

Shemini Atzeret The Eighth Day Basics 101

Numbers 29:35-38 "On the eighth day hold an assembly and do no regular work. Present an offering made by fire as an aroma pleasing to YHVH, a burnt offering of one bull, one ram and seven male lambs a year old, all without defect. With the bull, the ram and the lambs, prepare their grain offerings and drink offerings according to the number specified. Include one male goat as a sin offering."

Last week we studied the Feast of Sukkot and the wedding supper of the Lamb. This week we look at the last and eighth day of this feast called Shemini Atzeret. It is interesting that the Scriptures given for the readings start in Deuteronomy 14:1-19, where we are brought back to the pattern of the Tabernacle and its function. The lesson begins with clean and unclean foods. This might seem like an unusual place to start, unless we have the understanding of being a royal priesthood and holy nation. It starts with knowing the difference between clean and unclean and how to avoid defilement of the Tabernacle. At the Feast of Tabernacles we should know how to walk in it.

Clean and Unclean

Today our bodies represent the Tabernacle/Temple. That is why the scriptures for the day start with the teaching of clean and unclean. The rabbit, camel, pig, pork and bacon, shrimp, lobster, octopus and crab, and meat with *blood* and *fat* are all unclean (not to be considered as a food), and can defile our bodies. Participating in such consumption would cause a priest to forfeit his service in the Holy Place, as nothing defiled enters the sanctuary. We can serve *man* in a type of "outer court ministry", but serving *YHVH* in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle is for those who obey and walk in His ways, not their own. The eighth day, Shemini Atzeret, is considered to be a day of Most Holy Place ministry (1 Corinthians 3:16-17).

Why is this so important? The Levitical priesthood was a shadow and a type to show us YHVH's order and how to approach a Holy God. Today, believers who walk in Yeshua's ways are His priesthood. Yeshua is our High Priest in the order of Melchizedek from the tribe of Judah. There is a calling on our lives. Peter says we are a royal priesthood and a holy nation who stumbled over the (His) message (Exodus 19:5-6; 1 Peter 2:5-13). The twelve tribes are presently returning to YHVH's ways and are no longer stumbling over the message but rather are embracing it and walking in it. We have received the same instruction as the Children of Israel did in the wilderness - the Law of Moses. It is our possession as the assembly of Jacob and our wedding gift. We are coming home to serve in THE Tabernacle and the foods we consume is one of the foundations of His Kingdom.

The Tithe

The next reading for Shemini Atzeret is Deuteronomy 14:22-29 about tithes. Again this is one of the main foundations in the Tabernacle. Without tithes/offerings there would be no Tabernacle in the wilderness. Ultimately it was the Israelite's tithe/offering that built the Tabernacle. Tithes also maintained it and sustained those who served in it, the priests. This is true today. Without tithes there is no functioning body of Yeshua. Not bringing the full tithe causes a breakdown and separation of YHVH's plan and blessings in our lives - not that YHVH failed, but we failed attending to His requests of us. Once the tithe is given to Him we no longer have rule over it, as it is our *sacred portion* to Him. Ananias and Sapphira kept back part of the *sacred portion* for themselves. As a result, they died and were no longer part of the assembly (Deuteronomy 26:13; Acts 5:1-11).

We are told in Leviticus 23:36, "On the eighth day you shall observe a sacred occasion and bring an offering by fire to YHVH; it is a solemn gathering: you shall not work at your occupations." The equivalent Hebrew word for solemn gathering is Strong's # 6161/TWOT 1675c from the root word *atsar* meaning to restrain, limit, gather, and sum up.

The sacred assembly, called in Hebrew *miqra*, designates the weekly Sabbaths and the new months (Leviticus 23:2; Ezekiel 46:3; cf. Isaiah 66:23). However, its most usual meaning is reserved for the seven special convocational Sabbaths, YHVH's Feast days. The sacred assemblies included a formal summoning of people to worship by the blast of trumpets (Numbers 10:2, 10). Physical presence was mandatory for males on the three pilgrimage feasts: Passover, Shavuot and Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14,17).

The eighth day of Tabernacles is to be a solemn assembly. Stone's Edition Chumesh says, "A day of restriction (a day of non-work) much like a Sabbath. It is a requirement that the pilgrims remain in Jerusalem for an extra day. YHVH is saying, 'Make a small banquet for Me so that I can enjoy your (exclusive) company.' This can be likened to a king who ordered his servants to make a great banquet. When it was over, he asked his dearest friends to arrange a small meal where he, the king, could enjoy their intimate company. So, too, following the offerings for the nations, YHVH longs for the company of His own nation (bride) as she lingers this one extra day." A day is as a thousand years to YHVH. May we linger with Him a thousand years. Those who keep this extra day enter into the millennial.

2 Peter 3:8-12 "But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With YHVH a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day (eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Shemini Atzeret). YHVH is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of YHVH will come like a thief (Yom Teruah). The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid

bare (Yom Kippur). Since everything will be destroyed in this way, *what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.*"

What else can we find in Scripture about the eighth day? First, in Exodus 22:30 we are told that newborn animals could not be offered up for sacrifice until they were eight days old. Second, priests did not start their service to YHVH until the eighth day, after seven days of consecration (Leviticus 9:1). Third, circumcision for a male child happened on the eighth day (Leviticus 12:3). So too we see that people with skin afflictions and bodily discharges were unclean seven days; only then were they able to re-enter the camp on the eighth day after their status change (Mikvah cleansing) (Leviticus 14:10, 23 and Lev.15). The days of the Passover observance, and Feast of Unleavened Bread combine for a total of eight days. The counting of the Omer is a seven-week count from Unleavened Bread to the Feast of Shavuot, where on the start of the eighth week they received YHVH's teaching and instruction at Mount Sinai. The Feast of Tabernacles is a seven-day feast with an extra day called the eighth day, eight signifying "new beginnings".

It was believed Yeshua was born on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles as His circumcision is recorded in scripture when He was eight days old. "And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, His name was called Yeshua, which was so named of the angel before He was conceived in the womb" (Luke 2:21).

In 2 Chronicles 7:1-10 / 1 Kings 8: 54-66 Solomon dedicated the Temple in a celebration that lasted seven days. He consecrated the middle part of the outer court and dedicated the altar during those seven days. Then they continued their celebration, entering right into the Feast of Tabernacles the following seven days. On the eighth day of the Feast of Tabernacles they held a solemn, closing assembly (Shemini Atzeret). *On the 23rd of the seventh month Solomon sent the people home.*

Note: All through Scripture the eighth day appears to be a solemn or closing of the assembly. We also see in Solomon's dedication that on the ninth day the people were sent home. No celebration of Simchat Torah.