

Counting of the Omer 2024

Day 3

by Marc Gravelle

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Psalms 119: 17-24

I decided this morning to concentrate on what obedience is, because I am in awe of what our heavenly Father has promised us, **IF** we will willingly and lovingly turn to Him with a surrendered contrite obedient heart. While the blessings are way too numerous to delineate, there are two *verses* in *Deuteronomy* that jump out at me, and **IT IS** directed at those people who willingly choose to believe and **OBEY** the Words of our heavenly Father that are contained in His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life. *Deuteronomy 28:1-2* *And it shall come to pass, IF you shall hearken diligently unto the Voice of Yahweh your Elohim **TO OBSERVE AND TO DO ALL** His Commandments which I Command you this day, that Yahweh your Elohim **WILL** set you on high above **ALL** nations of the earth: 2 **And ALL THESE BLESSINGS SHALL COME UPON YOU, AND OVERTAKE YOU, IF you WILL** only hearken (*shemah*) unto the Voice of YHVH your Elohim.*

Now, as you read today's recommended readings, think of the implications of this promise that Yahweh gives to all people who willingly choose to believe, follow, and **OBEY** the Words of His Torah of life, and see what it does for your spirit. As for me, when I think or meditate on these two *verses*, I am simply in awe of who **IT IS** that we have chosen to serve, and I can't wait to get into the Scriptures and see what other wonderful promises He has in store for us.

Psalm 23:1-7

1 Yahweh is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul: he leads me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over. 6 Surely, goodness and mercy shall follow me, all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of Yahweh for ever.

Today, in *Psalm 23*, I would like to concentrate on the first part of *verse 2*, *He makes me to lie done in green pastures*. The fact that the Psalmist believes that Yahweh makes him lie down, tells us that he, the Psalmist feels absolutely safe in the presence of Yahweh, he feels so safe that he can lay down and fall asleep, because he knows in his heart and soul that Yahweh will protect Him, as He promised He would do for all people who willingly choose to believe, follow and obey all the Words of His Torah of Life. Now that is not all the Psalmist says, he also points to that the place that Yahweh has him lay down is Green Pasture, **בְּנֵאוֹת יִשְׁאֵל**, BiNot, is from the word, Na'ah, **נָאָה**, which means to be comely, be befitting, was becoming, was beautiful, he adorned, decorated, beautified, he took pleasure in, it also means, dwelling, habitation, pasture, meadow, Deshe, **דֶּשֶׁה**, means, to spout, shoot, grow, to swell, sprout, it grew green, sprouted, was covered with grass, green grass, green herbage, season of grass, spring, field, lawn. Now as we look at the definition of the

words that speak of the place where Yahweh had the Psalmist lie down, we see that, it is a beautiful place, that is befitting of a person who has willingly chosen to surrender their hearts, minds, souls and strength to Yahweh, and, that, that place, will end up being the Psalmists permanent residence, as long as he keeps believing following and obeying the Words of the Father's Torah of Life, for Scripture makes it very clear, that when any one chooses to walk on Yahweh's Path of righteousness, when they willingly choose to observe the Words of the Father's Torah, then their Torah obedient Life, will sprout, and blossom into a Life that is filled with Yahweh's many blessings, for Yahweh's blessings are activated by surrendered obedience to His Words of Life. Amein

Psalms 119: 17-24

Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live and keep (guard) Your word (Torah). Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Torah. I am a stranger in the earth; do not hide Your Commandments (Torah) from me. My soul is crushed with longing after Your ordinances (Torah) at all times. You rebuke the arrogant, the cursed, who wander from Your Commandments (Torah). Take away reproach and contempt from me, for I observe Your testimonies (Torah). Even though princes sit and talk against me, Your servant meditates on Your Statutes (Torah). Your Testimonies (Torah) also are my delight; they are my counselors."

One thing that we can be **assured of** when we obey Yahweh's Commandment to count the Omer each day, throughout the fifty days, and that is, that many other people throughout the world are following a similar routine. They may have a different meditation or method for turning to our heavenly Father, **BUT, IF** they are seeking to be **obedient** to His **WAYS**, they are being blessed with whatever the Father has to give them. Thankfully, our Creator **IS** primarily looking at the individual heart's desire, to please Him, because of one's inherent love for the Elohim of Abraham, Yitzchaq and Ya'aqov. In many respects, this confirms to me, that there are a great number of people, throughout the world, who are actually complying with some of the admonitions declared by the Apostle John in his epistles:

*Beloved, **IF** our heart **DOES NOT** condemn us, we have confidence before Elohim; and whatever we ask, we receive from Him, **BECAUSE** we **KEEP His Commandments** and **DO** the things that are **pleasing** in His sight. This **IS** His Commandment, **THAT**, we believe in the Name of His Son Yeshua the Messiah, the Words of the Living Torah made flesh, and **LOVE one another**, just as He Commanded us. The one who **KEEPS** His Commandments abides in Him, and He in him. We **KNOW** by this, that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us. (1 John 3: 21-24, Ezekiel 36:26-27).*

*Whoever believes that Yeshua is the Messiah **IS** born of Elohim, and **whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him**. By this we know that we love the children of Elohim, **WHEN** we love Elohim and obey His Commandments. **FOR THIS IS THE LOVE OF ELOHIM, THAT WE KEEP His Commandments, and His Commandments are not burdensome**. For whatever is born of Elohim overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world, our belief, (our emunah, our trust in Him, and His absolute **TRUTH** that can only be found in His Word, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of life). *Who is the one who overcomes the world, **BUT** he who **BELIEVES** that Yeshua **IS** the Son of Elohim? (1 John 5:1-5).**

The evidence of the love of Elohim **IS** very apparent throughout Scripture, **BUT** especially in this season of anticipating the day when the Feast of Weeks, or *Shavuot, Pentecost* is celebrated. The expectation is that something wonderful **IS** going to happen, as we deliberately draw closer to our heavenly Father through meditating upon His Word and count the Omer as we have been commanded to do. As the Psalmist reminds us today, even when reproach and contempt arise because of our desire to observe the Commandments, the Torah of Mosheh, we **MUST** continue to meditate and observe the Torah of our Most High Elohim.

*Verses 22-23 Take away reproach and contempt from me, for I **OBSERVE** Your Testimonies. Even though princes sit and talk against me, Your servant meditates on Your Statutes.*

In other words, our love for Him and our belief in Him, **IS** to be so great, that obedience to His Statutes, Commands, Ordinances and Regulations, **IS** the desire of our heart. Our belief **WILL BE** strengthened, when we think about that reality, and consider the facts that there are millions of people sprinkled around the globe with the same love and desire to please our heavenly Father by obeying His Commandments. We need to couple those wonderful thoughts, with the *Omer count* as we look forward to celebrating the Feast of Weeks on the fiftieth day.

When we do that, when we contemplate on the fact that many other people are obeying our heavenly Father and are counting the Omer, we will come to realize that many of those who participate in Shavuot convocations, are people who truly love the Messiah, the Words of the Living Torah of Mosheh made flesh, and desire to obey our heavenly Father's Commandment to gather together at **HIS APPOINTED TIMES**. Then you can begin to fathom some of the expectations that must have come into the minds of the Apostles, and even the one hundred twenty disciples that were gathered together in the Upper Room, after spending forty days with Messiah in His resurrected glorified state, during this time of *counting the Omer*. For as you know, just prior to His ascension, before He left His Disciples (*the people who really loved Him and desired to obey the Father's Commandments*), He made the following gesture.

*To these, He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of **forty days** and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of Elohim. Gathering them together, He **Commanded** them **NOT** to leave Jerusalem, **BUT** to wait for what the Father had promised, Which, He said, you heard from Me; for John immersed you in water, **BUT** you will be immersed in the Holy Spirit not many days from now (**Acts 1:3-5**).*

What promise was that, you might ask? First, at the Last Seder, as recorded in the Gospel of John, Yeshua promised to send the Helper, or Comforter, who we now know, is the Holy Spirit of our heavenly Father. *I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever. (**John 14:16**).*

Then, Yeshua said to the Disciples at the Inn on the road to Emmaus, on this, the first day of the Feast of Firstfruits, which was Sunday morning, He said, *And, behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: **BUT** tarry in the city of Jerusalem, until you are clothed, covered with power from on high.* Yeshua is telling us in *Luke 24:49*, that all the people who willingly and lovingly choose to believe, follow, obey and **DO** the Father's Torah of Life, **WILL** be clothed or covered with the

power of His Holy Spirit, power that comes directly from the Father, through His Comforter, His Holy Spirit.

Just imagine, as the followers of the Messiah were gathering in Jerusalem for the Feast of Weeks, and as they were counting the Omer for the fifty days between the early Feast of Firstfruits or *Yom HaBikkurim* celebrated during the Feast of Unleavened Bread, after the ascension of Yeshua, the last ten days were filled with great anticipation of what we, today, in our English Bibles, refer to as the Day of Pentecost.

Of course, we know that on that particular *Shavuot*, two thousand years ago, the promise of Yeshua, of His people being clothed or covered with the power of the Father's Holy Spirit were manifested as per Yahweh's promise, to over 3,000 souls who were gathered to celebrate the feast.

So, with all due respect to the First Century Saints, there **IS** once again a group of followers, who have the Testimony of Yeshua the Messiah and **KEEP** and **OBEY** the Commandments of Yahweh Elohim, and while I understand that we are ***all in various stages of complying with His Commandments***, nevertheless, there is a definite increased attempt on a worldwide basis, to ***KEEP the Passover and some of the other Feasts as well***. To these people, that are attempting to return to the Ways of our heavenly Father, there are many questions yet to be answered, and even though I am sure that there are, and will continue to be debates, over how, who, why, when, where and what should be done, the fact still remains, that the time that we now live in, **IS** quite similar to the years when the Messiah walked the earth; for once again, there is a group of people developing, who are actually trying to comply with the Scriptural description of the future saints, who have been prophesied in John's book of Revelation. These are men and women who have willingly chosen to surrender their hearts of flesh to Yahweh, and **BELIEVE** the testimony of Yeshua and obey the Commandments, the Torah of the most High Elohim. (*Revelation 12:17; 14:12*).

So enjoy this time of *counting the Omer*, because in doing so, you **WILL HAVE** the opportunity to be among the ***obedient ones***, in whom Yahweh delights, people, who are not only known by the love they have for one another, **BUT** by their obedience to His Commands.

Exercise for today: Meditate on friends and family, and call someone that you have not spoken to for a while, and tell them you love them, and that Elohim has put them on your heart to pray for them.

Psalm 119:17-24

*Verse 17 Deal bountifully with Your servant, that I may live, and **KEEP** Your Word.*

We have established that the word, **WORD**, when used as the **WORD** of Elohim, means the Torah of YHVH. Here in *verse 17* the Psalmist **IS** saying that he **KEEPS** the Word of Yahweh and since He willingly does so, He asks our heavenly Father to deal bountifully with him. In other words, he is asking Elohim to search his heart and when Yahweh sees that he **IS SINCERE, THEN** the Psalmists asks Yahweh to bless him, as He promised He would do, in His Word.

Verse 18 Open You my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Your Torah.

Here, it is quite clear that the Psalmist, is devoted to Yahweh's Word, and therefore He asks Yahweh

to open his eyes even more, so that he might see and perceive the beauty contained in the Words of Elohim's Torah of Life. The Psalmist **IS** aware that Yahweh **IS** infinite, but that he himself, is a finite being, and he knows that there **IS** a lot that he **does not YET understand** about the Word of Elohim, because of his finite limitations, and therefore, he asks Elohim to remove those limitations, so that he, the Psalmist, might see the wondrous things that are hidden in Yahweh's Torah, His inerrant and everlasting Teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life. This is a prayer that should be on every believer's lips, every day.

*Verse 19 I am a stranger in the earth: do **NOT** hide Your Commandments from me.*

Here the Psalmist **IS** aware that this earth **IS NOT** his home and that he **IS** simply a sojourner on a journey of Life, in a human body, while he is here on this earth, to prepare him for eternal life in the kingdom of Elohim, and he pleads with the Father, to **NOT** hide His Commandments from him. He is asking the Father to divulge to him, all the deep meanings of the Words of His Torah, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions so that he, the Psalmist, can learn to obey them, as Yahweh desires of all of us to do.

*Verse 20 My soul breaks for the longing that it has unto Your Judgments at **ALL** times.*

Here the Psalmist shows Elohim and us, his heart; he says that his heart, his soul, his whole being, longs for, and desires **ALL** of Yahweh's judgements, **ALL** of His inerrant and everlasting Torah, His directives on how we are to live a pure and Holy Life, as Yahweh is Holy.

Verse 21 You have rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from Your Commandments.

Here, it is obvious that the Psalmist **IS** aware that Yahweh does **NOT** put up with pride in people, and that He rebukes the prideful, because they have chosen **NOT** to follow the Words of His Torah, His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Directives for everlasting Life, and because they willingly choose **NOT** to follow the Ways or the Commandments of Yahweh, **they are cursed**.

*Verse 22 Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have **KEPT** Your Testimonies.*

The Psalmist **IS** aware that he is a finite human being, and that he often makes mistakes, and therefore he asks Yahweh to take away **ALL** those moments, where he errs or where he reproaches or has contempt for the Words and or the teachings of Yahweh, moments of anger and or disappointment in his life. He feels comfortable asking Yahweh for this, **BECAUSE** he tries as hard as she can to keep and do the Testimonies of Yahweh on a regular basis. This tells us that the Testimonies of Yahweh are part of His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, His Torah of Life.

Verse 23 Princes also did sit and speak against me: but Your servant did meditate in Your Statutes.

The Psalmist says that princes or masters or leaders, speak against what he does and says, when he willingly keeps the Torah of Yahweh, but regardless of what they say or do, the Psalmist **IS** resolved to continue to meditate on the Word of Elohim, meditate in **ALL** of His Statutes, in order to better

understand and **DO** them.

Verse 24 Your testimonies also are my delight and my counselors.

Here the psalmist tells all of us that he simply delights in, and obeys Yahweh's Statutes, because he has found that in the Statutes of Yahweh, in His inerrant and everlasting teaching and instructions, **THERE IS GREAT COUNSEL** and therefore he has chosen to continually meditate in those Statutes, for his personal comfort and delight.

Studying and keeping Torah together as a community.

*Have a great Elohim blessed week and may YHVH bless your every thought,
and your every deed. Until we meet again. Shalom Alechem!*