

# אֵמֹר

## Emor

(speak)

### Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 21:1-24:23

#### YHWH's Appointed Times

***Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 23:2***

***“Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them, ‘The feasts of YHWH, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, even these are My feasts.’ ”***

There are several terms in this passage and throughout this chapter that we need to define in order to understand what it is that YHWH is commanding us to keep and observe. The first word that we need to understand is the word which is translated into English as “feasts” in the above verse. This word appears twice in two different forms. The first appearance is מוֹעֲדַי – “mo’edei,” which is in the masculine plural construct and the second occurrence is מוֹעֲדִי – “mo’edai,” which is also in the masculine plural construct, but having the first person singular suffix.

In the first occurrence we find that this word is coupled with YHWH’s name, giving us the translation and understanding of “feasts of YHWH” with the word of coming from the construct form. The second occurrence gives us “feasts of mine” or as rendered in the above passage, “My feasts”.

The plural form of this word is often seen as מוֹעֲדִים – “mo’edim.” The singular form is מוֹעֵד – “mo’ed.” The root of this word is found in the Hebrew word יָעַד – “ya’ad,” which means “arrange and set specifics.” Thus we find in the meaning of מוֹעֵד the idea of an appointment, which in this case YHWH has made with His people, a divine appointment. What we then find is that YHWH is specifically making set-apart times in which He desires for us to meet with Him. The question then becomes: will we meet with Him during these times, or will we make up our own times and expect Him to come and meet with us? YHWH has some very specific things to say about this practice.

***Yeshayah (Isaiah) 1:14***

***“Your new moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; they are a trouble to Me; I am weary of bearing them.”***

Please notice that the wording of this passage is contrasted with the wording of the previous passage. Specifically, in the former passage we find that the mo'edei of YHWH are commanded to be kept and observed, by Him. However, His mo'edei are contrasted in the first passage with what YHWH refers to as your feasts, which He hates and is tired of bearing.

When a person or a group of people make up their own appointments and then have the audacity to believe that YHWH will honor those “holidays”, they had better go back to Scripture and reread and study what YHWH actually says concerning these matters. It is not something to take lightly!

The next word that we need to understand is actually a pair of words – מִקְרָאֵי קִדְשׁ – “miqraei qodesh,” which is translated in the above passage as “holy convocations.” The word מִקְרָאֵי is in the masculine plural construct form and is thus connected to the following word קִדְשׁ which altogether means “a set-apart gathering.”

The Hebrew word מִקְרָא – “miqra” comes from the root word קרא – “qara,” which means to *summon* and *cause change in direction* with the addition of the prefix מ which means *from*, or even more specifically, *to take part from a whole*. So when we consider this phrase מִקְרָאֵי קִדְשׁ in the context, YHWH is summoning His people to separate a few days from the whole so that they may be set-apart to Him and that we might be set-apart to Him as well in the process of obeying Him in this manner.

Then when we then read the next verse which also contains this same phrase, we learn something very important.

### ***Vayyiqra (Leviticus) 23:3***

***“Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day is a Shabbat Shabbaton, a holy convocation; you shall do no manner of work; it is a Shabbat to YHWH in all your dwellings.”***

Notice that YHWH commands us to make the seventh day of the week a weekly Shabbat and a מִקְרָא קִדְשׁ – miqra qodesh. Notice also that it is also to be a Shabbat Shabbaton, which we will deal with below.

It is interesting to note that when YHWH lists these mo'edim, these feast days, that He lists first of all the weekly Shabbat. Now there are those who teach that the weekly Shabbat is not a mo'ed. Those that teach this go through all sorts of mental gymnastics trying to prove that the weekly Shabbat is not a mo'ed or not an appointed time of YHWH, which is what “mo'ed” means. This does not make any sense to me. The seventh day of the week YHWH commands us to set apart. It is His Shabbat and He wants us to make it our Shabbat as well. This day is supposed to be a set-apart day, which is the very idea in the word “mo'ed.” Those that teach such silly things are trying to prove that it is a set-apart day, an appointed day by YHWH, but at the same time that it is not an appointed day. ???

However, when we look at the pashat meaning of this word מוֹעֵד – “mo’ed” and then look at the text of where this particular word occurs in relation to the seventh day Shabbat, surely one must conclude that YHWH’s seventh day weekly Shabbat is an appointed time from Him! And since it is one of His appointed days, then it is in fact a מוֹעֵד.

The next phrase that we need to understand is “Shabbat Shabbaton” - שַׁבַּת שַׁבְּתוֹן. We find this phrase in verse three above as well as several other places in this chapter of Vayyiqra. YHWH tells us that on the first day and on the eighth day of Sukkot is to be a “solemn rest”. But just exactly what is a “solemn rest”? The Hebrew word here in both cases is שַׁבְּתוֹן – “shabbaton.” This word is found thirteen times in eleven verses in the Torah Moshe; three of those in the book of Shemot (Exodus) and the rest of them in the book of Vayyiqra (Leviticus).

Several times this word is immediately preceded by the word שַׁבַּת – “Shabbat.” So the question before us is this: what is a “Shabbat Shabbaton”; and how do we properly understand the word “shabbaton”?

As we can easily see, the word “shabbaton” comes from the word “Shabbat.” The word שַׁבַּת – “shabbat” means “to stop work, curtail activity before completion.” שַׁבְּתוֹן – “Shabbaton” seems to be the compounding of שַׁבַּת and אָוֶן. Often when making compound words in Hebrew, letters are dropped, in this case the aleph is dropped adding the וֹן – “on”, which is pronounced with a long o sound as in the English word “own.” This word, אָוֶן means “to acquire.” So what we have with the word שַׁבְּתוֹן would mean “to acquire a cessation of work or an acquired cessation of work.” With the coupling of these two words together we would have an emphatic command not to work.

The word שַׁבְּתוֹן occurs with some of the mo’edim, but not all of them. It is important for us to examine these days that are shabbaton, and those that are not, and the reason why those days that are not shabbaton are not listed as such.

There are only four of the seven yearly high days that are spoken of in the Torah as being Shabbaton, days of complete rest. The other three days that are not Shabbaton, are not for very specific reasons, as we are about to discuss. Let us put these days before us in the form of a list for easy reference.

#### **Days listed as Shabbaton**

1. The weekly Shabbat – the seventh day of the week
2. Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement, the tenth day of the seventh month
3. Yom Teruah – the Day of Sounding, the first day of the seventh month
4. The first day of Sukkot – the fifteenth day of the seventh month
5. The eighth day of Sukkot – the twenty-second day of the seventh month
6. The Shemitah – the year of land rest

First let us examine the weekly Shabbat as a Shabbaton to see what this means so that we can apply this same standard set in the Torah to the other days.

***Shemot [Exodus] 16:23***

***And he said to them, "This is that which YHWH has spoken, 'Tomorrow is a solemn rest, a holy Shabbat to YHWH; bake that which you will bake, and boil that which you will boil; and all that remains over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.' "***

This passage is speaking of the weekly Shabbat on the seventh day. Notice that there is to be no cooking on this day. All the cooking is to be done before that day begins. This is a very important aspect of what makes a Shabbaton. We will come back to this again, so keep this in the forefront of your memory.

***Shemot [Exodus] 31:15***

***Six days shall work be done, but on the seventh day is a Shabbat of solemn rest, holy to YHWH; whosoever does any work on the Shabbat day, he shall surely be put to death.***

Working on the Shabbat carries the death penalty! There are no exceptions. Please brethren, do not try to reason this away with something like: you are under grace and YHWH knows your heart and He will understand. Stop! This is extremely serious. Your eternal life and well-being hangs in the balance here. Is this something that you really want to gamble with? Particularly considering that YHWH has already told us that working on the Shabbat carries the death penalty? What part of that don't you understand? So, are you going to obey His commandments or not?

Such is a Shabbaton. When a day is a Shabbaton, we are not to cook on this day, nor are we to work on this day!

***Shemot [Exodus] 35:2***

***Six days shall work be done; but on the seventh day there shall be to you a holy day, a Shabbat of solemn rest to YHWH; whosoever does any work therein shall be put to death.***

Here is a second witness that working on the weekly Shabbat carries the death penalty.

Next, we see that Yom Teruah, also known as the Day of Trumpets is a Shabbaton as well.

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:24***

***"Speak to the children of Israel, saying, 'In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, shall be a solemn rest to you, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, a holy convocation.' "***

Then we see from two separate passages that Yom Kippur or the Day of Atonement is a Shabbaton as well.

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:31***

***"It is a Shabbat of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict your souls; it is a statute forever."***

And again;

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:30-32***

***30 “And whatsoever soul it be that does any manner of work in that same day, that soul will I destroy from among his people.***

***31 You shall do no manner of work; it is a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.***

***32 It shall be to you a Shabbat of solemn rest, and you shall afflict your souls; in the ninth day of the month at even, from even to even, shall you keep your Shabbat.”***

Then we come to Sukkot, in which we find that both the seventh day and the eighth day are Shabbaton.

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:39***

***“Howbeit on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruits of the land, you shall keep the feast of YHWH seven days; on the first day shall be a solemn rest, and on the eighth day shall be a solemn rest.”***

Then just as a side note which we will need to deal with later in a separate study, the Shemitah year, or the year of the land Shabbat, is a Shabbaton as well. In this the land is to enjoy a complete rest. This does not necessarily mean that the owner of the land rests for the entire year, but that he is not to work his land.

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 25:3-5***

***3 “Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in the fruits thereof;***

***4 but in the seventh year shall be a Shabbat of solemn rest for the land, a Shabbat to YHWH; you shall neither sow your field, nor prune your vineyard.***

***5 That which grows of itself of your harvest you shall not reap, and the grapes of your undressed vine you shall not gather; it shall be a year of solemn rest for the land.”***

This is a brief examination of each of the ten verses where the word “Shabbaton” is found in the Torah, or for that matter, all of the Tanak.

The first and seventh days of Unleavened Bread are not listed as Shabbaton, and neither is Shavuot; but there are very good reasons why these three days are not listed as Shabbaton. Let us examine those reasons now.

Please note what the following passage teaches us.

***Shemot [Exodus] 12:16***

***“And in the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done by you.”***

YHWH gives us a very specific exemption for the first and last days of Unleavened Bread. That exemption is that food which we cook on those days, to be eaten on those days, may be cooked. It is for this reason, that these days are not called Shabbaton. It is for this very reason that Shavuot is also not a Shabbaton.

***Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 23:17***

***“You shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two tenth parts of an ephah; they shall be of fine flour, they shall be baked with leaven, for first-fruits to YHWH.”***

YHWH also commands us to bake two loaves of bread to be done on the day of Shavuot. Therefore, once again we see why YHWH does not call Shavuot a Shabbaton.

So we see that there are some very specific exclusions that YHWH gives to us concerning what days are Shabbaton. The days that YHWH calls Shabbaton, are days in which no work and no cooking are to be done. These days include the first and eighth days of Sukkot. However, the first and last days of the feast of Unleavened Bread are not Shabbaton and we may cook on those two days.

As YHWH restores His set-apart times, His feasts and His Shabbatot to us, let us be careful to follow what YHWH has said about His appointed times!

ABBA YHWH, teach us to faithfully guard Your appointed times in a way that is completely pleasing to You; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat shalom

Zerubbabel ben Emunah

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