

Shiur L'Yom Sh'lishi¹

[Tuesday's Study]

READINGS: **Torah B'ha'alotcha:** **Numbers 9:1-14**
 Haftarah: **Zechariah 3:1-7**
 B'rit Chadasha: **I Corinthians 10:6-11**

They kept the Pesach ... in the wilderness of Sinai.

[Numbers 9:5]

Today's Meditation is Revelation 2:1-7;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition #7, *Kabat*z [Ingathering]

Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe – And the Holy One spoke to Moshe ... *v'midbar-Sinai* – in the Sinai desert ... *bashanah ha-shenit l'tzetam me'erezt Mitzrayim* – in the second year of bringing forth from the land of Egypt ... *bachodesh ha-rishon l'emor* – in the first month, saying **Numbers 9:1.**

It is springtime at Sinai. The desert floor is bursting into bloom. Lambs are up and walking. Both in the Nile Delta and in the land of the patriarchs heads of barley are appearing in the fields. Here at the Mountain of God, the pillar of fire and cloud is billowing as it could lift off the desert floor any minute. Reportedly the beautiful land of milk and honey, about which we have heard glorious stories all of our lives, lies just a few hundred kilometers to our Northeast. Even with children and animals, we could probably be there in as little as 11 days². Anticipation is building. Surely it will not be much longer now. So what are we waiting for? What have we forgotten?

What Have We Forgotten – and What and Who do We Need to Forgive?

The Holy One knows what lies before us in the desert. He has carefully planned each obstacle we will face along the way. He knows what we are going to have to deal with – and how it is going to challenge our shalom, our *simchah* (joy) and our commitment to Him, His Will, His Ways, and His Grand Plan. He knows that of the 603,550 men counted in the recent accounting only five men know Him and trust Him well enough to successfully navigate the obstacle course. He knows who those men are: *Y'hoshua*, of the tribe of Efrayim, *Kalev* of the tribe of Y'hudah, and *Elazar*, *Itamar*, and *Pinechas* of the tribe of Levi. He knows that Miryam won't make it. He knows that Aharon won't make it. He knows that even Moshe won't make it. He knows, therefore, that the generation that will enter and possess

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² See Deuteronomy 1:2: *It is eleven days' journey from Horeb to Kadesh Barnea by way of Mount Seir.*

the land – and turn it into the earthly beachhead for the Kingdom of Heaven – consists presently of a bunch of children. He wants to start preparing these children now. So He calls Moshe back into the *Mish'kan*, and instructs him: ***Veya'asu b'nei-Yisra'el et-ha-pasach b'mo'ado*** [i.e. cause the children of Israel to make the Passover at its appointed time], ***b'arba'ah asar yom bachodesh hazeh beyn ha-arba'im ta'asu oto*** [i.e. on the fourteenth day of this month, at twilight, you are to observe it]; ***b'mo'ado kechol-chukotav uchechol-mishpatav ta'asu oto*** [i.e. at its appointed time, according to all its ceremonies, you are to observe it].

Passover, eh? There are three pilgrimage festivals in Torah – Passover in the early spring, *Shavuot* in the late spring, and *Sukkot* in the autumn. Each of these pilgrimage festivals constitutes an act in the Great Passion Play that the Holy One has written for His Covenant People – to remind us who we are and why we are here. *Passover* defines our identity. *Shavuot* defines our mission. And *Sukkot* defines our destiny.

Settling Our Identity Issues

Before we head off into the desert, the Holy One knows we have critical identity issues that need to be resolved. The ‘identity question’ is on the table: before you face the heat and the hunger, the sand fleas and the serpents, the temptresses and the terrorists, the false prophets and the enemy strongholds that stand between you and your destiny, *do you truly understand, and are you comfortable with, who and Whose you are?*

Do you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that *the Creator of the Universe had designed – and takes great delight in - you?*

Do you know beyond question that *He has borne your transgressions and forgiven your follies?*

Do you understand that, despite your sin and your weaknesses of the flesh, you have been chosen – and fully equipped and empowered – for a life of ambassadorial relevance, Kingdom restoration, and humble, gentle greatness?

Do you ‘get it’ yet, that *if you will just do what your Creator says to do, when He says it, and will not do whatever He says not to do, in your sphere of influence He will cause His Kingdom to come and His Will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven?*

It Is All About Making Sure Our Children Know Who – and Whose - They Are

At its essence, Passover is primarily *for and about children*. Children of all ages,

yes – but children. That should come as no surprise to anyone who has read the Torah. After all, offspring have always been at the epicenter of the Avrahamic Covenant. See Genesis 13:16, where the Holy One said to Avraham: ***I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered.*** See also Genesis 15:5, where the Holy One told Avraham: ***Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.” And He said to him, “So shall your descendants be.”*** Children who are well and faithfully trained in the ways of the Creator from their youth have been at the heart of the Great Redemptive Plan since it was announced. As the Holy One explains in Torah concerning the reason He appeared to and cut covenant with Avraham in the first place, it was ***in order that [Avraham] might teach his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Holy One, to make/build righteousness and justice.*** Genesis 18:19a. It was – is – will always be – through the child-rearing, child-training process that the Holy One intends to ***bring to Avraham what He has spoken to him.*** Genesis 18:19b.

How does Passover – as an element of the Covenant of Redemption – tie in with this lofty objective? Its observance – as well as that of the weekly Sabbath - is designed to inscribe on our children’s souls, from their earliest days of childhood, the essential messages of *who they are*, of *where they came from* and *where they are called to go*, of *how beloved and valued by the Holy One they are*, of *How good and wise their Benefactor and Redeemer in Heaven is*, and of *why they have been given the breath of life and called to a lifestyle of kedusha at such a time as this*. Do your children know these things, Beloved? Do you know them? Are you *rehearsing these things in your homes*? Are you *modeling these things for – and teaching these things to - the members of the next generation of the Covenant*? Are you *living the themes and truths out before them - on schedule, as directed, in meaningful ways, and in real time*?

Every year, at the first of the year, we are given another chance at – and lesson in - redemption. Passover is the key to it all. Remember, the Holy One’s specific instructions concerning the observance of *Pesach* were:

Speak to your son in that day, and say, '[This is done] because of what the Holy One did for me when I came up from Egypt.' *** So it will be, when your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What [is] this?' you are say to him, 'By strength of hand the Holy One brought us out of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Exodus 12:8, 13; and see also Exodus 10:1-2 and Dt. 6:20-25.

Passover is about teaching our children to see themselves – and all persons of the Covenant - as *overcomers, not as victims*; as *transcenders, not as patsies*; and as *bishops, knights, and queens on the chessboard of life, not as helpless pawns*. Do your children see themselves in this way? Do *you* see them this way? Do you even

see yourself this way? It is in the process of teaching these things to our children in connection with Passover and its aftermath that we are to simultaneously *reawaken* - and *reaffirm these truths to* - the inner child that still dwells within our own hearts.

The Critical, Foundational, Identity-Sealing Power of the Pesach Celebration

Today's aliyah reminds us that *Pesach* – and the symbolic appropriation by every man, woman and child of the Lamb's blood upon the doorposts of our lives – is and will always be the cornerstone of our relationship with the Divine Bridegroom of Heaven. Except for the fact that we, trusting in His promise of deliverance, placed the blood of the Lamb on our doorposts, none of us would have ever made it to Sea of Reeds, to the miracle of manna, or to the rock that pours forth living water, much less to the mountain of revelation. But for our heeding the Voice of Heaven and applying the Lamb's blood as directed we would have lived our entire lives and died in the slave camps of the world. But for our heeding the Voice of Heaven and applying the Lamb's blood as directed we would have never had our DNA transformed by the Holy One's tender words of betrothal, much less had any hope of becoming His Betrothed Bride. But for our heeding the Voice of Heaven and applying the Lamb's blood as directed we would have no basis whatsoever for expectation of a "promised land" to tend and to keep for our Bridegroom.

Coming to Grips With the Realization that the Process of Deliverance is Incomplete and On-Going

It has been almost a year since the Divine Bridegroom of Heaven captured our heart with signs and wonders and catapulted us out of Egypt, freeing us to come to this mountain. We have met our Creator. He has saved us from bondage. It was only 9 months ago that He called all of us He had redeemed unto Him, to stand together under the *Chuppah*³ of the Divine Bridegroom's Glory Cloud and hear the Voice that spoke the Universe into existence declare wonderful creative and prophetic words of betrothal⁴. We are now our Beloveds, and He is ours. But even

³ A *Chuppah* is a *canopy* under which a couple recites betrothal or marriage vows.

⁴ The so-called "ten commandments" which all who came to Mount Sinai with Moshe [including the mixed multitude from the nations which threw in their lot with the natural descendants of Ya'akov after the plague of the firstborn] heard with our own ears are much more than "commandments". They constitute the "outline" or "preamble" to a *shitre eyrusin* [betrothal covenant] by which the Holy One creatively and prophetically spoke over those assembled and their descendants forever a description of how He *saw* – and would with their consent and participation *re-create* - His Bride. The remainder of Torah's *mitzvot* [quantified by some as 613 commandments] are the specific instructions He gave as to how we as mortals are to participate in the Bride-preparation process. The "observance" of the *mitzvot* of Torah are not designed to bring us into relationship with the Holy One. They were never intended as a "means to salvation". They are the natural response of willing human beings to the Divine Favor and creative, prophetic spoken Word of the Holy One. They are not words telling us what to do and not do to get or stay in His good graces – they are

yet, we know there is more to the Covenant – and the journey to freedom – than we have yet experienced. We are now approaching the anniversary of the Holy One’s “appointed season” of deliverance. The Calendar of our Bridegroom-King is telling us it is time to commemorate the Passover; to *relive it*; to *experience its excitement afresh*; to *rejoice in it*; and to *share it with and teach its significance to our children*. Passover is really that important – to our individual and collective identities, to the purpose of the covenant, and to our Bridegroom-King’s Grand Redemptive Plan.

As important as Pesach is to our individual and collective identity, mission, and destiny as the people of the Bridegroom-King - is THIS really where we should observe it? Back in Egypt we were told that it was: ***When the Holy One brings you into the land of the Kena’ani ... which He swore to your ancestors to give you ...*** that the observance of *Pesach* is to occur. **Exodus 13:5-6**. We aren’t there yet. There are no fields of barley here to declare the changing of years – only sand. There is no wheat to forge into unleavened bread here – only stones. We are eating manna from Heaven, not the fruit of the land. The stretch of road that lies before us is a lot longer than the road that lies behind us. We have only just begun our journey with the Holy One. We have far, far more adventure to look forward to. We have entered a glorious process, but we have not in any wise completed it. Our race is not *done*, but *yet to run*. Much fear and trembling and surrender, trust, perseverance and faithfulness, will still be required if we are to work out the deeper levels of our salvation, access the full dimension of our deliverance, and become fully productive in our destiny.

So, as we sit here in the middle of the desert, isolated from mankind, thinking about *Pesach*, *Unleavened Bread*, and *Shavuot*, with their harvest themes, we realize we still have a long way to go to work out the height and depth and width and details of the glorious salvation our Bridegroom has planned for us. Should we – *can* we – *dare* we - really celebrate the deliverance He has wrought for us even while we await the greater portion of what He has promised? Do we celebrate the taste of freedom we have experienced even as we languish over the unbroken fellowship, unmediated communion, and responsible co-laboring with our Bridegroom King that our hearts passionately desire? What shall we do concerning the Holy One’s instructions about the *Pesach* [Passover]?

The Issue Is Decided

In today’s aliyah the issue is decided. The Holy One basically says [Rabbi’s son

Divine Empowerments defining the holy and wise people He has destined for us to become in order to testify to the world of His goodness.

paraphrase/interpretation⁵]:

O My Beautiful People – Yes! Stop at the appointed time and celebrate your redemption, even though it is at present only partial. Celebrate being delivered from even before you are delivered to.

Each family, select your Pesach lamb, and inspect it, and let yourself be convinced it is without blemish - then remember how its blood became your salvation. Remember the cries and wailing in Egypt over the loss of their firstborn children even as you nestled yours safely within your arms.

Hold a prophetic rehearsal in your tents to share with your children the remembrance of these things.

Take a break from your regular work. Gather your children around you and make a big deal out of cleansing your tents of *chametz* (leaven) - and consecrating yourselves and your households to Me afresh.

Meet with Me, My People, on *My timetable*, according to *My instructions* instead of your own convenience or at your whim. Meet with Me at the *appointed time, with your children around you* – and without depending on paid clergymen and “worship leaders”. Surrender to Me *in your homes with your families and friends* - and I will change you forever.”

Getting – and staying – in rhythm with the Calendar I have chosen for My Bride really is that important!

The Holy One wants it to be clear that it is fitting ... no, more than that - it is *essential* to our new creation identities - that we commemorate ***Pesach*** before leaving this place. We are His Witnesses. It is our appointed time to take the stand and testify – to our children if no one else - of what we have seen, heard, and experienced – and how it has changed us forever. Before we set off into the next phase of our journey it is altogether fitting therefore that we pause to sweetly remember and joyfully commemorate the first time we ever appropriated the Blood of the Lamb for ourselves and our households - and thereby took our first step of faith toward eternal covenant with the Bridegroom of Heaven!

Our commemoration is not, however, intended to be limited to a remembrance of the Lamb we selected, inspected, and slain on the evening of the 14th of Aviv in the year of our exodus from Egypt. Oh no, Dear Reader! ‘*Keeping Pesach*’ requires us to go back much, much further than the Exodus and to commemorate the Lamb slain ‘*before the foundation of the world*’ [Revelation 13:8] in whose *Book of Life* our names are written. And even that is not all. We also look forward into the future and appropriate unto ourselves *the Lamb worthy to open the seals on the book of*

⁵ The use by this writer of the phrase ‘*Rabbi’s son paraphrase/interpretation*’ means that the writer is not quoting or translating directly from the text of Scripture, simply giving his own interpretation of the meaning or message he feels is being conveyed. It is very important to recognize the vast difference between a man’s interpretation and the text itself. The use of this phrase is intended as a *literary device only*. Feel free to disagree with the writer’s interpretation.

the Holy One's final judgment. Revelation 5:7-9. Each time we 'make Pesach' on earth we therefore join the twenty-four *zakenim* [elders] and the four living creatures of Heaven as they sing:

*You are worthy to take the book and to open its seals:
For you were killed, and bought us for God with your blood,
Out of every tribe, language, people, and nation,
And made us a kingdom of priests to our God; and we will reign on eretz.
[Revelation 5:9-10]*

So, right there on the desert floor at the base of Mount Sinai, our ancestors modeled for us how and when to celebrate the *Passover*. All the natural-born Hebrews as well as the 'mixed multitude' of foreigners who had been engrafted into the Avrahamic line as we left Egypt gathered by households to dip unleavened bread made from manna in a concoction of bitter herbs. The hearts of all the fathers in the camp were turned to their children, and the hearts of all the children in the camp were turned to their fathers. The children of all tribes and tongues and nations that the Holy one had gathered to Himself at Sinai as the first fruits of worldwide redemption heard the redemption story from the mouths of their very own fathers and mothers. And there under the Great Sinaitic Chuppah, in the course of listening to the story, all who participated were marked forever as sons and daughters of the Covenant.

Commemorating the Passover in the shadow of the Sinaitic Chuppah must have been *dramatic*. It must have been *cleansing* and *healing*. It guaranteed that the children of those who walked out of Egypt untouched and through the Sea of Reeds dry shod would never look at the world - or for that matter the purpose of life on earth - the same way again.

Pesach Sheni - The Second Chance Pesach

Alas, some of us were not ready to *make Pesach* on the evening of 14 Aviv. Some wanted to, but could not, celebrate the identity-sealing and community-building memorial of *Pesach* with the other families of the redeemed community. What of those who were in charge of the bones of Yosef [Joseph] - which we brought out of Egypt with us - during that time period? What of those whose relatives died while we were encamped at Sinai?

The Holy One has been teaching us that contact with certain things, attitudes, and speech human beings encounter cause them to become '*tamei*' - KJV '*unclean, but more specifically* emotionally conflicted to the point of being in danger of coming spiritually - if not bodily - undone. As we have discussed in these studies, *tamei* status is a spiritual state of high alert that requires a temporary suspension of normal activities and associations, a season of complete concentration on and returning to the ways of the Holy One. Those of us who were *tamei* on 14 Aviv accepted our separation

from the community as the best thing for us and for our families. But should we thereby *be denied the joy of celebrating the Festival of our past and the rehearsal of our future deliverance?* Here is what our text tells us:

Vayehi anashim asher hayu t'me'im l'nefesh adam

There were certain men, who were tamei because of the life-force of Adam/a man,

v'lo-yachlu la'asot ha-Pesach b'yom hahu

so that they could not keep the Pesach on that day,

vayik'revu lifnei Moshe v'lifnei Aharon b'yom hahu

and they came before Moshe and before Aharon on that day.

Vayomru ha-anashim ha-hemah elav

And those men said to him,

anachnu t'me'im l'nefesh adam

"We are tamei because of the life-force of Adam.

lamah nigara levilti hak'riv et-korban Adonai

Why are we kept from drawing near the Holy One with korban Pesach

b'mo'ado betoch b'nei Yisra'el

in its appointed season among the children of Yisra'el?"

[Numbers 9:6-7]

“*What about us!*” these men cried to Moshe. What about the branches of the Great Tree of Life that were broken off? “*We want to meet with our Divine Bridegroom as a group, and remember and relive the events of our deliverance too!*” “*Ask the Holy One about us!*” Through no fault of their own these men were unable to both stay true to Torah and participate in the commemoration and prophetic rehearsal of *Pesach* with their families. What of these?

Uh ... Can I Get Back To You On That?

I suspect that Moshe and Aharon were puzzled by these inquiries. This had never come up before, and they had no immediate response. Torah puts it thusly:

Vayomer aleihem Moshe

'Wait here,' replied Moshe

imdu v'esh'me'ah mah-yetzaveh Adonai lachem

'I will listen for/hear whatever the Holy One says regarding you.'

[Numbers 9:8]

These men have stumped both *the prophet* [Moshe] and *the priest* [Aharon]! They have a *legitimate question* – and neither Moshe nor Aharon have a ready answer. But Moshe knows something much more important than the answer to every question – He knows *the Source of All Wisdom and Knowledge*. And so, with expectation born of intimate relationship He approaches that Source in humility, seeking counsel. The Holy One was gracious as always. Here is how Torah records

the counsel of the Holy One regarding these men:

Ish ish ki-yihyeh tamei l'nefesh

If any man of you or of your generations is tamei by reason of a life-force,

o veideirech rechokah lachem o l'doroteichem

or is on a journey far away, in any of your generations,

v'asah Pesach l'Adonai

he is still to make/do Pesach unto the Holy One.

B'chodesh ha-sheni b'arba'ah asar yom beyn ha-arba'im ya'asu oto

In the second month, on the fourteenth day at evening they are to make/do it;

al-matzot umerorim yocheiluhu

they are to eat it [the lamb] with matzah and with bitter herbs.

[Numbers 9:9-11]

I can almost hear the Holy One laughing with glee, clapping His Hands, as it were. *Yes, My Children. Always, yes. Celebrate! Commemorate! Keep your appointment with Me – even if you are late! I will gladly give you a second chance.*

Oh, that all His Children would be so eager to appear for His Divine Appointments and participate in His prophetic rehearsals!

A Warning: Please Do Not Reject the Pesach Lamb!

In contrast to the ones who *earnestly desired but could not* participate in the commemoration of Pesach and identify with the Lamb as their Deliverer, the Holy One foresaw that there would be others who *could* participate in the commemoration, and thus who *could* identify with the Lamb as their Deliverer, but who *would simply refuse to do so!* Go figure! But alas the Holy One was right - as always. Many today – out of ignorance perhaps, or because of centuries of false teachings and anti-Semitic bias – flat out refuse to celebrate the *Pesach*. The Holy One had this to say regarding such people: ***But the man who is tahor, and who is not on a journey, and still fails to make/do the Pesach ...***

v'nich'retah ha-nefesh hahi me'ameyha

that soul will be cut off from his people.

Because he didn't approach the Holy One through korban Pesach in its appointed season that man will bear his guilt.

[Numbers 9:13]

May none of us - or any of our children or relatives – ever fall into this category. Instead may all who have in the past for whatever reason failed to experience this aspect of our new creation identities make *teshuvah* [*i.e.* turn back to/reconnect with the Holy One and His Covenant ways] with sincere hearts. And next 14 Aviv, the Holy One willing, let us all demonstrate the fruit of our *teshuvah* together by completing the

return to the Divine Plan for our lives as set forth in Torah.

All Who are Hungry, Come and Dine!

What of those who want to commemorate Pesach and identify with the Lamb as Deliverer but who are not of “Jewish”⁶ descent? Or what of those who in the past have rejected the Lamb? For such persons there is and has always been in the Holy One’s economy *much grace* – and what is more, a place of honor at the *Pesach* table. Here are the Holy One’s specific instructions regarding “foreigners”⁷:

Vechi-yagur itchem ger

If a foreigner lives among you,

v'asah Pesach l'Adonai

and desires to make Pesach to the Holy One;

kechukat ha-Pesach uchemish'pato ken ya'aseh

according to the directions [I have given concerning] the Pesach shall he make it

chukah achat yihyeh lachem

You are to have one statute,

v'l'ger ule'ezrach ha-aretz

both for the foreigner and for him who is born in the land.

[Numbers 9:14]

There is not to be one set of instructions exclusive to natural-born Hebrews and another set of instructions for everyone else. All human beings, of all ethnicities,, all cultures, all economic and social classes, all nations, all households, and all individuals are called to follow the example of Avraham and break free of their personal, familial, regional, national, ethnic, cultural, class, and gender-specific norms and follow Torah’s definition of a ‘well-lived’ life. The *foreigner* can – is indeed being called to – participate just as fully as the natural-born Hebrew.

Are you a “foreigner”? Take heart - there is plenty of room for you at the table with the descendants of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov!

Questions For Today’s Study

1. As today’s aliyah begins we step backward a little bit in chronology.

[A] Which *mo’ed* [feast/Divine appointment] did the Holy One want B’nei Yisrael to celebrate right before leaving Har Sinai?

⁶ In the opinion of many the proper word would be “Israel” – which would include descendants of all 12 tribes descended from Ya’akov – not just “Jews” (a term frequently used to denote only those descended from the tribe of Y’hudah [Judah]).

⁷ For more information on “foreigners” observing Torah equally with natural born Hebrews – see Numbers 15:14-15, 29, and Deuteronomy 16:11, 14 and 31:12; particularly in regard to the end of days, see also Isaiah 14:1-2, Isaiah 56:5-8, and Ezekiel 47:22-23.

[B] In what month and on what day did they observe it?

[C] Imagine you are a Hebrew boy or girl from the tribe of *Y'hudah* [Judah] at the time this first feast is celebrated. Write an entry in your journal or diary about the celebration. Be creative and descriptive.

[D] Why were some unable to celebrate the feast at the stated time?

[E] What special arrangements did the Holy One make to give them a “second chance”?

2. Some take the position that the Passover and the rest of the Feasts are only for *B'nei Yisrael* [the natural descendants of Ya'akov] – not for “foreigners”. In verse 14 however a principle is laid down as to how foreigners who acknowledge the covenant the Holy One has with *B'nei Yisrael* are to relate to the Feasts.

[A] What is that principle?

[B] Go back now and read Exodus 12:43-45. How can these verses and Numbers 9:14 be consistent? [Hint: Was Exodus 12:43-45 speaking about *Pesach* in all years and generations – or was it speaking only about the initial *Pesach* in Egypt where the issue was whether or not the firstborn of Israel would die?]

3. In today's Haftarah verses the prophet Zechariah sees the fourth of his eight “night visions”. In this vision Zechariah sees Y'hoshua [Joshua] the High Priest standing before the Angel of the Holy One, with *Ha-Satan* there to make accusations against him. The following is an excerpt:

Now Y'hoshua [Joshua] was standing before the angel, clothed with filthy garments.

And the angel said to those who were standing before him,

"Remove the filthy garments from him."

*Then he said to him, "Behold, I have taken your iniquity away from you,
and I will clothe you with rich apparel."*

Then I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head."

*So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments;
and the angel of the Holy One was standing by.*

And the angel of the Holy One enjoined Y'hoshua, "Thus says the Holy One of hosts:

***If you will walk in my ways and keep my charge,
then you shall rule my house and have charge of my courts,
and I will give you the right of access among those who are standing here.***

[A] What was going on concerning B'nei Yisrael at the time these visions were given to Zechariah?

[B] With regard to the vision described in today's verses list the “cast of characters” who played a part in the vision.

[C] What was the ‘setting’ of this vision – *i.e.* where did it all take place?

[D] Prepare an outline listing in chronological order the events that transpired in this vision.

[E] What was the subject of the disagreement between the Holy One and Ha-Satan in Zechariah's 4th vision?

[F] What words and tone did the Holy One use when confronting Ha-Satan?

[G] Why did the Holy One tell the angels to take off Y'hoshua's clothes and put on new ones?

[H] What item of clothing was Zechariah most concerned with? What do you think this item of clothing signified? Why was Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet [not the Holy One or the angels] the one interested in Joshua having this item of clothing?

[I] As we have come to learn, in Hebraic thought garments are outward signs that reveal the wearer's inward spiritual condition. The 'clothing' which the Holy One requested be put on Y'hoshua was not merely a covering. Its spiritual content is specified in the first two phrases of verse 7 – when the Holy One creatively spoke over Y'hoshua, instructing Him to “*walk in My ways*” and “*keep My charge*”. In Strong's and Gesenius, look up the Hebrew words that are translated “*walk*”, “*ways*”, “*keep*”, and “*charge*” in this passage. Write each Hebrew word in Hebrew letters, with vowel points, then as transliterated into English, and write a Hebraic conceptual definition for each, focusing upon the *inward condition* which must be present for “Y'hoshua's robe” to fit.

[J] Likewise the “turban” which Zechariah requested be put on Y'hoshua is an outward evidence of an inner spiritual reality. The spiritual content of this turban is spelled out in the last three phrases of verse 7 – when the Holy One instructed Y'hoshua he was to “*judge*” the Holy One's “*house*” and “*keep*” the Holy One's “*courts*”. In Strong's and Gesenius, look up the Hebrew words which are translated “*judge*”, “*house*”, “*keep*”, and “*courts*” [and their primitive verb roots] in this passage. Write each Hebrew word in Hebrew letters, with vowel points, then as transliterated into English, and write a Hebraic conceptual definition for each, focusing what it means to wear “Y'hoshua's turban”.

4. Regarding today's reading from the apostolic Scriptures: Yesterday when *Shaul* [Paul] of Tarsus left off in I Corinthians 10:5 we saw Israelite bodies strewn across the desert like litter. In today's passage, Shaul discusses the “poison(s)” that killed them (and that threaten to kill us too if we do not cling to the Holy One with all our hearts).

*Now these things were our examples
to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.*

*Neither be idolaters as some of them were.
As it is written, "The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play."*

*Neither let us engage in perversions of sexuality as some of them did
and in one day twenty-three thousand fell.*

*Neither let us test the Holy One as some of them tested and perished by the serpents.
Neither grumble as some of them also grumbled - and perished by the destroyer.*

Now all these things happened to them by way of example,

and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

[I Corinthians 10:6-11]

[A] According to verses 6 and 11 why are the sins of our fathers and the bad things that happened among our ancestors recorded in Torah?

[B] List the things Shaul warns us not to do or be.

[C] For each of the things you listed try to find the passage in *B'midbar* [Numbers] or *Shemot* [Exodus] to which Shaul was referring. [Hint: use a Bible with margin references or an Amplified Bible].

[D] For each reference Shaul makes to a particular sin or sinful condition, describe the manner of death of the Israelites who habitually engaged in that sin or surrendered to that sinful condition.

[E] At the conclusion of verse 11 how does Shaul describe or refer to you and me - that is, who are we, according to Shaul?

*May you relive the events of your deliverance again today –
and may you never be the same!*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Revelation 2:1-7

To the angel of the kehillah⁸ in Ephesus write: "He who holds the seven stars in his right hand; He who walks among of the seven golden menorot says these things: "I know your works and your toil and perseverance, and that you can't tolerate evil men, and have tested those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and found them false. You have perseverance and have endured for my name's sake, and have not grown weary.

But I have this against you - that you left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and make t'shuvah, and do the primary mitzvot; or else I am coming to you swiftly, and will move your menorah out of its place, unless you make t'shuvah. But this you have, that you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the k'hillot. To him who overcomes I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of my God.

⁸ The traditional English translations “church”, “assembly”, and “congregations” are all dangerously misleading renditions of the Greek word *ekklesia*, especially in today’s confused state of religion when form has taken precedence over substance. The message of the vision we are discussing was not to any “local church” or synagogue, or indeed to any formal or informal religious body or organization – but simply to those in each city who have *sh'ma-d* the Holy One’s calling to Messiah, trusting in the Lamb for their salvation, wherever in the city they may be dispersed. The Hebrew word *kehillah* - meaning those who respond to the call (of the Holy One) - is therefore deemed preferable.