jewish people. The nations say Israel stole the land from the people of Canaan. However, all of the earth belongs to the Lord, and so He took the land from them, giving them 400 years to repent, and he gave the land to Israel. The Lord looks for men to repent and turn from their sins. Even the nations in Canaan were given the opportunity to turn from their wicked ways. The Lord cares for us and design a particular way in which we are to live our lives for Him. The importance on the way we worship the Lord is illustrated in the midrash on the psalms (*Midrash Tehillim 88, Part 1*).

Midrash Tehillim 88, Part 1 opens with the Dibur Hamathil (דיבור המתחיל) saying, “*A song, a psalm of the sons of Korach; for the leader; upon Makhalat Leannoth (מַחְלַת לְעֲנוֹת, for singing of praise) (Tehillim / Psalms 88:1).*” The homiletic introduction to the midrash states, “*What is meant by Makhalat?*” Rabbi Berechiah interprets this in the following way, according to the midrash.

*According to Rabbi Berechiah, Makhalat means that the Holy One blessed be He, said to David, Praise Me in any way you desire to praise Me, and I will condone (makhaliti) whatever your manner of praising Me, for no man can*

*discover even one of the many kinds of praise which are appropriate for the Holy One blessed be He. As Scripture says, Will it be told Him that I would speak? If a man speak, surely he will be swallowed up (Job 37:20). (Mid-rash Tehillim 88, Part 1)*

The rabbis interpret the opening verse and the word Makhalat to mean that man may praise the Lord in any way he desires. Do you think praises are neutral, and the Lord will receive our praises regardless of how we do it? The rabbi continues saying that there are praises that are appropriate for the Lord and that no man is able to discover this. The question is whether there is a right way or a wrong way to worship God? The question for us is *“What is the right way and how do we benefit if we worship the Lord God in the right way?”* And, *“are there consequences to worshipping the Lord the wrong way?”* We know according to the Scriptures, the Lord God deeply cares for us and wants us to benefit from his loving direction. If we worship him in the right way, we will be happy and we will avoid many problems in life. We will also have His blessing and His help. The prophet Isaiah said the following:

***Isaiah 48:16-19***

*48:16 ‘Come near to Me, listen to this: From the first I have not spoken in secret, From the time it took place, I was there. And now the Lord God has sent Me, and His Spirit.’ 48:17 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, ‘I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, Who leads you in the way you should go. 48:18 ‘If only you had paid attention to My commandments! Then your well-being would have been like a river, And your righteousness like the waves of the sea. 48:19 ‘Your descendants would have been like the sand, And your offspring like its grains; Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from My presence.’ (NASB)*

Isaiah says if the people had listened and obeyed to God’s commands, *48:19 ‘Your descendants would have been like the sand, And your offspring like its grains; Their name would never be cut off or destroyed from*

*My presence.*’ (NASB) The Lord does not speak in secret and note how he connects paying attention to the commands in regard to the Lord leading His people. There are hundreds of religions that claim to teach the truth about the Lord however, they differ greatly in their teachings about who God is and what he expects of us. Even in Christianity there is a large degree of variation in what God expects of us. According to Yeshua, there are certain things we must do if we want to have God’s approval? This is related to the importance in the way that we worship the Lord, and that we do so in the way He approves. This is why we read in the Torah, כ : 40:2 *‘On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting.* (NASB) The Lord is giving us the specifics on how to worship Him.

Many people believe that all religions are pleasing to God, but the Scriptures do not teach that. It is important to remember that it is not enough just to claim to be a believer in Yeshua. Yeshua said, *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.”* What does it mean to do the will of the Father in heaven? To receive the Lord God’s approval, we must learn what the Lord requires of us and do it. Yeshua called those who do not do God’s will *“workers of lawlessness.”* (see *Matthew 7:21-23*) The Lord gives everyone on earth the opportunity to gain everlasting life. Insight into how this works is found in *Mark 6:7 And He summoned the twelve and began to send them out in pairs, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits; 6:8 and He instructed them that they should take nothing for their journey, except a mere staff no bread, no bag, no money in their belt 6:9 but to wear sandals; and He added ‘Do not put on two tunics.’ 6:10 And He said to them, ‘Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave town. 6:11 ‘Any place that does not receive you or listen to you, as you go out from there, shake the dust off the soles of your feet for a testimony against them.’ 6:12 They went out and preached that men should repent. (NASB) The interesting thing is that worship, serving God, repentance, and everlasting life are all connected. To have eternal life we are told that we must worship God properly and live in a way that is acceptable to him. This is connected to repentance and turning from sin. Notice what the disciples teach as they are sent out two by two into the neighboring towns. Mark says *6:12 They went out and preached that men should repent.* (NASB) This is important*

because repentance is related to how we live our lives, and how we worship the Lord. We are called to turn from sin, and walk in God's ways according to the Torah. Sadly, many refuse to do so. That is why Yeshua said, *"7:13 'Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 7:14 'For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.'" (Matthew 7:13-14)* Therefore, seeking the Lord God in heaven in the Messiah, and striving to live in His ways of righteousness, holiness, justice, and truth leads to everlasting life, is the way in which God wants us to live. By doing so, He empowers us by His Spirit to live for Him, He changes our hearts, and we serve Him by our faith in Yeshua the Messiah. Remember, what Paul wrote in *Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 12:2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. (NASB)* The way we live our lives is connected to the way in which we worship the Lord God in heaven. Living out lives in any other way leads to destruction. The idea of our lives (bodies) being a sacrifice draws us right back to the Torah command, בַּיּוֹם-הַהוּא תִּשְׂחָדוּ בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ תִּקְיָם, אֶת-מִשְׁכַּן אֱהִל מוֹעֵד: 40:2 *'On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. (NASB)* where the Lord is instructing us how to worship Him. The Lord does not want anybody to be destroyed, and this is why He has made a way for people everywhere to learn about Him, and remember Him. (*2 Peter 3:9*)

The Apostle Peter speaks of these things in his epistle, commenting on why the Lord seems slow in His promises for His people.

### ***2 Peter 3:9-16***

*3:9 The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. 3:11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this*

*way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 3:12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! 3:13 But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. 3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, 3:15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, 3:16 as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction. (NASB)*

Peter says repentance leads to not perishing, and at a future time the heavens and the earth will perish, but righteousness will prevail. Can you see the significance of these statements? Peter says righteousness prevails, and this is connected to faith, worship, serving God, and repentance. Everlasting life in the Messiah Yeshua is connected to these things, and this is connected to the Torah as a way of life.

Peter encourages the people to be diligent in the faith, to be found in peace, spotless, and blameless, to live in righteousness (walk according to the Torah), holiness, justice, and truth. He goes on to speak of Paul who writes of all these things, and that Paul's letters are difficult to understand, in which the untaught and unstable person distort Paul's words. Note how today men say that the Torah is passed away based upon Paul's words. If one of the chief disciples of Yeshua considered Paul's words difficult to understand, Peter who lived and walked with Yeshua, he lived and walked in first century Judaism, and was taught at the feet of Yeshua, if he considered Paul's words difficult, shouldn't we take care to study Paul to understand what he meant when he wrote of the Messiah to the nations? Paul was not promoting a form of lawlessness. The fact of the matter is the Torah has not passed away and we are called to walk the way Yeshua walked (*1 John 2:3-6*)

The construction of the Tabernacle on the first day of the month (כ



40:2 בְּיוֹם-הַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ תִּקְיִם אֶת-מִשְׁכַּן אֱהֵל מוֹעֵד:  
*'On the first day of the first month you shall set up the tabernacle of the tent of meeting. NASB)* is a very significant statement for us today. This is a point in Israel's history whereby the Lord God in heaven has identified and revealed Himself. He calls us to worship Him by remembering what He has done. Does the Lord care how we worship Him? He most certainly does! The reason being is that it is connected to His word, the Holy Scriptures. This coupled with Paul's writing about lives (bodies) being a sacrifice, truly, the way we worship the Lord God means either life or death for us in regard to our obedience to His Word. The point is that we may not perfectly keep the mitzvot, but we should be striving to do so because that is what Yeshua wants for our lives. The joy of Torah is found in the desire to live for the Lord because of our love for Him, and because of His love for us.



