

Sh'mini שמיני

“Eighth”

Shmini is the name of this week's Parasha. Shmini means eighth. The number eight signifies new beginnings. In this week's Parasha we learn that on the eighth day Moshe called Aharon and his sons to begin their priestly work. God gave specific instructions for how to properly worship Him. Through the work of the Kohanim (priests), sin could be atoned for and the presence of God would come before the people. The people could not approach God without coming to Him through the priesthood.

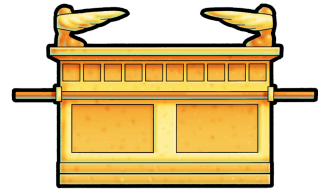
The priesthood could only approach God by following His instructions to do so. It is a grievous sin when the leaders that God has called to serve Him do not obey God. The priests (Kohanim) were set apart for the purpose of reflecting His glory for the world to see.

God gave them a set of instructions on what food would be appropriate for them to eat. This special diet is an individual's daily demonstration to the world that they trust and depend on God.

Focus Passage Leviticus 9:1-10:11

In Leviticus 9:1, on the eighth day (Sh'mini), Moshe (Moses) called Aharon, his sons, and the elders of Yisra'el together. Eight represents newness, and it has a Kingdom purpose. This Kingdom purpose for the Kohanim (priests) was to lead the people in the truth of God. This type of leadership produces faithful followers who are a blessing to the world.

And Moshe said to Aharon, “This is what the LORD spoke, saying: ‘By those who come near Me I must be regarded as Holy; and before all the people I must be glorified.’ ”
-Leviticus 10:3

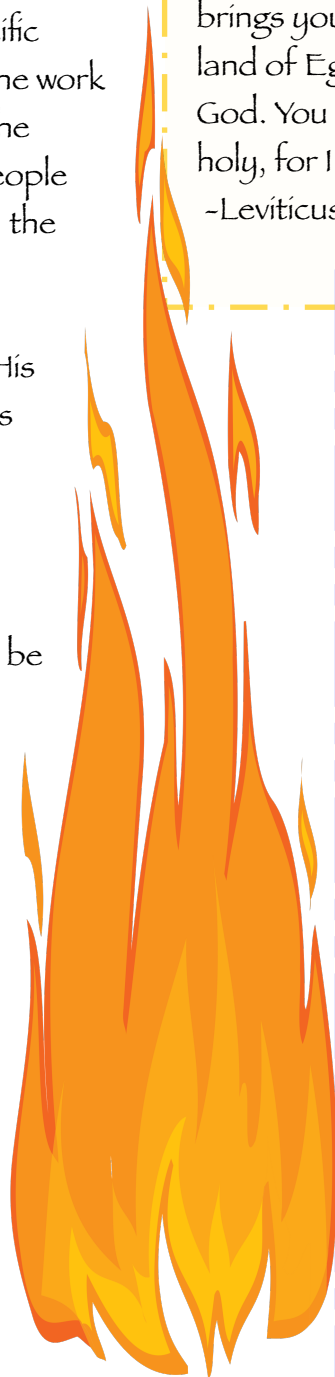


“For I am the LORD who brings you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God. You shall therefore be holy, for I am Holy”
-Leviticus 11:45

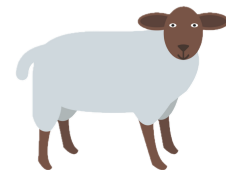
Pray First

Father God,
We praise You
because of Your
mercies. You have
provided a way for
us to worship You.
Teach us to worship
You according to
Your instructions
and not the ways of
man.
In Yeshua's Name we
pray,
Amen

Read Next:
Leviticus 9:1-11:47



The main purpose of the priest was to atone for sin and bring the presence of God before the people. Sin separated them from God. The work of the priest reversed the consequence of sin and brought them back into the presence of God. Today, because of the work of Messiah Yeshua on the cross, we can have forgiveness of sins. When we repent of our sins we can be in God's presence.



In Leviticus 9:7 Moshe said to Aharon, "Go to the altar, offer your sin offering (חטאת קרבן - korban hatta't) and your burnt offering (עלה קרבן - korban olah), and make atonement for yourself and for the people." Aharon and his sons did as they were told by Moshe and as the LORD commanded them. This showed submissiveness to God and His commands.



First Aharon offered the burnt offering on the altar. This offering enabled them to transition into the presence of God and worship Him. Then Aharon offered the sin offering as was commanded. This was a sacrifice for one who unintentionally sinned against a command of the LORD. Next Aharon presented the grain offering (מנחה קרבן - korban minchah). This offering was done because they wanted to worship God.

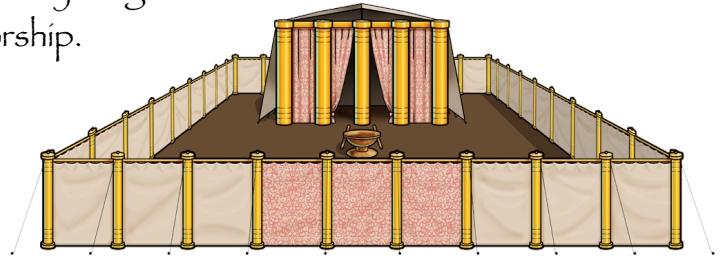
The final offering that Aharon offered in Leviticus 9:21 was a wave offering before the LORD. This signified the victory of God's will being accomplished. This chapter ends with Moshe and Aharon coming out of the Tabernacle of Meeting and blessing the people of Yisra'el. When they did this the Glory of the LORD appeared before all of the people. Fire came out before the Lord and consumed the burnt offering and the fat on the altar. When the people saw it, they shouted and fell on their faces. The fire confirmed God's acceptance of their obedient worship. Biblically based worship should be the priority of our lives.

In Leviticus Chapter 10 we learn that proper worship was not the priority of Nadav (Nadab) or Abihu (Abihu). Leviticus 10:1 says that Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aharon, each took his censor and put fire in it, put incense on it, and offered profane fire before the LORD, which He had not commanded them to do. The most grievous sin a leader can do is IMPROPER WORSHIP. Improper worship will bring about death. Improper worship is usually based upon how we think we should worship. This is what Nadab and Abihu were doing. They entered a restricted place because they wanted to worship God where they wanted to worship. The incense that they put on the censor was not what God told them to bring before Him. Nadab and Abihu would not have been there if they did not want to worship God, but they wanted to worship God where they wanted to worship God, how they wanted to worship God, and when they wanted to worship God. When we worship God our way it does not glorify Him. Leviticus 10:2 tells us that when they offered their offering to the LORD fire went out from the LORD and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Moshe commanded Eltzafan and Misha'el to carry Nadab and Abihu outside the camp. They took them outside the camp just as Moshe asked them to.

In Leviticus 10:6-7 Moshe gave instructions for El'azar and Itamar not to uncover their heads, nor tear their clothes lest they die, and wrath come upon all the people. When the leaders of God are not doing things according to the instructions of the Word of God, the people will receive God's anger. Restoration is now needed so that the people may worship God.

There are numerous benefits from worshipping God. Through worship we see things from God's perspective. We will have greater discernment when we worship, and we will be better equipped to serve God. In Leviticus 10:8-10 we learn that God instructed the priests on how to conduct themselves. God spoke to Aharon and instructed him to not drink wine or intoxicating drink, nor his sons, when they went into the Tabernacle of Meeting, lest they die.

We do not have a Tabernacle. Although we do not worship in the Tabernacle, this standard still applies today. We should not worship God having done anything that God forbids us to do when we approach Him in worship.



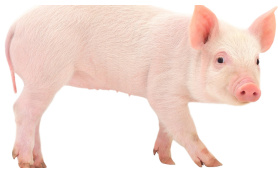
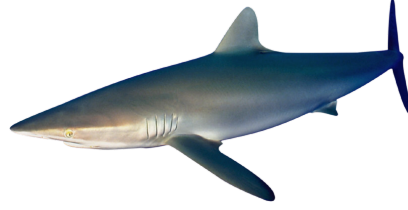
Leviticus 10:10 tells us that when we worship God properly we are able to discern what is holy and unholy, what is clean and unclean. Worship gives us insight. Correct worship positions us to be blessed by God, but incorrect worship brings about judgment. Worship is a matter of life and death, and failure to worship God correctly has disastrous consequences. When we worship God our way it does not glorify Him, and it will not be recognized by Him. We need to worship God according to His instructions, found in the Word of God.

As we reflect on this Parasha teaching we see that worship, when done correctly, will bring the presence of God and His blessing. Improper worship will bring death. Because of the work of Messiah Yeshua there is no reason to fear if you have unintentionally worshipped God improperly. You may be thinking, "I cannot worship God properly all the time," or that you have worshipped God improperly in the past and were not aware. This is why we have repentance for sin. Messiah died for us so that we could repent and be restored to Him. We are never going to be perfect. We all make mistakes and sin, but the man or woman of God is quick to repent of their sin so that they might experience forgiveness and restoration. Seek to make biblically based worship the priority of your life and repent if you have not. Ask yourself: is my worship pleasing to God?



Animals intended for food...

Put an 'X' over the animals God commanded us not to eat.



The animals God did not intend for food are the shark, the frog, the lizard, the snake, the pig and the crab.

A Deeper Dive

Pray First

Father God,
We thank You for Your
steadfast love.
Teach us to live in a way
that glorifies You.
May we seek to hear from
You so that we may
know the calling You have
for our life.

In Yeshua's name we pray,
Amen

Read next
Acts 10:9-22

In Acts 10, Peter, a disciple (תַּלְמִיד - talmid) of Yeshua, was on a journey and stopped to rest at a home in Joppa. Peter was hungry and while food was being prepared for him to eat, Peter went to the roof top to pray. Peter had a physical hunger, but he also had a spiritual hunger. His desire to pray was more powerful than his hunger for food. Peter wanted an experience with God. Now it was the sixth hour. Six is related to the grace of God. This alerts us that an event is about to happen that is related to the grace of God. In Acts 10:10 we read, "Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat but while they made ready, he fell into a trance." Acts 10:11 tells us that Peter perceived the heavens opening and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners was descending to him and let down to the earth. What Peter saw was a four-corner garment and the purpose of this vision relates to the commandments of God. Many have interpreted Acts chapter 10 incorrectly and thought this passage was about food, but it is not. Peter experienced a message about the kingdom.

In Acts 10:13 we read, "and a voice came to him, 'Rise Peter; sacrifice and eat.'" Peter was being called to be a priest (Kohen). In previous Torah lessons we have learned that the purpose of the priest was to serve God by teaching the people the truth about Him. In Acts 10:15, God continued to speak to Peter and told him, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." God was telling Peter if He cleanses it, it is not common. You might be thinking that this passage is about food. But God has called us to be students of the Word, and we need to look back at the beginning of chapter 10 to understand the context. In Acts 10:1 we read that there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion. He lived in Caesarea, the capital of the Roman empire in Yisra'el. Cornelius was a Gentile and a follower of Yeshua. In Acts 10:2 we read that he was "a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave generously to the people, and prayed to God always." And just before we read of Peter's vision, an angel of God came to Cornelius and told him to send for Peter.

Returning to Peter's vision on the rooftop, what we are learning as we read is that Peter is NOT having a vision about what food we should and should not eat. He was having a vision about the Gentile people. Messiah Yeshua, through Peter's vision, was reaffirming God's call to Yisra'el and telling Peter not to believe that Gentiles were unclean. At this time many believing Jews believed that



Sheep



Goat



Cow



Pig



Spider



Snake

Gentiles were unclean. Yisra'el's purpose was to minister to the Gentiles and to bring them the truth of God's Word so that the Gentiles might be members of the family of God. God desires Jews and Gentiles to be with Him in the kingdom. Peter was pondering this vision, wondering what this vision meant when the men that Cornelius sent arrived at the gate of the home.

The Holy Spirit spoke to Peter in Acts 10:20 and said, "Arise and go to them for I have sent them." Peter was being commissioned to go to the Gentiles. God's desire is for all people to come to Him, both the Jew and Gentile. It is through the forgiveness of sins, through the grace of God, and through the gospel message that we can be with God. Upon hearing from the Holy Spirit, Peter obeyed the calling of God and went with the men that Cornelius sent. The gospel message was going to the Gentiles! We are called to be people of the truth and share the truth of this message. Seek to participate in the things of God, pray as Peter did diligently so that you may hear the calling that God has upon your life. Follow the instructions that God gives you for your life so that you may point others to the gospel message of Yeshua and glorify God.

And a voice spoke to him again a second time,
"What God has cleansed you must not call
common."
-Acts 10:15

The name of this Torah portion is Sh'mini, which means "eighth." In Hebrew Sh'mini is written right-to-left with the letters Shin Mem Yod Nun Yod, like this:

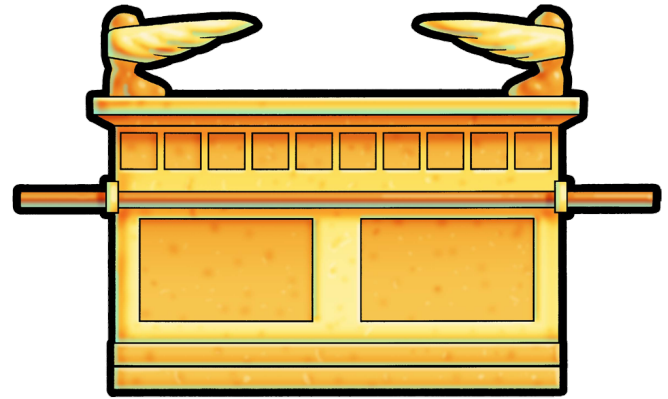
Yod
↓
Yod → שמיני ← Shin
↑ ↑
Nun Mem

Try writing it on the spaces below.

A Closer Look

Haftarah: 2 Samuel 6:1-7:17

In our prophetic reading we see that David desired to bring the Ark of God back to Jerusalem. The Ark of God represents the very Presence of God. David's desire to move the Ark of God back to Jerusalem was a correct desire, but in his excitement to accomplish this he failed. Uzzah touched the Ark of God when he should not have.

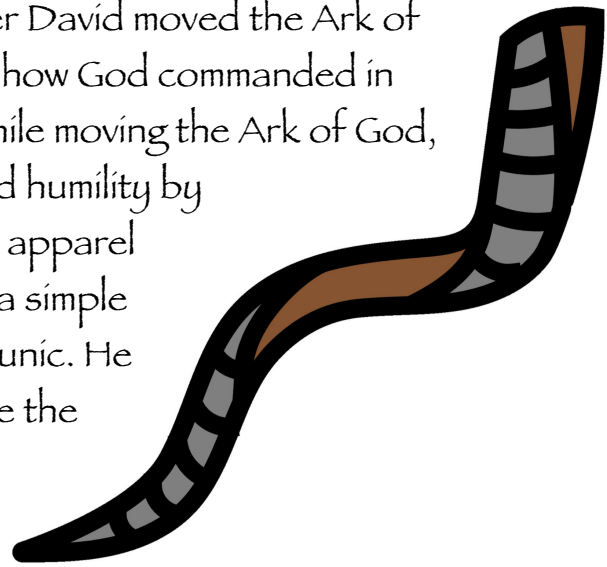


Ultimately this was because David attempted to serve God in his own understanding rather than consulting the Word of God for the proper way to handle the Ark of God. The result was the death of Uzzah, and disappointment and despair for David.

Then David danced before the LORD with all his might and David was wearing a linen ephod.

2 Samuel 6:14

Three months later David moved the Ark of God according to how God commanded in the Scriptures. While moving the Ark of God, David showed God humility by removing his royal apparel and dressing like a simple servant in a linen tunic. He



worshipped the Lord while dancing before the Ark of God. David also recognized God's provision by blowing the shofar.

The shofar symbolized God's provision. Worshipping God with a humble heart as we recognize His provision is necessary to draw closer to Him. When we approach God with humility, worship, and recognition of God's provision great change will happen in our lives as we seek to serve Him.