

Mindset of the Moedim

By Michael Ladda

Every year when we celebrate the feast days it seems that we are met with trials and tribulations in our lives. Things don't go as planned, our family seems to be trying to derail us, there are a multitude of distractions in our life, and we can become hypersensitive to what others are doing or not doing that causes us frustration. As we are ramping up to have a divine appointment with Elohim, the world seems to want to avert our focus to conflict and disorder. It reminds of Avraham's encounter with Elohim in Genesis 15.

Genesis 15:10-11 *"And he took all these to Him and cut them in the middle, and placed each half opposite the other, but he did not cut the birds. And the birds of prey came down on the carcasses, and Avram drove them away."*

This image of Avraham driving away the birds of prey symbolizes the constant battle against distractions and negativity that threaten to disrupt our communion with Elohim, especially during His appointed times. To truly observe the feasts of Yah, we must cultivate a mindset that mirrors Avraham's determination, a heart focused on Elohim's kingdom and a spirit cleansed by His truth.

Let's begin with the very foundation of these feasts:

Leviticus 23:1-2 *"And YHVH spoke to Mosheh, saying, 'Speak to the children of Yisrael, and say to them, "The appointed times of YHVH, which you are to proclaim as set-apart gatherings, these are My appointed times."'"*

These verses establish the feasts as Elohim's appointed times, moedim, set-apart gatherings designed for communion with Him. They are not merely historical commemorations, but living encounters with the Creator, opportunities to deepen our understanding of His plan and strengthen our relationship with Him.

The Feasts as Prophetic Signposts

The feasts reveal Elohim's redemptive plan through Yeshua's first and second comings. Passover signifies Yeshua's sacrificial death, while the Days of Unleavened Bread symbolize a life purged of sin, mirroring His burial and our commitment to new life. Paul connects the Feast of Firstfruits to Yeshua's resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15:20, underscoring its prophetic significance. Shavuot, or the Feast of Weeks, embodies the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, empowering believers to walk out Elohim's will.

The fall feasts further reveal Elohim's plan. Yom Teruah, the Feast of Trumpets, foreshadows the last trumpet and Yeshua's return, a call to repentance and readiness. Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, anticipates the final cleansing of sin through Yeshua's perfect sacrifice. Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, pictures Elohim's dwelling with His people in the Messianic Kingdom, where Yeshua will reign.

Understanding these feasts in their prophetic context reveals Elohim's ultimate plan of redemption. They illuminate the narrative from Yeshua's first coming to His glorious return and eternal reign, showcasing the comprehensive nature of Elohim's plan for humanity.

The Mindset of Paul: A Model for Feast Observance

To understand the proper mindset for observing these feasts, we can examine the example of the Apostle Paul. His life, as recorded in the book of Acts, demonstrates a consistent commitment to Elohim's appointed times and a heart focused on His kingdom.

Acts 27:9 *"And much time having passed, and sailing being now dangerous because the Fast was already over, Sha'ul advised them."*

Here, Paul refers to "the Fast," which is widely understood to be Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This demonstrates that Paul continued to observe the feasts even after Yeshua's ascension. He recognized their significance and understood their enduring relevance. It is important to note the timing of this verse. Paul is on a ship, in the midst of a dangerous voyage. Yet, he is aware of the timing of the feast, showing that his mind was aligned with Elohim's calendar. Even in the midst of trials, his focus remained on Elohim's appointed times.

Acts 18:21 (NKJV) *"but took leave of them, saying, 'I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.' And he sailed from Ephesus."*

Paul's desire to keep the feast in Jerusalem reveals his deep respect for Elohim's appointed times. He prioritized these gatherings, even amidst his demanding missionary journeys. His heart was set on being present in Jerusalem during the feast, demonstrating a desire to participate in the communal worship of Elohim.

1 Corinthians 16:8 *"But I shall remain in Ephesos until the Festival of Weeks."*

Paul's decision to remain in Ephesus until Shavuot (Pentecost) highlights his commitment to observing the feasts. He planned his travels around Elohim's appointed times, demonstrating that these gatherings were not optional extras but essential components of his spiritual life.

1 Corinthians 5:8 *"So let us keep the festival, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of evil and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth."*

This verse is crucial for understanding the mindset required for feast observance. Paul connects the Feast of Unleavened Bread with spiritual purity. He urges believers to remove the "old leaven" of sin and embrace the "unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." This speaks to a heart cleansed and prepared for communion with Elohim. It is not enough to merely observe the outward rituals; we must also cultivate an inward purity.

The Importance of a Pure Heart

Paul's emphasis on removing leaven in 1 Corinthians 5:8 echoes the broader theme of spiritual preparation found throughout the scriptures. The moedim are not simply historical reenactments; they are opportunities for spiritual renewal and transformation. To participate fully in these gatherings, we must approach them with a pure heart, free from the leaven of sin and hypocrisy.

Psalm 24:3-4 *"Who shall go up into the mountain of YHVH? And who shall stand in His set-apart place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his being to falsehood, nor sworn deceitfully."*

This psalm emphasizes the importance of a pure heart for approaching Elohim. It reminds us that external actions are not enough; our inner being must also be cleansed and aligned with His will.

Matthew 5:8 *"Blessed are the clean in heart, for they shall see Elohim."*

Yeshua's words in the Sermon on the Mount reinforce the importance of a pure heart. To truly see and experience Elohim, we must cultivate an inner purity that reflects His character.

Hebrews 10:22 *“Let us draw near with a true heart in completeness of belief, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with clean water.”*

This verse encourages us to approach Elohim with a true heart, cleansed by His grace. It speaks to the transformative power of Yeshua's sacrifice, which purifies our consciences and enables us to draw near to Elohim.

Focusing on the Kingdom of Elohim

In addition to a pure heart, we must also cultivate a mindset focused on the kingdom of Elohim. The feasts of Leviticus 23 are not merely about personal piety; they are also about participating in Elohim's redemptive plan for humanity.

Matthew 6:33 *“But seek first the reign of Elohim and His righteousness, and all these shall be added to you.”*

Yeshua's words remind us that our primary focus should be on Elohim's kingdom. When we prioritize His reign, He promises to provide for our needs.

Colossians 3:1-2 *“If then you were raised with Messiah, seek the matters above, where Messiah is sitting at the right hand of Elohim. Set your mind on matters above, not on matters on the earth.”*

Paul encourages believers to set their minds on heavenly matters, to focus on the eternal realities of Elohim's kingdom. This mindset is essential for observing the feasts, as it helps us to transcend the distractions and trials of this world and focus on our eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 11:13-16 *“In belief all these died, not having received the promises, but seeing them from a distance, welcomed and embraced them, and confessed that they were aliens and strangers on the earth. For those who speak this way make it clear that they seek a fatherland. And yet, if they had indeed kept remembering that place from which they had come out, they would have had the chance to return. But now they long for a better place, that is, a heavenly. Therefore Elohim is not ashamed to be called their Elohim, for He has prepared a city for them.”*

This passage from Hebrews highlights the importance of a kingdom-focused perspective. The patriarchs, like Avraham, Yitzhak, and Yaakov, lived as sojourners, looking forward to a heavenly city prepared by Elohim. Their lives exemplify a mindset that transcends earthly concerns, demonstrating a deep longing for Elohim's kingdom. Just as they lived with this focus, so should we, especially when observing the feasts, remembering our ultimate home is with Elohim.

Endurance Under Trials: The Refining Fire of the Moedim

It is crucial to acknowledge that the very act of striving to observe Elohim's appointed times often brings with it a barrage of trials. As we prepare our hearts and minds for an encounter with the Most High, we may find ourselves facing heightened spiritual battles, relational conflicts, and unexpected disruptions. This is not a coincidence, but rather a testament to the significance of these gatherings. Satan, the adversary, recognizes the transformative power of the moedim and seeks to derail our focus, sowing seeds of doubt, discord, and distraction.

However, these trials are not meant to discourage us, but to refine us. They serve as a crucible, testing our faith, strengthening our resolve, and deepening our dependence on Elohim. Just as Avraham drove away the birds of prey, we must learn to stand firm against the forces that seek to divert us from Elohim's presence.

Paul, amidst perilous journeys and constant opposition, remained steadfast in his commitment to the feasts, demonstrating that true devotion is forged in the fires of adversity.

The trials we face during these appointed times can reveal the hidden areas of our hearts that need purification. They expose our weaknesses and force us to confront our reliance on our own strength. In these moments, we must remember that Elohim's grace is sufficient, and His strength is made perfect in our weakness (2 Corinthians 12:9). The very act of pressing through these trials, of refusing to be swayed from our commitment to Elohim, is an act of worship. It demonstrates our unwavering faith and our determination to prioritize His kingdom above all else.

Consider that the very nature of these feasts often requires sacrifice. Time must be set aside from worldly pursuits, and often we must endure the misunderstanding or even opposition of those around us. This willingness to endure hardship for the sake of Elohim's appointed times is a testament to our love and devotion. It is a tangible expression of our commitment to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness.

Moreover, the trials we face during the moedim mirror the trials faced by Yeshua and the early believers. Just as Yeshua endured suffering and rejection, we too may experience hardship as we strive to follow His example. By persevering through these trials, we participate in the suffering of Messiah and anticipate the glory that will be revealed.

In essence, the trials encountered during the moedim are not obstacles to be avoided, but opportunities for spiritual growth and refinement. They are a reminder that our journey is not always easy, but that Elohim is faithful to strengthen and equip us for every challenge. By enduring these trials with faith and perseverance, we emerge stronger, more focused, and more deeply connected to Elohim.

A Heart Prepared for an Encounter

The moedim are far more than mere historical observances; they are divine appointments designed for a transformative encounter with Elohim. To truly engage with these feasts, we must cultivate a mindset that mirrors Avraham's resolute determination, Paul's unwavering commitment, and the enduring faith of the patriarchs. This necessitates a spirit prepared to seek the divine, a heart cleansed of sin and hypocrisy, and a mind focused on the eternal realities of Elohim's kingdom.

The trials and tribulations we face during these appointed times are not obstacles, but rather refining fires, testing our faith and deepening our dependence on Elohim. By enduring these challenges with perseverance and a kingdom-focused perspective, we emerge stronger, more aligned with His will, and better prepared to experience the fullness of His presence.

The moedim, then, become a journey of spiritual purification and a prophetic glimpse into Elohim's redemptive plan, leading to a profound and life-altering appointment with the King of Kings. Ultimately, the feasts serve as a reminder that our journey is not just about observing dates on a calendar, but about cultivating a heart prepared for an ongoing, transformative encounter with the living Elohim.