



**Parsha Emor ~ "Speak"**  
**Beit Emet Congregation ~ Vancouver, WA**  
**Wayyiqra 21:1-24:23 ~ 5/14/05**  
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This week's *parsha*, like so many, picks up where last week's left off. If you'll remember, last week we read *Parsha Kedoshim* which means "set apart ones". This week, we continue with commandments and instructions in becoming "set-apart". In fact all of Torah is written to teach us "**Set-apartness**". But, of the five books of Moshe, the Torah, Wayyiqra speaks directly to every facet of our lives, as we have been learning together. Again, I will remind you that many English translations render the title of this sefer (book) as "Leviticus", which is a Greek title referring to the "Levites". However, in the Hebrew, it is Wayyiqra which means "And He Spoke". This is a very important theme throughout Torah. Yahweh spoke it. He did indeed write the "Ten Words" with His finger, in stone. But, He spoke those Words to all the Children of Yisra'el first. And, in the same fashion, Elohim speaks to Moshe in the opening of this *sidrah*.

This week we are reminded, first that the sons of Aharon, the Kohanim are set-apart. Let's begin with **Wayyiqra 21:1-12**; *And YHVH said to Mosheh, "Speak to the priests, the sons of Aharon, and say to them: 'No one is to be defiled for the dead among his people, except for his relatives who are nearest to him: for his mother, and for his father, and for his son, and for his daughter, and for his brother; and for his maiden sister who is near to him, who has had no husband – for her he is defiled. A leader does not defile himself among his people, to profane himself; they do not make any bald place on their heads, and they do not shave the corner of their beard, and they do not make a cutting in their flesh. They are set-apart to their Elohim and do not profane the Name of their Elohim, for they bring the offerings of YHVH made by fire, and the bread of their Elohim, and shall be set-apart. They do not take a woman who is a whore or a defiled woman, and they do not take a woman put away from her husband, for he is set-apart to his Elohim. And you shall set him apart, for he brings the bread of your Elohim, he is set apart to you. For I, YHVH, setting you apart, am set-apart. And when the daughter of any priest profanes herself by whoring, she profanes her father. She is burned with fire.*

*And the high priest among his brothers, on whose head the anointing oil was poured and who is ordained to wear the garments, does not unbind his head nor tear his garments, nor come near any dead body, nor defile himself for his father or his mother, nor go out of the set-apart place, nor profane the set-apart place of his Elohim, for the sign of dedication of the anointing oil of his Elohim is upon him. I am YHVH."*

Now, I think this is pretty straight-forward stuff, here. The **making** of a bald spot, the **shaving** of the corners of the beard and the **cutting** of the flesh, were all pagan practices that were used by certain groups to identify with the false elohim that they served. We see this today. Oh, and don't worry, we will discuss beards and side locks and all that stuff when Torah takes us there. As we've been learning on our journey through Torah together, while these commands are given to the Kohen, the priests; we know that Yahweh considers us priests and kings; because of the works of Yahshua our Messiah. We as priest and kings must not profane ourselves. Think about that for a moment. When we sin, even

when we wink at something we know Torah has instructed us is wrong, we profane ourselves.

Now, there is one verse here that caught my eye. **Verse 8** says; *'And you shall set him apart, for he brings the bread of your Elohim, he is set apart to you. For I, YHVH, setting you apart, am set-apart.'* So, the priesthood is set-apart because they bring the **bread** of our Elohim. So, what does that mean? Bring it where? Well, the Hebrew word here for "**bread**" is "**lechem**" (lamed-chet-mem), Strong's #3899. Now, when you look up the word "**lechem**" in Strong's or Gesenius' Lexicon and you'll see it means "**bread**", "**showbread**", "**food**" and "**banquet**". Well, the priest did bring the "**showbread**", representing the twelve tribes of Yisra'el, before Yahweh in the Mishkan (Tabernacle) and the Beit Mikdash (Temple). However, "bread", "food" and "banquet" all speak to the references of Torah being the "**Bread of Life**". And, among many references, Yahshua said in **Yohanah 6:30-36**; ***So they said to Him, "What sign then would You do, so that we see and believe You? What would You do? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it has been written, 'He gave them bread out of the heaven to eat.' "Therefore Yahshua said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, Mosheh did not give you the bread out of the heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread out of the heaven. For the bread of Elohim is He who comes down out of the heaven and gives life to the world." So they said to Him, "Master, give us this bread always." And Yahshua said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall not get hungry at all, and he who believes in Me shall not get thirsty at all. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and still do not believe." And, He continues in verse 47-51; "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me possesses everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of the heaven, so that anyone might eat of it, and not die. I am the living bread which came down out of the heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever. And indeed, the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."***

"But, Wait!" as the guy on the commercials always says, "There's more!". You see, "**lechem**" comes from the root word "**lacham**", which incidentally is spelled the same, just with different vowel points. Now "**lacham**" means to "**make war**" or "**to do battle**". So, in bringing the "**bread of Elohim**", the priest "**feeds**" the Children of Yisra'el and arms them for "**battle**". "**Lechem**" or "**lacham**" (lamed-chet-mem), what's in a word? Lamed is the shepherd's staff and means "**to teach**" or "**learn**". Chet means "**life**" and mem is "**water**". Because it's a final mem, it represents the water that flows deep within or hidden. Here with "**lechem**" we "**learn the living water**". By this, we make war, we do battle, against satan, yes; but more importantly against our flesh, our evil inclination. That's why it refers to the "**deep**" flowing water; it's deep within. By the way, the numeric value of "**lechem**" and "**lacham**" is 78, which equals "**b'av**" or "**a prayer**"; also "**melach**" which is "**salt**".

Now, let's go on in **Wayyiqra 21:13-24**; ***"And let him take a wife in her maidenhood. A widow or one put away or a defiled woman or a whore – these he does not take. But a maiden of his own people he does take as a wife. And he does not profane his offspring among his people, for I am YHVH, who sets him apart." And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Speak to Aharon, saying, 'No man of your offspring throughout their generations, who has any defect, is to draw near to bring the bread of his Elohim. For any man who has a defect is not to draw near: a man blind or one lame or disfigured or deformed, a man who has a broken foot or broken hand, or is a hunchback or a dwarf, or a man who has a defect in his eye, or eczema or scab, or is a eunuch. No man among the offspring of Aharon the priest, who has a defect, is to come near to bring the offerings made by fire to YHVH – he has a defect, he does not come near to bring the bread of his Elohim. He does eat the bread of his Elohim, both the most set-apart and the set-apart, only, he does not***

**go near the veil or approach the altar, because he has a defect, lest he profanes My set-apart places. For I am YHVH, who sets them apart.' ” Thus Mosheh spoke to Aharon and his sons, and to all the children of Yisra'el.** We discussed this section pretty thoroughly on Tuesday night during Torah study. And, we came to the conclusion that, regarding the priest having to be without physical defect, because the set-apart offerings were to be perfect and without spot or blemish, so would the one bringing the offering before Yahweh; that is the priest.

We have to understand that this is talking of more than just physical defects. Granted, just as the animals brought for the offerings, the **“qorban”** or **“drawing near”**; so too, the priest that was “drawing near” for himself and the people, had to be without defect. But, let’s look at the words used here for these defects. **Verse 17** says that no man with any defect **“shall draw near to bring the bread of his Elohim”**. The word here for **“defect”** is **“muwm”**, Strong’s 3971, meaning any **“physical blemish”** or **“moral stain”**. But, this gets very interesting. You see, “muwm” is spelled mem-aleph-vav-mem (there’s that final mem again at the end). Mem of course is **“water”**, aleph is **“master”** and the vav **“connects”**. So, the outer or upper water the master connects to the lower or inner water. All that in a defect. Bear with me here. Now, the numeric value of **“muwm”** is 87 which equals **“h’qabas”** or **“is washed”**, **“laban’eh”** or **“to be made white”**, **“I’ Mizbe’ach”** or **“at the altar”** and **“Ab Yada”** or **“Fathers knows”**. What a picture! Yahshua, the Bread, gave Himself, drew near for us. He could do this because He was without blemish. And, because of this, we can take our defect, our blemished self and be washed, made white at the altar before Elohim and be **“yada”** known of our Father.

Scripture also says, “not a **“blind man”**. While there are several Hebrew words for **“blind”**, this verse uses **“ivare”** which we learned last week has the connotation of having **“scales”** or a **“film”** over the eyes. This is often referred to as blindness in the spiritual sense. Then, there’s the **“lame”** man. Again, there are several words for **“lame”**. But here, **“pise’ach”** is used and it means **“to limp”**; but comes from the root word **“pesach”** which means to **“passover”**, again making a spiritual connection to a physical defect. Next we **“or disfigured”**. King Jimmy says **“he that hath a flat nose”**. The Hebrew word here is **“charam”** which is an interesting word. It’s Strong’s #2763 (chet-reish-mem) and means **“to utterly destroy”**, **“to put under the ban”** (which means with no possibility of redemption), to **“mutilate”** or **“split”** part of one’s body, to **“constrict the nose”** or better said **“to bore through the nose”** (as for a nose ring) so to lead a camel or beast about. But, it also means to **“be devoted to”** and is another word for **“consecrated”**. Here, we also have **“deformed”**. The KJV says **“anything superfluous”**. The Hebrew word is **“sara”** and means **“extended”** or **“stretched out”** and, according to Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon, refers to someone whose ears are too long or too big. This may be referring to the pagan practice of enlarging the earlobes; or it may mean listening to evil talk, or lashon hara.

Then, the passage goes on to mention a man with a **“broken foot”** or **“sheber regel”**. **“Sheber”** also means to **“break down”** or **“interpret”** as with a dream. **“Regel”** literally means **“of El”**. Now, while this suggests that it refers to someone who interprets dreams from Yahweh, the root word for **“regel”** is **“ragal”** and means **“to slander”** or be a **“tale bearer”**. So, the connotation here may not be tov. There’s **“broken hand”** or **“sheber yad”**. Now, **“yad”** is **“hand”**, but also **“time”** or **“sign”** along with **“interpreting”**.

Then, there’s my personal favorite **“hunchback”** or **“gibein”** which refers to someone who can’t straighten up. It also means to **“be cowardly”**. This is followed by **“dwarf”** or **“dak”** which actually means **“small”**, **“thin”**, **“gaunt”** or **“emaciated”**. Next we see a man with **“a defect in his eye”** or **“teballul ayin”**. **“Teballul”** means **“confused”**. So a man who’s confused in his vision or by what he sees, isn’t focused on Yahweh. Then there’s **“eczema”** or **“garab”** which refers to **“itching”** or a **“burning”** in the skin or flesh. In Hebrew thought, it refers to **“lust”**. Next is a **“scab”** or

**"yallepheth"** a rash or that **"which is contagious"**.

There's an interesting picture in this last one. We have the **"eunuch"** or **"eshek mero'akh"**. You see **"eshek"** is translated as **"stones"** and others as **"testicles"**. **"Mero'akh"** is **"bruised"** or **"damaged"**. This, I believe, is a picture of our ability, or lack thereof, to bring forth progeny, or add to the kingdom. "Eshek" is spelled aleph-shin-kaf which literally represents **"Master El Shaddai's palm"**. What?! Master El Shaddai's palm? Remember, in B'reshith 23 we have the account of Eliezer, Avraham's oldest servant, placing his hand under Avraham's thigh and swearing that he would take a wife for Yitzaq from Avraham's relatives. In like manner, Ya'aqob has Yosef swear to bury him with his fathers in Hebron. These men swore oaths by the seed of the Hebrew people. The seed of all Yisra'el is still in the palm of El Shaddai (El is Sufficient).

In the next chapter, Chapter 22, we have more on the set-apart offerings and the priests who are to bring them as a "drawing near" or "korban" before Yahweh. Following this chapter, we have the repeating of Yahweh's Appointed Times, His Mo'edim in **Wayyiqra 23:1-16**; **And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and say to them, 'The appointed times of YHVH, which you are to proclaim as setapart gatherings, My appointed times, are these: Six days work is done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a set-apart gathering. You do no work, it is a Sabbath to YHVH in all your dwellings. These are the appointed times of YHVH, set-apart gatherings which you are to proclaim at their appointed times. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, between the evenings, is the Passover to YHVH. And on the fifteenth day of this month is the Festival of Unleavened Bread to YHVH— seven days you eat unleavened bread. On the first day you have a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work. And you shall bring an offering made by fire to YHVH for seven days. On the seventh day is a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work.' "** And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, **"Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and you shall say to them, 'When you come into the land which I give you, and shall reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the first-fruits of your harvest to the priest. And he shall wave the sheaf before YHVH, for your acceptance. On the morrow after the Sabbath the priest waves it. And on that day when you wave the sheaf, you shall prepare a male lamb a year old, a perfect one, as a burnt offering to YHVH, and its grain offering: two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to YHVH, a sweet fragrance, and its drink offering: one fourth of a hin of wine. And you do not eat bread or roasted grain or fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your Elohim – a law forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, you shall count for yourselves: seven completed Sabbaths. Until the morrow after the seventh Sabbath you count fifty days, then you shall bring a new grain offering to YHVH"**. Now, this is what we are doing tomorrow. We're gathering for Shavu'ot, on the 50<sup>th</sup> day following the Feast of Firstfruits. Now it's true we don't have a priest to bring the grain offering to. However, we are gathering, as Torah commands, to celebrate the beginning of the wheat harvest. Remember, wheat represents mankind in Scripture. And, Yahweh fulfills His Word in season. I believe the next few months will see a harvest. Of course, we're also gathering tomorrow to commemorate the giving of Torah on Mt. Sinai and the gift of Ruach HaKodesh after Yahshua ascended to sit at the right hand of Elohim.

Now, let's continue with **Verses 17-32**; **'Bring from your dwellings for a wave offering two loaves of bread, of two-tenths of an Ephah of fine flour they are, baked with leaven, first-fruits to YHVH. And besides the bread, you shall bring seven lambs a year old, perfect ones, and one young bull and two rams. They are a burnt offering to YHVH, with their grain offering and their drink offerings, an offering made by fire for a sweet fragrance**

*to YHVH. And you shall offer one male goat as a sin offering, and two male lambs a year old, as a peace offering. And the priest shall wave them, besides the bread of the first-fruits, as a wave offering before YHVH, besides the two lambs. They are set-apart to YHVH for the priest. And on this same day you shall proclaim a set-apart gathering for yourselves, you do no servile work on it – a law forever in all your dwellings throughout your generations. And when you reap the harvest of your land do not completely reap the corners of your field when you reap, and do not gather any gleaning from your harvest. Leave them for the poor and for the stranger. I am YHVH your Elohim.’ ” And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, saying, ‘In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you have a rest, a remembrance of blowing of trumpets, a set-apart gathering. ‘You do no servile work, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to YHVH.’ ” And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, “On the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a setapart gathering for you. And you shall afflict your beings, and shall bring an offering made by fire to YHVH. And you do no work on that same day, for it is the Day of Atonement, to make atonement for you before YHVH your Elohim. “For any being who is not afflicted on that same day, he shall be cut off from his people. And any being who does any work on that same day, that being I shall destroy from the midst of his people. “You do no work – a law forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. ‘It is a Sabbath of rest to you, and you shall afflict your beings. On the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you observe your Sabbath.’ ”*

We’re not examining the Mo’edim here. We’re going to do that as each one occurs. For example, as tomorrow is Shavu’ot, in addition to doing what is commanded on Shavu’ot, Rob is teaching about Shavu’ot. However, I do want to point out a couple of things regarding Yom Kippur, or the Day of Atonement. First of all, in looking up “**Kippur**”, I found that Strong’s has it spelled wrong. In fact, they have the word “**Kephar**” (town or village) in place of “**Kippur**” (atonement); one reason to always double check. I don’t want to do an involved study here, today. However, since, after Shavu’ot tomorrow, we will be awaiting the fall Feasts and Yom Kippur is the second of those, there are a couple of things I want us to be thinking about in advance. This mo’ed is considered the most set-apart of the “*appointed times*”. Torah treats it as is does a weekly Shabbat, in that it says we are to do “**no work**”, not just “*no servile work*”. We are commanded here twice in 5 verses to afflict our beings and reminded that if our “souls” are not afflicted, we shall be “*cut off*” from our people, Yisra’el. Traditionally Yom Kippur is a day of fasting (both food and water). But, what does it mean to “*afflict you being*”?

When I looked up “**afflict**” I was surprised to find the word “**anah**”. “**Anah**” is one of those Hebrew words that has several meanings, that all have some application here I believe. For example, “**anah**” means to “**afflict**”, “**to be humble**”, “**to bow down**”, “**to weaken oneself**”, “**to sing solemnly**”, “**to cantilate**”, “**to answer a prayer**” (or receive an answer to prayer), “**to labor over something**” or “**to submit oneself**”. I don’t see fasting listed among these, you may think. Where did that come from? Perhaps it’s Talmud and we should not do it, “**traditions of men**” and all. Well, it is a tradition. But we must ask ourselves something here; “how do we keep this to afflict, humble and otherwise submit ourselves to Yahweh on this day”? Remember the theme of what we’ve been reading. As a nation, we draw near to Yahweh on this day to seek “**atonement**” (kippur). We’ve spent the last several weeks learning how to approach Yahweh. We now have a spotless, “*perfect*” Kohen HaGadol (High Priest) who made atonement for us. The church would have us believe that Sha’ul said in **Ibrim (Hebrews) 4:16** that we should “**boldly**” come before the throne of Elohim. Whether in the Greek, Aramaic or Hebrew, that would be better translated as “**openly with confidence**”. So how do we approach Yahweh to receive “**atonement**”? **Yonah**

**3:4-8** says; *And Yonah began to go in to the city on the first day's walk. And he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineweh shall be overthrown!" And the men of Nineweh believed in Elohim, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. And the word reached the sovereign of Nineweh, so he arose from his throne and took off his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he proclaimed and said throughout Nineweh, "By decree of the sovereign and his nobles: No man or beast, herd or flock, shall taste whatever – let them not eat, let them not even drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and call mightily to Elohim. And let each one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands.*

Now, let's return to **Wayyiqra 23:33-44**; *And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Speak to the children of Yisra'el, saying, 'On the fifteenth day of this seventh month is the Festival of Booths for seven days to YHVH. On the first day is a set-apart gathering, you do no servile work. For seven days you bring an offering made by fire to YHVH. On the eighth day there shall be a set-apart gathering for you, and you shall bring an offering made by fire to YHVH. It is a closing festival, you do no servile work. These are the appointed times of YHVH which you proclaim as set-apart gatherings, to bring an offering made by fire to YHVH, a burnt offering and a grain offering, a slaughtering and drink offerings, as commanded for every day – besides the Sabbaths of YHVH, and besides your gifts, and besides all your vows, and besides all your voluntary offerings which you give to YHVH. On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you gather in the fruit of the land, observe the festival of YHVH for seven days. On the first day is a rest, and on the eighth day a rest. And you shall take for yourselves on the first day the fruit of good trees, branches of palm trees, twigs of leafy trees, and willows of the stream, and shall rejoice before YHVH your Elohim for seven days. And you shall observe it as a festival to YHVH for seven days in the year – a law forever in your generations. Observe it in the seventh month. Dwell in booths for seven days; all who are native Yisra'elites dwell in booths, so that your generations know that I made the children of Yisra'el dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Mitsrayim. I am YHVH your Elohim.' "* Thus did Mosheh speak of the appointed times of YHVH to the children of Yisra'el. Of course, before we head out to the wilderness of the Oregon Coast, we will study this "appointed", Sukkot and how to observe it in depth.

Now, we'll quickly look at **Chapter 24**, beginning with **verses 1-4**; *And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Command the children of Yisra'el that they bring to you clear oil of pressed olives for the light, to make the lamps burn continually. Outside the veil of the Witness, in the Tent of Meeting, Aharon is to arrange it from evening until morning before YHVH continually – a law forever throughout your generations. He is to arrange the lamps on the clean gold lampstand before YHVH continually.* Here, B'nei Yisra'el is to bring the clear oil for the light and the High Priest is to arrange daily the lamps of the Menorah and keep it lit continually. The menorah represents the Torah. Remember **B'reshith 1:3**, after Elohim created heaven and earth, and the earth became formless (**toho** = **confused**) and empty, and darkness (**choshek** = **secrecy**) was on the face of the deep (**tehowm** = **the deep** or **the grave**), and the Ruach Elohim was moving on the face of the **waters (mayim)**, Yahweh said, "Let light (ohr) come to be. (**hayah** or **appear, come forth**) Now, the Hebrew word used here in verse 2 above for "light" is "**ma'ohr**". Now, we might expect to see the word "**ohr**" as in B'reshith 1. But, by adding the mem (or **water**) the light becomes "**illumination**", the exact meaning of "**ma'ohr**". In **Yohanan 8:12** Yahshua says; *Therefore Yahshua spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall by no means walk in darkness, but possess the light of life."* He also said to His talmidim in **Mattityahu 5:14-16**; *"You are the light of the world. It is impossible for a city to be hidden on a mountain. Nor do they light a lamp and*

***put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it shines to all those in the house. Let your light so shine before men, so that they see your good works and praise your Father who is in the heavens.*** In the Hebrew Mattityahu, the word used here for light is "***ma'ohr***", "***illumination***". So, the High Priest guards the Torah, the "***illumination***" unto Yahweh for the people.

Then, ***Wayyiqra 24:5-9*** tells us; "***And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it, two-tenths of an Ephah in each cake. And you shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the clean table before YHVH. And you shall put clear frankincense on each row, and it shall be on the bread as a remembrance portion, an offering made by fire to YHVH. On every Sabbath he is to arrange it before YHVH continually, from the children of Yisra'el – an everlasting covenant. And it shall be for Aharon and his sons, and they shall eat it in the set-apart place, because it is most set-apart to him from the offerings of YHVH made by fire – an everlasting law.***"

I especially love this part. Our High Priest prepares the "showbread", twelve cakes, or loaves, representing the twelve tribes of Yisra'el and, each Shabbat, arranges them on a clean table before Yahweh. Let's look at a couple of things here. The cakes are made of two tenths of an ephah of flour. Remember we learned a few weeks ago that one tenth of an ephah was worth a half shekel, as in the half shekel atonement and thus represented one man. So these cakes are made up of two men, or two witnesses for each tribe. Then, there are two rows of six cakes; which would equal two rows, each of twelve men. The rabbis teach that this is a picture of the twenty-four elders before the Throne of Elohim. Now, on the Shabbat, the High Priest arranges (***arak = to set out an array or lay out to compare***) them before Yahweh. It's like Yahshua arrays them before Yahweh to examine them or compare the growth or progress each Shabbat. Then each week, as the tribes are renewed so to speak and the loaves replaced and examined, the priests did eat of the previous week's cakes. Since Yahweh's portion is His people, this is symbolic of the priest's set-apartness toward Yahweh to minister to His portion.

We'll finish with ***Chapter 24:10-23***; ***And the son of an Yisra'elite woman, whose father was a Mitsrite, went out among the children of Yisra'el. And the Yisra'elite woman's son and a man of Yisra'el strove in the camp. And the Yisra'elite woman's son blasphemed the Name, and cursed. So they brought him to Mosheh. Now his mother's name was Shelomith the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan. And they put him in under guard, that it might be declared to them at the mouth of YHVH. And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, "Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and all those who heard him shall lay their hands on his head, and all the congregation shall stone him. And speak to the children of Yisra'el, saying, 'Anyone who curses his Elohim shall bear his sin. And he who blasphemes the Name of YHVH shall certainly be put to death, and all the congregation certainly stone him, the stranger as well as the native. When he blasphemes the Name, he is put to death. And he who smites the life from any man shall certainly be put to death. And he who smites a beast repays it, body for body. And when a man inflicts a blemish upon his neighbor, as he has done so it is done to him: 'fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; as he inflicts a blemish upon him, so it is done to him. And he who smites a beast repays it, and he who smites a man to death is put to death. You are to have one right-ruling, for the stranger and for the native, for I am YHVH your Elohim.'*"** And Mosheh spoke to the children of Yisra'el, and they brought the one who cursed outside the camp, and stoned him with stones. And the children of Yisra'el did as YHVH commanded Mosheh.

To understand the incident of the blasphemer in this closing section of our parsha, we need to remember that the son of the Yisra'elite woman (whose father was Egyptian) was the issue of an

illicit relationship. This parsha centers on the special purity and set-apartness of the priests. But, here we have the product of a forbidden union fighting with an Yisra'elite and, in the process, blasphemes the Name of Yahweh. The mother's name is indeed interesting. **Shelomith** means **peaceful** and **Dibri** means **words**. The rabbis teach that we are given this information in order to remember this point. While "**peaceful words**" should have prevailed here, this man chose his words in anger and contempt. The Hebrew word here for "**blasphemed**" is "**naqab**" which also means to "**pronounce a curse upon**", "**pierce**", "**stab**", "**bore a hole in**" or "**do violence upon**". It is these verses that the rabbis use to justify forbidding the pronouncement of Yahweh's Name.

What a fitting climax to the last few weeks' teachings. We've learned not to draw near to Yahweh unless we are washed clean, focused and set-apart. All of these Yehudah, as a rule, has taken great care to do. Ephraim, when he has bothered to approach Yahweh at all, has brought all manner of "strange fire". He has indeed considered Torah as a strange thing. But, Yehudah has built so many fences around Torah that they many times can't see it anymore. In order not offend Yahweh, their Husband, they refuse to say His Name. Earlier, I referred to Ibrim 4:16 in coming before Yahweh's Throne in confidence. That's what this is about. If we believe that Yahweh is our Salvation, our Deliverance, by His Mighty Right Arm (Yahshua) and we draw near to Him cleansed, in "humbleness" and in "set-apartness" then we can call upon His Name in confidence. Because we become a people called by His Name. As Yahweh declared over us in **Yeshayahu 43:1-11**; ***But now, thus said YHVH, your Creator, O Ya'aqob, and He who formed you, O Yisra'el, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by your name, you are Mine. When you pass through the waters, I am with you; and through rivers, they do not overflow you. When you walk through fire, you are not scorched, and a flame does not burn you. For I am YHVH your Elohim, the Setapart One of Yisra'el, your Savior; I gave Mitsrayim for your ransom, Kush and Seba in your place. Since you were precious in My eyes, you have been esteemed, and I have loved you. And I give men in your place, and peoples for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you. I shall bring your seed from the east, and gather you from the west. I shall say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not keep them back!' Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth – all those who are called by My Name, whom I have created, formed, even made for My esteem." He shall bring out a blind people who have eyes, and deaf ones who have ears. All the nations shall be assembled, and the peoples be gathered. Who among them declares this, and show us former events? Let them give their witnesses, to be declared right; or let them hear and say, "It is truth." "You are My witnesses," declares YHVH, "And My servant whom I have chosen, so that you know and believe Me, and understand that I am He. Before Me there was no El formed, nor after Me there is none. I, I am YHVH, and besides Me there is no savior."***