

Notes: May 21 2016

Start: 10 AM

**Order of service:**

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tov
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Praise and Worship Songs
8. Message
9. Aaronic Blessing
10. Kiddush
11. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: *Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe*

English: *May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe*

Transliteration: *Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.*

English: *May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.*

Introduction: Elements of Shavuot

When we look at this week's Parashah – Emor, meaning Speak, we are shown in chapter 21 instructions given to Aharon and his sons regarding how they are to live their lives as Cohenim, serving Adonai. Our path will ultimately lead us to Shavuot and its elements and application.

To begin this Parashah Emor, Instructions are given to Aaron in order to accomplish two things:

1. Promote holiness
2. Prevent from profaning of Adonai's Name

There were standards set by Adonai for the Cohanim. Standards that we can glean from...

**Lev 21:6** Rather, they are to be holy for their God and not profane the name of their God. For they are the ones who present Adonai with offerings made by fire, the bread of their God; therefore they must be holy.

They are set apart and instructed not to defile themselves because their purpose and function wasn't just about them but impacted the entire community. If the Cohenim were unable to perform their duties because they did not remain consecrated, it just didn't separate them from Adonai but the entire community.

**Lev 22:2** "Tell Aharon and his sons to separate themselves from the holy things of the people of Isra'el which they set apart as holy for me, so that they will not profane my holy name; I am Adonai.

What does this mean that they are to separate themselves from the holy things of the people? I believe verse 3 provides us with that answer...

**Lev 22:3** Tell them, 'Any descendant of yours through all your generations who approaches the holy things that the people of Isra'el consecrate to Adonai and is unclean will be cut off from before me; I am Adonai.

Meaning, they are to be undefiled according to what will follow...

- coming in contact with a dead body
- having seminal emission
- coming in contact with a reptile or insect
- cannot eat anything that dies naturally or is killed by another animal

**Lev 22:9** The cohanim must observe this charge of mine; otherwise, if they profane it, they will bear the consequences of their sin for doing so and die in it; I am Adonai, who makes them holy.

The things that are consecrated are the sacrifices and offerings that are provided by the people with the intention of being offered to Adonai.

**Lev 22:18** "Speak to Aharon and his sons and to the entire people of Isra'el; tell them: 'When anyone, whether a member of the house of Isra'el or a foreigner living in Isra'el, brings his offering, either in connection with a vow or as a voluntary offering, and brings it to Adonai as a burnt offering,

**Lev 22:19** in order for you to be accepted, you must bring a male without defect from the cattle, the sheep or the goats.

**Lev 22:20** You are not to bring anything with a defect, because it will not be accepted from you.

You have all these instructions conveyed by Adonai toward Aharon and his sons regarding consecration in order to make certain that they understand what will prevent them from performing their duty to Adonai. Yet, there is a distinction between Cohenim and Levites in relation to their duties...

Remember all Cohenim are Levites but not all Levites are Cohenim.

So, what is the role, purpose and function of Levites who are not Cohenim?

Distinction between Cohanim – direct descendants of Aaron and Levites – v.1

- There are three structures within the Israelite society
  - The Cohen – direct descendants of Aaron and part of the Levites
  - The Levites – descendants of the tribe of Levi, but not including the Cohen
  - The Israelites – remaining tribes

What of the other descendants of Levi?

- Assigned roles to assist in the maintenance of the Mishkan
  - carrying various vessels
  - assembly of the Mishkan

The role that Adonai has established for the Levites is found primarily in Numbers 18 regarding their Temple service.

Their distinction from the other tribes is conveyed in Numbers 8 and another role that involves Sanctuary cities is found in Numbers 35.

They would also act as authorities for interpreting the Word of Adonai in the communities they would reside in. Thus assisting any Cohen in their community.

Levite's roles are defined, but not as Cohenim, but as those who would assist the Cohenim.

Ultimately we see that the role of the Levites who are not Cohenim are in essence the same role as Gentiles who accept the Yeshua.

**Eph 3:5** In past generations it was not made known to mankind, as the Spirit is now revealing it to his emissaries and prophets,

**Eph 3:6** that in union with the Messiah and through the Good News the Gentiles were to be joint heirs, a joint body and joint sharers with the Jews in what God has promised.

**Eph 3:7** I became a servant of this Good News by God's gracious gift, which he gave me through the operation of his power.

**Eph 3:8** To me, the least important of all God's holy people, was given this privilege of announcing to the Gentiles the Good News of the Messiah's unfathomable riches,

**Eph 3:9** and of letting everyone see how this secret plan is going to work out. This plan, kept hidden for ages by God, the Creator of everything,

**Eph 3:10** is for the rulers and authorities in heaven to learn, through the existence of the Messianic Community, how many-sided God's wisdom is.

**Eph 3:11** This accords with God's age-old purpose, accomplished in the Messiah Yeshua, our Lord.

**Eph 3:12** In union with him, through his faithfulness, we have boldness and confidence when we approach God.

This mystery that Sha'ul talks about is not something that has been totally concealed, at least to Israel, but the mystery was in how this would happen. Throughout Scripture we have read about Israel's purpose and impact it is to have on the nations. Whether it is Jonah going to Nineveh, Adonai's statement to Isaiah's statement:

**Isa 49:5** So now Adonai says — he formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Ya`akov back to him, to have Isra'el gathered to him, so that I will be honored in the sight of Adonai, my God having become my strength —

**Isa 49:6** he has said, "It is not enough that you are merely my servant to raise up the tribes of Ya`akov and restore the offspring of Isra'el. I will also make you a light to the nations, so my salvation can spread to the ends of the earth."

or His statement to Zechariah:

**Zec 8:23** Adonai-Tzva'ot says, 'When that time comes, ten men will take hold — speaking all the languages of the nations — will grab hold of the cloak of a Jew and say, "We want to go with you, because we have heard that God is with you." ' ' "

We are told about Israel's purpose and impact. It would ultimately be through Yeshua that this would all be revealed and enacted.

But, doesn't Scripture say that we are a nation of Cohenim???

**1Pe 2:9** But you are a chosen people, the King's cohanim, a holy nation, a people for God to possess! Why? In order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Many Christian theologians have used this verse as evidence that the Church (the Christians) has replaced Israel (the Jews). Replacement theology is inconsistent with [Rom 11:17-26](#), [Eph 2:11-22](#), and other references at [Mat 5:5](#). I would put it this way:

Who is Kefa writing to...

**1Pe 1:1** From: Kefa, an emissary of Yeshua the Messiah To: God's chosen people, living as aliens in the Diaspora — in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, the province of Asia, and Bythina —

**1Pe 1:2** chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father and set apart by the Spirit for obeying Yeshua the Messiah and for sprinkling with his blood: Grace and shalom be yours in full measure.

Christians are indeed a chosen people, priests for the King, a holy "nation" (in a metaphorical sense), a people set aside for God to possess-not by way of superseding the Jews as God's people, but by way of being joined to them by faith in the same God and in the Jewish Messiah.

Not everyone is or can be a Cohen. That doesn't make you any less significant in the eyes of Adonai or in the purpose He has established for you.

This past week we were beginning Romans 12 in which Sha'ul was conveying how the congregation of Messiah is like a body...

**Rom 12:4** For just as there are many parts that compose one body, but the parts don't all have the same function;

**Rom 12:5** so there are many of us, and in union with the Messiah we comprise one body, with each of us belonging to the others.

**Rom 12:6** But we have gifts that differ and which are meant to be used according to the grace that has been given to us. If your gift is prophecy, use it to the extent of your trust;

**Rom 12:7** if it is serving, use it to serve; if you are a teacher, use your gift in teaching;

**Rom 12:8** if you are a counselor, use your gift to comfort and exhort; if you are someone who gives, do it simply and generously; if you are in a position of leadership, lead with diligence and zeal; if you are one who does acts of mercy, do them cheerfully.

Getting back to 1 Kefa 2:9...

**1Pe 2:9** But you are a chosen people, the King's cohanim, a holy nation, a people for God to possess! Why? In order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Where is Kefa referencing a holy nation and cohanim from?

**Exo 19:6** and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el."

What was happening in Exodus 19?

This was Israel's destination on the road to Shavuot, that I had talked about last week.

The very place that we read the following...

**Exo 19:18** Mount Sinai was enveloped in smoke, because Adonai descended onto it in fire — its smoke went up like the smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain shook violently.

**Exo 19:19** As the sound of the shofar grew louder and louder, Moshe spoke; and God answered him with a voice.

Which brings us to the elements of Shavuot...

**Act 2:2** Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

**Act 2:3** Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them.

God emphasized the connection between the *Torah* and the *Ruach HaKodesh* by giving both with similar miraculous signs.

The roar of the wind reminds us of the sound of the shofar and the voice of Adonai as He spoke in all authority at Sinai.

The fire in Jerusalem on Shavuot recalled the fire, smoke at Sinai, ultimately reminding us of Adonai's Shechinah.

**Deu 5:22 (5:19)** "These words Adonai spoke to your entire gathering at the mountain from fire, cloud and thick mist, in a loud voice; then it ceased. But he wrote them on two stone tablets, which he gave to me.

**Deu 5:23 (5:20)** When you heard the voice coming out of the darkness, as the mountain blazed with fire, you came to me, all the heads of your tribes and your leaders,

**Deu 5:24 (5:21)** and said, 'Here, Adonai our God has shown us his glory and his greatness! We have heard his voice coming from the fire, and we have seen today that God does speak with human beings, and they stay alive.

However, instead of God's people being kept away ([Exo 19:21-23](#); [Deu 5:22-24](#)), God's glory, represented by the tongues of fire, came to each individual.

This fire also represents Adonai intent to purify a people, separate them from the ways of the nations and ultimately refine them into as Exodus 19:5 - 6 conveys...

**Exo 19:5** Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep my covenant, then you will be my own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine;

**Exo 19:6** and you will be a kingdom of cohanim for me, a nation set apart.' These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra'el."

If you will allow me to refine you into my people...you will become for me a holy nation.

In becoming His people, ultimately, we are not to be involved in any practices that bring dishonor or worse profane Adonai's Name which is how He is recognized.

The idea to profane or desecrate the Name of Adonai conveys dishonoring Him and His character and is understood in Judaism as Chillul Ha Shem...

Chillul HaShem – desecration of Adonai's Name – How:

- By doing things that are prohibited
  - idolatry, murder, forbidden sexual relations, etc...
- A Jew is required to die rather than to commit such a sin and those that commit these offenses dishonor Adonai by refusing to give up their lives
- Faced with the choice – they should choose to die or they have committed chillul HaShem
- If a non-Jew commands a Jew to sin in front of a minyan of other Jews, he is also to be put to death

Yet there is the equally important and positive aspect understood in Judaism as Kiddush Ha Shem...

Kiddush HaShem – sanctifying Adonai's Name – How:

- To honor the Name of Adonai by giving up our lives.
- When we recite the Sh'ma we affirm that we would rather die than deny.

During this season that leads us to Shavuot, let us be reminded by the journey, that we are to draw closer to Him, to where on Shavuot, we receive His promises. This is how it was at Sinai and Jerusalem. Today have you truly received His promises whereby you are honoring Him through Kiddush HaShem, or are you in danger of Chillul HaShem? The road to Shavuot, that I talked about last week and the Omer that we count to bring us to Shavuot is the time where we should reflect and purge that which doesn't belong. Just as the month of Elul is a time of reflection leading us to Yom Kippur, let this time as we count the Omer produce the same outcome of revealing all that needs to be revealed in order for us to come into Shavuot through T'shuvah.