

Torah Portion Vayak'hel / Pekudei
Exodus 35:1 – 38:20

This Torah Portion takes its name from the first Hebrew word spoken in Exodus 35:1, Vayakhel, meaning “He gathered/Countings”. The verb *kahal* in Hebrew means “to assemble” so Vayak'hel means “and he assembled”.

At the end of the last Torah Portion Moses came down from off of the mountain with a shining face. After coming down he now assembles all of Israel so that they may hear the Word of Yahweh.

Moses begins with “remembering the Sabbath day”.

Why should we keep the weekly Sabbath? First of all, because it was a command from the Almighty.

I would like to share some reasons why it is important for believers in Yeshua today to keep the Sabbath day each week.

1. In Exodus 20:8 we find that it is the fourth commandment. So, why do most followers of Yeshua only keep 9 out of the 10 commandments? If you read the scriptures relating to the Sabbath day you will find that God had more to say about the 4th commandment than all of the others.
2. There is a key verse in Deuteronomy 6:23 that says “And He has brought us out from there (Egypt) in order to bring us in, to give us the land which He had sworn to our fathers.” In Deuteronomy Chapter 5 we find the commandments repeated. The Sabbath commandment is listed again in verses 12-15. In verse 15 notice that God adds something here that was missing in Exodus 20 regarding the Sabbath commandment.
“And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and Yahweh your Elohim brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm. On account of this Yahweh your Elohim has commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.”

Here we see that the Sabbath day commandment is attached to the coming out of Egyptian bondage and on account of this God commands them to keep the Sabbath.

How is this important for us today? The Sabbath day is connected to redemption and coming into the promised land. In Exodus 31:13 we are told that the Sabbaths are given as a sign between God’s children and Him forever.

Just as with all of the Appointed times of Yahweh – The SABBATH has a future fulfillment. All of God’s saints are looking forward to the day when we will enter his ETERNAL SABBATH in the millennial kingdom and then afterwards we will enter the New Heaven and the New Earth.

3. In Isaiah 66:22-23 we clearly see that the Sabbath day is still important to God when He is reigning as King.
“For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me,” declares Yahweh, so your seed and your name shall stand, and it will be, from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says Yahweh.”
4. Hebrews 4: 1-13
In verse 1 we find: - “While the promise remains of entering into his rest” –REMAINS – that means we have not entered into his rest yet. It is in the future. Some will not enter in because of unbelief.

We find that the children of Israel did not enter in because of unbelief. They were not able to enter into His rest, which was the promised land. The writer of Hebrews declares that we too can fall short of entering into His rest if we have unbelief. Entering into His rest is still a future event. Keeping the Sabbath is a picture of the future fulfillment of our entering into his rest. (Just as we I truly do not have salvation yet either- we will only truly have salvation at His return)

5. Hebrews 12: 25-29 “Watch that you do not refuse the one speaking”. They were warned but they refused to obey the warnings of what would happen if they did not heed his commandments. Also, they refused at the foot of Mt. Sinai to speak with him person to person but demanded a mediator, which they got in Aaron and his sons.

Now, we have a mediator – Yeshua- God himself. What will happen if we refuse to hear him speak to us. There is no priest to go to God for us – Yeshua is the mediator, the new High Priest. If we refuse His warnings then we will not enter into his rest. But I want to enter into His unshakable Kingdom (vs 28) which is going to be the future Kingdom of Rest.

6. Acts 3: 19-21 “ times of rest” - some translations say “times of refreshing” may come before the presence of YHWH. Refreshing means times of joy, peace, freedom from persecution and hardship, REST. The Heavens have received Him until the fullness of all things then He is coming to bring his Kingdom and eternal Shabbat. (Sabbath)
Isaiah 14: 1-3 Speaking of the last days and the restoration of Israel – this is when God is going to bring REST to his people.
7. Just as the first Exodus was tied to the Sabbath keeping – so will the last Exodus.
Jeremiah 16: 14- 15
8. You see, The SABBATH is a sign. Those who keep it recognize that we too will be delivered from our EGYPTIAN Bondage. The bondage of sin and this world of sin and strife.
9. The word for “rest” in Hebrew is “Shabbat” or Sabbath in English. According to ancient Aramaic Peshitta manuscripts the correct interpretation of Hebrews 4:9 is, “It is therefore the duty to the people of Yahweh to keep the Sabbath.”

I believe that we are standing on the threshold of our promised land. This is when we will enter into HIS REST- HIS ETERNAL Sabbath. THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF OUR GOD. YHWH SHAMMA - GOD IS PRESENT.

The problem is will we “guard” our souls to heed his warnings. To listen to the one who speaks from heaven. Will we keep His commandments and teachings. If not- we too can be like them and not enter in because of unbelief. I hope we don’t refuse to hear as they did.

Making confession in Yeshua for salvation is the easy part, but holding onto that confession and not succumbing to Satan’s deception and his seducing spirits and teachings is the challenge that we all face. As the Apostle Paul said it is he who “finishes the race”. This is the one that will enter the eternal Shabbat that is yet to come.

So, I keep Shabbat because I am commanded too, but also because it is a joy to know that I do it remembering His words that it is a sign between me and Him and I am practicing for my eternal Shabbat that is too come with the next great and final exodus of God’s children, when they enter into his eternal REST.

After Moses finishes instructions on keeping the Sabbath, he then addresses the area of contributions for the Tabernacle. We find that these offerings were to be of a willing heart. Whatever we do for Yahweh must come from a willing heart. Anything done otherwise will not stand the test of time but will be burned up as stubble. Sometimes we may do things out of obligation or because we want to look good and pious to others. God looks at the heart and its intent. Those things done out of obligation only or those things done so that we may look good in the eyes of others will not be accepted by God, although they may have been good deeds.

Portion Pekudei
Exodus 38:21 – 40:38

In Hebrew Pekudei means “accounting of”.

In this short Torah Portion Moses completes his accounting of the offerings which were to be brought for the Tabernacle construction. Aaron and the priests are given their clothing so that they may work in the sanctuary. Moses anoints Aaron and his sons making their appointment official. A cloud then descends upon the Tent of Meeting representing God's Holy presence as He fills the Tabernacle.

This portion represents the last reading from the book of Exodus. During non-leap years it is read along with Torah Portion Vayak'hel. When the additional month of Adar is inserted (during leap years) Pekudei is read alone.

A quick reference guide to the clothing of the priests may be appropriate here:

All priests wore:

The full length linen tunic

Linen trousers

A band of white linen as a turban

A linen sash bound above the waist

The High Priest had two sets of garments. One set was called the “**white garments**” and they were only worn on Yom Kippur. (Leviticus 16:1-4 then again in verses 23-24) These were linen trousers, linen tunic, linen sash, linen turban. He **ONLY** wore these on the day of atonement when he entered the Holiest Place. These white garments were like that of the regular priests.

The everyday garments were called “golden garments”. This garment consisted of: (Exodus 28:1-43) Breastplate, an ephod or ornamented vest, a robe, a tunic, a turban, sash, and linen underpants. The Ephod was made of (vs. 5 and 6) gold, blue, purple, and scarlet, and the fine linen.” Likewise, the breastplate was made of the same thing (vs15). The robe was made of all blue(vs. 31), the tunic of fine linen (vs. 39), the turban of linen (vs. 39) and the sash or belt of woven work (vs. 39) The plate of pure gold on the turban which said “Holiness to Yahweh” was held in place by a blue cord. The underpants were made of linen.

Notice that no shoes were worn by the priest as they ministered before Yahweh. They ministered to him barefoot.

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