

PARASHAT TZAV

(GIVE AN ORDER)

LEVITICUS 6:8[1]* -8:36

ETZ CHAYEEM HOD (HE IS A TREE OF LIFE)

Yeshua is a tree of life to those who take hold of Him, and those who support Him are praiseworthy. His ways are ways of pleasantness and all of His paths are shalom. Bring us back YHVH to You, and we shall come, renew our days as of old.

As we begin to study the Torah let us never forget that YESHUA THE MESSIAH is the Living Torah, the Torah-Word of Elohim made flesh. He is the way, the truth and the life — the Living Manna sent from heaven. Without Him living in our lives through the indwelling Presence of his Set-apart/Kadosh Spirit (Who leads us into all truth and revelation) the Written Torah can become the dead letter of the law!

Haftorah Reading

Jeremiah 7:21–8:3; 9:22(23)–23(24)

Testimony of Yeshua

On being a living sacrifice: **Romans 12:1–2**

On Yeshua being our High Priest and the ultimate sacrifice: **Hebrews 4:14–5:10; 7:1–28; 8:1–6; 9:1–28; 10:1–39; 13:10–14**

On being a pure spiritual temple: **2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1; 1 Peter 1:14–16**

On the spiritual priestly garments of the saints: **Ephesians 5:27; 6:10–18; Revelation 7:13–14; 19:8**

Outline of This Week's Parashah (Torah Portion)

—6:8 (1) The Law of the Elevation or Burnt (*Olah*) Offering

—6:14 (7) The Meal or Grain (*Minchah*) Offering

—6:24 (17) The Sin (*Chatat*) Offering

—7:1 The Guilt (*Asham*) Offering

—7:11 The Thanksgiving (*Todah*) or Peace (*Shelamim*) Offering

—7:19 Eating in a State of Contamination

—7:22 Fat and Blood Not to Be Eaten

—7:28 The Parts of the Offering to Be Burned and Those Given to the Priests as Gifts

—8:1 Consecration of Aaron and His Sons for the Priestly Service in the Tabernacle

Study Questions for This Week's Midrash (Torah Discussion)

1 6:10 [6:3 in Jewish bibles], *Linen britches*. The Jewish sages teach that every Israelite should be a human temple. If he is set-apart (*kadosh*), then the temple of his body will be *kadosh*; if he sins he contaminates it. This is consistent with the teachings of the apostles (see the Testimony of Yeshua readings above). Furthermore, in this parashah we see the high priest donning a “fitted” linen tunic and britches “on his flesh,” which was an illusion to robes of righteousness (Lev 6:10 [3]). Most of us have too casual a view of sin—something a righteous and set-apart Elohim hates and calls an abomination (Ps 5:5; Prov 6:16–19).

* Lev 6:1 in Hebrew/Jewish bibles is Lev 6:8 in Christian Bibles. The verse numbering system at times differs as it does here.

Sin that is not repented of will damn us eternally (Ezek 18:4,20; Rom 6:23). Our sin sentenced Yeshua to a hideous death on the cross in our place. (Selah: pause and reflect.)

Perhaps the greatest area of sin is with our mouths; it defiles our spiritual temples probably every day! (Read Mark 7:14–23 and Jas 3:1–12.) Our mouths sow discord among brethren, speak vanities, murders and lies—things that Elohim (his Hebrew name referring to the judgment side of his character) hates and calls an abomination in Proverbs 6:16–19. The tongue is a world of iniquity, especially behind closed doors where we let down our guard with our family and loved ones. There our tongues rip, slice, slash, murder, speak vanities and hypocrisy almost without measure. The word *Babylon* comes from the Hebrew word *bavel* meaning “confusion or mixture” referring to when the languages of men were confounded at the Tower of Babel. How can we be a righteous and set-apart priesthood offering up praise and worship to our Creator with our lips when 30 minutes before our lips were murdering our wife, children, husband or someone else on the way to Shabbat services? Is this not confusion? A divided heart? A forked (serpent’s) tongue? The Scriptures plainly tell us to come out of Babylon’s ways (Rev 18:4). The writer of Hebrews says, “Follow peace (*shalom*) with all men, and holiness, without which no man can see the Master” (Heb 12:14). If we could but tame the tongue, then we would be able to steer the whole temple of our spiritual ship (to mix metaphors) into the glorious harbors of holiness and relationship with man and with our Creator. Let’s stop and take some time to repent of our sinfulness in these areas.

- 2 **6:17 (10), No leaven.** Why does YHVH stipulate this prohibition? The main Jewish commentaries are unable to answer this question. It is not until we understand the spiritual implications of leavening as revealed in the Testimony of Yeshua that this prohibition makes sense. What is leaven a spiritual picture of? (See Matt 16:1–5, 12; Luke 12:1; 1 Cor 5:1–5.) What does unleavened bread represent? (See 1 Cor 5:5, the last words of the verse.) Now who did the unleavened bread offered on the altar represent? (See Matt 26:26.) Since leavened bread is a picture of hypocrisy and lies (or sin), for bread offered on the altar to contain leavening would violate the picture of Yeshua as the perfect and sinless offering. Yeshua’s death on the cross as a payment for all of man’s sins fulfilled all the types and shadows of the sacrificial system.
- 3 **6:16 (9), 27 (20), 29 (22), Holy [Heb. *kadosh*].** The tabernacle contained an altar upon which was barbecued meat that was at times eaten by the priests. Upon the same altar was baked unleavened bread, which was offered to YHVH and then eaten by the priest. The Jewish sages teach that not only is an Israelite’s body a tabernacle or temple, but that one’s table within one’s home is like an altar in the temple, and should, therefore, symbolize charity and hospitality—eternal values that we need to transmit to our children. So when there is no physical, earthly temple, the principles of the earthly temple are upheld in what we do with our bodies and what occurs in our homes. How diligent have you been to live out these principles in the temple of your body and the temple of your home?
- 4 **6:12 (5)–13 (6),** The fire on the altar of sacrifice was to never go out; it was a permanent fire. The priest was to stoke the fire each morning after it had died down during the night. What does this speak of in the redeemed Israelite believer’s life? Does the term “morning devotions” ring a bell?
- 5 **7:11–17,** The Jewish sages teach that in the world to come (*olam haba*) after Messiah’s coming, and after the establishment of his eternal kingdom, a perfect world will exist without sin, therefore eliminating the need for the atonement offering. Nonetheless, the thanksgiving offering will continue as a means to thank Elohim and to offer praise to him. What does this teach us about what our attitude of gratitude toward YHVH should be? How grateful are you? How much of your prayer time is spent in thankfulness and gratitude versus the “gimmies”: “gimme (give me) this” and “gimme that?” We are commanded to give thanks to YHVH for **all things** (Eph 5:20; 1 Thess 5:18; Col 3:17). Have you disciplined yourself to be grateful to YHVH for all things—both the blessings we receive as well as for the trials that come our way? Do you find his blessing in everything, and let his joy and heart of gratitude penetrate your heart and mind in all circumstances? To do so is to tap into YHVH’s river of life. To do so is to let your light shine in such a way as to confound the natural mind of man and to cause those around you to wonder at your source of inner strength, joy, love and light. To do so adds health to your body and years to your life.

6 **7:13**, *Leavened bread*. The Torah prohibited the offering of leavened bread on the altar (Lev 2:11). There are only two instances where leavening in bread was permitted in the tabernacle service. In this verse, leavened bread was offered in conjunction with the peace offering (Lev 2:13) where it was eaten as part of the sacrificial meal. But it wasn't placed on the altar, nor was it a part of the sacrifice, therefore, it wasn't a prophetic picture of the sinless Yeshua dying on the cross.

Finally, the Torah instructs the priests to wave two loaves of leavened bread on *Shavuot* or Pentecost before YHVH (Lev 23:17). These two loaves pictured the two houses of Israel (the northern kingdom and southern kingdom)—a spiritual picture of Jews and Christians. In this ceremony, the gracious and merciful Creator was demonstrating his acceptance of his people despite their sin. (Take the opportunity to review and discuss Psalm 103, the entire chapter.)

7 **7:19–21**, The peace offering had to be offered in a state of spiritual purity on the part of both the meat and the eater. If either were impure (including impure thoughts on the part of the person making the offering), the offering was disqualified, and the person was even liable to punishment (or being “cut off” from the camp of Israel). What does this teach us about the state of one's heart versus the religious act itself or about YHVH's view of hypocrisy? Religious activity is only as meaningful and efficacious as the condition of the individual's heart doing the service.

What did Yeshua teach about those who would leave their gift at the altar, but whose hearts were impure due to offence they had with their brother? Did the Father accept such a gift? (See Matt 5:23–24.) YHVH says in Hosea 6:6, “For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of Elohim more than burnt offerings.” In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul states that all religious activities, head knowledge and spiritual giftedness is meaningless and valueless in the eyes of the Father if not accompanied by a heart of love. Why do you keep YHVH's Torah-commands? Out of duty and legalism or out of love for and faith in Elohim (see John 14:15, 21, 23; 15:10; 1 John 2:3; 5:2)? When you offer up your religious service to YHVH (i.e., praise and worship, devotions, Torah-obedience, good deeds to others, etc.), do you have impure thoughts of bitterness, anger, or resentment against your neighbor? If so, repent and allow YHVH's love to cleanse your heart so that you can offer up a pure, undefiled and acceptable sacrifice to him.

8 **7:23**, *Not eat any fat*. How was the organ fat of the ox, sheep and goats to be used in the sacrificial service? (See Lev 7:30–31.) The organ fat was given to YHVH as part of the burnt offering (Lev 1:3), the peace offering (Lev 3:3–4), the sin offering (Lev 4:8–10, 19). *Fat* is the Hebrew word *cheleb*/חלב meaning “fat of humans or animals” or metaphorically, “the choicest, best part, or abundance of the land.” Therefore, the fat as one of the choicest parts of the animal was reserved for sacrifice to YHVH on the altar. By not eating fat, the Israelites in their minds preserved a reverence for YHVH's altar upon which the fat was offered. To eat the fat was to show irreverence for that best part that belonged to Elohim. What was the penalty for eating the fat? (Read Lev 7:25.)

9 **7:26**, *Not eat any blood*. YHVH revealed in the Torah that the life of flesh is in the blood (see Lev 17:11). Therefore, the blood symbolizes the whole life of the living being. This is why the blood upon the altar made atonement for the souls of men (Lev 17:11), since it represented and pointed to the shedding of Yeshua's blood when he sacrificed his life on the cross in atoning for men's sins. Therefore, respecting the blood is necessary not only because it symbolizes the sanctity of the life of man who was made in the Creator's image (read Gen 1:26 cp. 9:6), but more importantly, because of the blood of Elohim's Son that was shed at the cross. Again, what is the spiritual-legal value of the blood with regard to sins of men? (The answer is in Lev 17:11.) For one to eat the blood showed disdain for what the blood typified, thus resulting in what punishment? (Look at Lev 7:27.)

The blood was to be reserved for the sacrificial service where it was used symbolically to represent Yeshua's shedding his blood on the cross. The blood of a lamb was put on the door posts to protect men from YHVH's judgment against sin (Exod 12:7, 13). Moses sprinkled the blood of oxen on the people symbolizing their coming into covenantal relationship with YHVH (Exod 24:5–8). Additionally, the blood of sacrificed animals was sprinkled throughout the tabernacle, on Aaron and his sons, and all around the altar to sanctify it. All these acts and uses of the blood were illustrative of the unrestricted cleansing power of

the blood of Yeshua, which is why YHVH expected his people to treat the blood with a reverence. Those who didn't evidenced a heart of indifference for the set-apart or *kadosh* things of Elohim—an intolerable offence in the Creator's eyes.

10 7:28–34, The peace offering was the only offering where the owner participated in the actual ceremony. In the ceremony, both the owner of the animal and the priest took part in this offering with the priest placing his hands under those of the owner who lifted and waved the meat in all four directions of the compass and then lifted and lowered the meat. The purpose of this, according to the Jewish sages, is to teach us that YHVH controls existence everywhere (in all four directions, and in heaven and below the earth). This is also to teach us that we are to be contented with our lot in life and that all is under the Creator's care and control. What was Paul's attitude about his station in life? Philippians 4:11–13 and 19 says:

Not that I speak in respect of want, for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Messiah which strengthens me. ... But my Elohim shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Messiah Yeshua.

What can we learn from Paul? Do you fight your lot in life giving way to coveting, greed, lust, materialism, striving, anguish and discontent? Or do you thank YHVH for what you have, for the rich blessings you have thanks to his grace, then place your cares and desires upon him and let him bring them to fulfillment? (See Pss 37:4–7, 23–25.) Do you go through life with an attitude of ingratitude or gratitude? It's your choice and you will reap what you sow.

It is interesting to note that the parts of the animal waved during the peace offering were the breast (housing the heart) and the right thigh (which is the leg representing power and strength). These body parts speak of *heart* and *action*. What does this teach us? Are mere emotions and good intentions without corresponding action acceptable to the Father? On the contrary, is mechanical and legalistic action without a proper heart attitude acceptable? Relate this to Paul's teaching about the letter of the law killing, but the spirit of the law bringing life (2 Cor 3:6). How does this relate to Yeshua's discussion with the woman at the well in John 4 where he states that the Father is seeking those who will worship him *both* in spirit and in truth (vv 23–24)?

11 As the laws of the offerings are given, we see the following mentioned: fine flour, olive oil and frankincense (6:15 [8]); burned with fire, unleavened bread (6:17 [10]), repeatedly baked and broken into pieces (6:21 [14]); consecration of and anointing oil on the priests (6:22 [15]; 8:1ff); contamination and koshering (6:27 [20]; 7:19); innards and feet of the sacrificed animal washed in water (8:21); fire offering (7:25) and ritual washing (8:6). What is this all speaking about? It is about set-apartness (holiness) before YHVH. How set-apart or *kadosh* is your life? Be brutally honest. How does YHVH see you in light of what you say, do and think? As we approach the *Pesach* (Passover) season, we must not pass over these questions lightly, but we must examine ourselves to be certain that during the Passover Seder when the time comes to partake of the third Cup of Redemption we are not guilty of drinking it unworthily to our own damnation. (Read 1 Cor 11:27–32.)

12 8:12, *Anointing oil ... consecrates [Heb. kadash]*. The Hebrew word *kadash*/קִדַּשׁ signifies the state of something that belongs to the realm of the sacred, and which is set-apart for divine use and has been separated from the sphere of the secular, common or profane. The Bible often uses the term *holy* (meaning "set-apart") to signify this state of being. The Word of Elohim designates many things as *set-apart*:

- ☞ Ground upon which YHVH is standing (Exod 3:5; Josh 5:15)
- ☞ The people of Israel (Exod 19:6; Deut 14:21; 26:19)
- ☞ The Sabbath (Exod 16:23; 20:8)
- ☞ The Tabernacle of Moses (Exod 26:33)
- ☞ The garments worn by the high priest (Exod 28:2)
- ☞ The altar of sacrifice (Exod 40:10)

- ☞ The offerings made on the altar (Lev 6:18)
- ☞ YHVH's feast days (Lev 23:2)
- ☞ The camp of Israel (Deut 23:14)
- ☞ Heaven as the abode of Elohim (Deut 26:15)
- ☞ YHVH Elohim (Job 6:10; Pss 22:3; 78:4; 99:5)
- ☞ Zion and Jerusalem (Ps 2:6; Matt 27:53; Rev 22:19)
- ☞ The Spirit of Elohim (Matt 1:20)
- ☞ The angels (Matt 25:31)
- ☞ The servants of Elohim (Mark 6:20)
- ☞ The name of YHVH (Luke 1:49)
- ☞ Yeshua (Acts 2:27; 3:14)
- ☞ YHVH's prophets (Acts 3:21)
- ☞ The saints (1 Pet 2:9; Rev 22:11)
- ☞ The Torah (2 Pet 3:21)

How many things in this list does the church ignore or profane by refusing to recognize as being holy or set-apart? How many things are considered to be *holy* in the church world that the Word of Elohim doesn't designate as *holy*?

YHVH's people are to learn to make a difference between that which he designates as *kadash* and that which is *profane* (Lev 10:10). In order to do this, one must know what YHVH defines as set-apart and then align our thinking and lifestyle with that.

The act of consecrating someone (or something, e.g. Exod 30:26) as occurs in Leviticus 8:12 often involves the ritual of pouring olive oil on them to signify their being set-apart for a special work or service. This is called *anointing* (see Exod 28:41; 29:7; 1 Sam 16:12; 1 Kgs 1:34; Isa 61:1; 2 Cor 1:21).

Yeshua's title is *Messiah* (Heb. *Mashiach*/מָשִׁיחַ literally meaning, "one who is anointed, smeared or consecrated with (olive) oil.") The English word *Christ* derives from the Greek word *Christos*/Χριστος, which is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word *mashiach*. In Biblical thought, the Messiah would be One coming from heaven who would possess a super-anointing of the Spirit of Elohim (Isa 11:1–10; 42:1–21; 61:1–3; John 3:34) to accomplish the purposes of Elohim on earth.

13 8:15, *Poured the blood.* The blood being poured out on the altar represented what? (Read Col 1:20; Heb 9:11–15, 21–28; 12:24; 13:12; 1 Pet 1:2.)

14 8:23, *Right ear... thumb... hand... toe.* What is the significance of the priests having a drop of blood from the sacrificed ram placed on the right ear, thumb of the right hand and great toe of the right foot? To the casual observer unlearned in the ways of YHVH and his Torah this may seem to be a curious, if not ridiculous ritual. But upon closer examination, what message is YHVH trying to communicate to Aaron and his sons as they are being consecrated to service in the tabernacle? What can we learn from this example given to us upon whom the ends of the age are come? (1 Cor 10:11). What do these body parts metaphorically represent in the redeemed Israelite believer's life?

HAFTORAH READING — JER 7:21–8:3; 9:22(23)–23(24)

“The Sacrifice of the Wicked Is an Abomination” (Prov 15:8)

THIS HAFTORAH PORTION REVEALS THAT THE PURPOSE OF SACRIFICE and of all outward acts of worship should be to deepen the inward sense of religion and to stimulate one to a set-apart (holy) life. Jeremiah, speaking for YHVH, decries the uselessness of religious activity when accompanied with unholiness and unrighteousness. Furthermore, he denounces the mere mechanical performance of acts of worship; of the superstition that the temple ritual could be a guarantee of security from the judgments of Elohim, while the Israelites were di-

forced from obedience to YHVH's Torah. Only whole-hearted repentance could avert a national disaster brought on by YHVH's judgments (*Soncino Pentateuch*, p. 439).

1 For the Israelites, what should have been the end-goal of religion as epitomized by the temple service? The true purpose of the temple religious experience was to transform people into living temples for the glory of YHVH. If the Israelites acted one way while in the temple and another way while outside the temple, then the temple activities had only become a mockery of YHVH, a farce and a repugnance to the very one they had supposedly come to worship. Humans may kid themselves, but they cannot deceive the One who reads hearts and minds. He is not moved by the facades of outward show or appearances. What are your true heart motives for pursuing the Hebrew roots of the Christian faith? If it is for any reason other than out of a deep, abiding love for Yeshua, for a desire to draw close to the Father in a personal one-on-one way, to walk in righteousness as an act of faith and worship toward him, then your motives need to be reevaluated and adjusted.

2 Let us define some applicable words here:

- ☞ *Pretense*: a claim made or implied, but not supported by fact; ostentation.
- ☞ *Ostentation*: excessive display; pretentiousness.
- ☞ *Hypocrisy*: a feigning to be what one is not or to believe what one does not; the false assumption of an appearance of virtue or religion.

What do the Scriptures have to say about *hypocrisy*? Please read...

- Job 13:16; 15:31,33,34; 20:4,5; 27:8–10
- Psalm 78:34–37
- Proverbs 15:7; 21:27
- Isaiah 1:13,15; 29:13–16; 48:1–2; 66:3–5
- Jeremiah 3:10; 7:4, 8–10
- Hosea 10:1,4
- Matthew 6:1,2,5,16,24; 7:5,15,21–23; 15:7–9, chapter 23
- Luke 11:39,42,44,52
- Romans 16:18
- Galatians 6:3
- Titus 1:16
- James 1:8,22–24,26; 2:14–26; 3:17
- 2 Peter 2:1–3,17,19
- 1 John 2:4,9,19; 4:20
- Revelation 3:15–18

3 Now let's review some statistics relevant to the state of the American Christian church from George Barna's book, *The Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators—A Statistical Report on the State of Religion in America*. This book was first published in 1996, yet how much has the American church changed for the better since then? Here are some startling statistics:

- ☞ 85 percent of Americans claim to be Christian
- ☞ 10 percent of Americans are "Bible Christians": that is, they fully accept biblical authority, total trust in Christ for salvation, are evangelistic and are active in a church, and believe in moral absolutes.
- ☞ 25 percent of Americans are "Conventional Christians": they claim total trust in Christ for salvation, are involved in a church, they exercise a privatized faith, believe in moral relativism and appreciate the Bible.
- ☞ 28 percent of Americans are "Cultural Christians": they have a universalistic world-view, their religion is works based (i.e., they believe that good people will go to heaven), they are moral relativistic,

nominal church involvement and are Christian in name only.

- Of those who claim to be Christian, only 40 percent believe in a literal Satan; 63 percent believe in the accuracy of the Bible; only 30 percent read their Bible in a week; only 57 percent agree that good people will go to heaven; only 31 percent believe in a fiery place of torment after death; 37 percent believe hell is only symbolic; only 9 percent knew what the “Great Commission” was; 63 percent had no idea what “John 3:16” referred to; and only 35 percent could accurately define the meaning of the word *gospel*.

4 YHVH sent the prophet Jeremiah to warn the nation of Israel of impending doom if it failed to repent of its disobedience of him. He then cites many examples of various sins that had become odious in YHVH’s nostrils. In their smugness, the Jews felt secure because they possessed the temple in Jerusalem. Surely YHVH would not allow the Jews to be destroyed for the sake of his house. Yet Jeremiah warned that this security was a false one and to prove his point he calls to their attention the example of the northern kingdom, which by this time had already been taken captive a couple of generations earlier. What parallels do we see in the church that are similar to those of the southern kingdom of Jeremiah’s day? How about in the Messianic Movement? How many Christians (and Messianics) take comfort in the notion that America is a “Christian nation” and that certainly YHVH would allow nothing disastrous to happen here? Some find confidence in America’s military and economic might. Others feel that a pre-tribulation rapture will carry them “out of here” when the going gets tough. Is it possible that many individuals may be in for a rude awakening when their escapist mentality scenarios don’t materialize as planned? We know from history that the temple in Jerusalem—as if it were some lucky talisman—did not protect the Jews who, while their temple was ablaze, were being dragged off as slaves. Could the unexpected happen to America, or any other country? Is YHVH any more duty-bound to protect us than he was the Jews of that day?

5 7:31–32, Child sacrifice as part of their cultic rituals was how the ancients disposed of unwanted children even as abortion serves the same wicked and grisly purpose in our day. These children were offered on the altars of Tophet while priests beat drums to drown out the shrieks of the children being burned alive (*The ArtScroll Chumash*, p. 1167). Jeremiah prophesied that those Jews who practiced this holocaust would become victims themselves with their very own carcasses becoming food for the scavenger birds. It has been said that the abortion rate is the same in the American Christian church as that of non-Christians. How concerned are you about the slaughter of the innocent in America, and what are you doing about it?

6 In this Haftorah portion, Jeremiah condemns the Jews for a number of sins. In this text, identify the societal or social sins for which that nation was guilty. YHVH is not only concerned about personal holiness, but societal holiness as well. What are you doing personally to better the world around you? We are not only called to improve ourselves, but to help improve our fellow man. In so doing, we evidence the love of Yeshua who loved us while we were yet sinners, and we demonstrate to a lost and hurting world that we are spiritual ambassadors for a heavenly kingdom that is founded on love and outgoing concern for others. We show the world that there is another way—the way of love and giving, which is the way of Yeshua, the Savior and Messiah, in whose footsteps we are to be following.