

עץ חיים

ETZ HAYIM

TORAH AND COMMENTARY

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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must, to be acceptable, be without blemish; there must be no defect in it. ²²Anything blind, or injured, or maimed, or with a wen, boil-scar, or scurvy—such you shall not offer to the LORD; you shall not put any of them on the altar as gifts to the LORD. ²³You may, however, present as a freewill offering an ox or a sheep with a limb extended or contracted; but it will not be accepted for a vow. ²⁴You shall not offer to the LORD anything [with its testes] bruised or crushed or torn or cut. You shall have no such practices in your own land, ²⁵nor shall you accept such [animals] from a foreigner for offering as food for your God, for they are mutilated, they have a defect; they shall not be accepted in your favor.

²⁶The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁷When an ox or a sheep or a goat is born, it shall stay seven days with its mother, and from the eighth day on it shall be acceptable as a gift to the LORD. ²⁸However, no animal from the herd or from the flock shall be slaughtered on the same day with its young.

²⁹When you sacrifice a thanksgiving offering to the LORD, sacrifice it so that it may be acceptable in your favor. ³⁰It shall be eaten on the same day; you shall not leave any of it until morning: I am the LORD.

³¹You shall faithfully observe My command-

22. There is a marked similarity between the physical defects that render a priest unfit to officiate and those that render an animal unfit for sacrifice.

23. freewill offering Because this offering is a gift to the sanctuary and is not intended for sacrifice, it need not be perfect.

תָּמִים יִהְיֶה לְרִצּוֹן כָּל־מוֹם לֹא יִהְיֶה־בּוֹ :
²² עֹרֹתָ אֹו שָׁבוֹר אֹו־חֲרוּץ אֹו־יִבְלֹת אֹו
 גָּרֵב אֹו יִלְפַת לֹא־תִקְרִיבוּ אֵלָהּ לַיהוָה
 וְאִשָּׁה לֹא־תִתְּנֶנּוּ מֵהֶם עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
 לַיהוָה :²³ וְשׂוֹר וְשֵׂה שְׂרוּעַ וְקָלוֹט נְדָבָה
 תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתוֹ וּלְנֹדֵר לֹא יִרְצָה :²⁴ וּמַעֲוֹף
 וְכַתּוּת וְנִתְּנוֹק וְכָרוֹת לֹא תִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה
 וּבְאַרְצְכֶם לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ :²⁵ וּמִיַּד בֶּן־נֶכֶר לֹא
 תִקְרִיבוּ אֶת־לֶחֶם אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מִכָּל־אֵלָהּ
 כִּי מִשְׁחַתֶּם בָּהֶם מוֹם בָּם לֹא יִרְצוּ
 לָכֶם : פ

²⁶ וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר :²⁷ שׂוֹר
 אֹו־כֶּשֶׁב אֹו־עֹו כִּי יוֹלֵד וְהָיָה שְׁבַע־עַת
 יָמִים תַּחַת אִמּוֹ וּמִיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי וְהִלְאָה
 יִרְצָה לְקַרְבָּן אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה :²⁸ וְשׂוֹר אֹו־
 שֵׂה אֹתוֹ וְאֶת־בְּנוֹ לֹא תִשְׁחָטוּ בַיּוֹם
 אַחָד :

²⁹ וְכִי־תִזְבְּחוּ זֶבַח־תּוֹדָה לַיהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם
 תִּזְבְּחוּ :³⁰ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יֵאָכַל לֹא־תוֹתִירוּ
 מִמֶּנּוּ עַד־בֹּקֶר אֲנִי יְהוָה :

³¹ וּשְׁמַרְתֶּם מִצְוֹתַי וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם אֲנִי

28. The law forbids such sacrifice even after eight days.

29–30. These verses present a separate law for the thanksgiving offering, which is here treated as distinct from the *sh'lamim*.

27–28. Maimonides writes, "There is no distinction between the suffering of a human being and that of a beast in this respect, since feelings of maternal affection belong not to the intellectual faculty but to the emotional faculty, which is common to humans and animals alike." Recent research seems to indicate that animals do indeed

have such feelings. Other scholars claim that the primary concern of the law is not with the animal's feelings but with the cultivation of kindness and compassion in the heart of the human being. "It is not because God pities the animal but in order that the people of Israel should not practice cruel habits" (B'khor Shor).

ments: I am the LORD. ³²You shall not profane My holy name, that I may be sanctified in the midst of the Israelite people—I the LORD who sanctify you, ³³I who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God, I the LORD.

יהוה: ³²ולא תחללו את-שם קדשי ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל אני יהוה מקדשכם: ³³המוציא אתכם מארץ מצרים להיות לכם לאלהים אני יהוה: פ

23 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²Speak to the Israelite people and say to them: These are My fixed times, the fixed times of the LORD, which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions.

³On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there shall be a sabbath of complete

כג רביעי וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ²דבר אל-בני ישראל ואמרת אליהם מועדי יהוה אשר-תקראו אתם מקראי קדש אלה הם מועדי: ³ששת ימים תעשה מלאכה וביום השביעי שבת שבתון מקרא-קדש כל-

THE CALENDAR OF SACRED TIME (23:1–44)

Chapter 23 presents a calendar of the annual festivals celebrated in biblical times.

SHABBAT (vv. 1–3)

2. Speak to the Israelite people These sacred occasions are to be observed by all the people, not only by the priesthood.

which you shall proclaim as sacred occasions Although the dates of the festivals and the regu-

larity of *Shabbat* were set by God, the Israelites also must proclaim them as sacred.

3. On six days work may be done This statement emphasizes three norms of conduct basic to the observance of *Shabbat*: (a) the prohibition of *m'lakhab* (work), (b) the sanctity of *Shabbat*, and (c) the requirement that *Shabbat* be observed in all Israelite settlements.

sabbath of complete rest Hebrew: *shabbat*

32. in the midst of the Israelite people The public performance of a *mitzvah* not only benefits the one who does it but has an effect on those who see it, even as a violation of the Torah in public is more damaging than similar behavior done privately (Hoffman). This led the Sages to view the sanctifying of God's name (*Kiddush ha-Shem*) as essentially a public act. Thus, for example, a *minyan* is required for recitation of the mourner's *Kaddish* and for other prayers proclaiming God's holiness. The faith of the congregation is strengthened when a newly bereaved man or woman, who might have reason to feel angry with God, stands up in its midst to praise God. The Talmud states that there is no greater achievement for a Jew than acting in a way that causes others to praise and respect the God of Israel and the Torah's ways; and there is no graver sin for a Jew than

acting in a way that causes people to think less of Israel's God and Israel's laws (BT Yoma 86a). The term *Kiddush ha-Shem*, sanctifying God's name in public, is often linked to, but not limited to, acts of martyrdom.

CHAPTER 23

2. The festivals of the Jewish year are listed first in Exod. 34. The list is repeated here to set out the special role and responsibilities of the *kohanim*, again in Num. 28–29 to present the special offerings brought on each festive occasion, and once more in Deut. 16 to emphasize the obligation of pilgrimage to the central shrine. The Israelites find the presence of God in the sanctuary, which represents the permanent holiness of sacred space, and on the festivals, which represent the recurring holiness of sacred time.

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

23:3. do no work The Hebrew word *m'lakhab* (work) signifies any creative endeavor. One should refrain not only from paid labor but also from many actions that today may be considered leisure activities, such as gardening, cooking, sewing, arts and crafts, building, and writing.

rest, a sacred occasion. You shall do no work; it shall be a sabbath of the LORD throughout your settlements.

⁴These are the set times of the LORD, the sacred occasions, which you shall celebrate each at its appointed time: ⁵In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, at twilight, there shall be a passover offering to the LORD, ⁶and on the fifteenth day of that month the LORD's Feast of Unleavened Bread. You shall eat unleavened bread for seven days. ⁷On the first day you shall celebrate a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations. ⁸Seven days you shall make gifts to the LORD. The seventh day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations.

⁹The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁰Speak to the Israelite people and say to them:

shabbaton; literally, "the most restful cessation" from assigned tasks. The word *shabbat* means "to desist, cease, be idle."

sabbath of the LORD A day that belongs to God.

FEAST OF UNLEAVENED BREAD (vv. 4–8)

4. Each festival is to occur at the same time every year.

5. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month This is the dating system that was in use during much of the biblical period. The unit of time was the lunar month (*hodesh*), not the week; and the months of the year were designated by ordinal numbers: the first month, the second month, and so forth. The counting of months began in the spring.

twilight The period of time between sunset

מְלֹאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ שַׁבַּת הוּא לַיהוָה
בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיכֶם: פ

⁴אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר-
תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם בְּמוֹעֲדָם: ⁵בַּחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן
בְּאַרְבַּעָה עָשָׂר לַחֹדֶשׁ בֵּין הָעֶרְבִים פֶּסַח
לַיהוָה: ⁶וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַזֶּה
תִּגַּד הַמִּצּוֹת לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים מִצּוֹת
תֹּאכְלוּ: ⁷בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ
יְהִי לָכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:
⁸וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֹשֶׁה לַיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים
בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת
עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: פ

⁹וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ¹⁰דַּבֵּר
אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם

and nightfall, approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes in duration.

passover offering Here the term "*pesah*" refers to the sacrifice, not to the festival (see Exod. 12:6).

7. On the first and seventh (or last) days of the festival, work is forbidden. The community celebrates together. During the intervening days, necessary normal work may be done, but the celebration continues.

NEW GRAIN CROP (vv. 9–14)

New grain is to be regarded as belonging to God and may not be eaten until certain offerings are taken from it and presented before God. Those offerings remove the sanctity from the crop, thereby releasing the remainder for ordinary human use.

7. you shall not work at your occupations
The Jewish festivals challenge us: Do we define ourselves primarily by our work? Or do we de-

fine ourselves primarily by our total humanity, our ability to celebrate, to sanctify time, to share special moments with our families?

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

23:6. seven days Traditionally, *Pesah* is observed for eight days in the Diaspora. See Comment to Exod. 12:16.

23:7. not work at your occupations Most categories of *m'lakhah* (activities prohibited on *Shabbat* and *Yom Kippur*) are also prohibited on the three pilgrimage festivals and *Rosh ha-Shanah*; the permitted activities are those necessary for the preparation of food (*okhel nefesh*), such as cooking, carrying, and the transfer of fire (M Betz. 5:2).

When you enter the land that I am giving to you and you reap its harvest, you shall bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹He shall elevate the sheaf before the LORD for acceptance in your behalf; the priest shall elevate it on the day after the sabbath. ¹²On the day that you elevate the sheaf, you shall offer as a burnt offering to the LORD a lamb of the first year without blemish. ¹³The grain offering with it shall be two-tenths of a measure of choice flour with oil mixed in, a gift of pleasing odor to the LORD; and the libation with it shall be of wine, a quarter of a *hin*. ¹⁴Until that very day, until you have brought the offering of your God, you shall eat no bread or parched grain or fresh ears; it is a law for all time throughout the ages in all your settlements.

¹⁵And from the day on which you bring the sheaf of elevation offering—the day after the sabbath—you shall count off seven weeks. They must be complete: ¹⁶you must count until the day after the seventh week—fifty days; then you shall bring an offering of new grain to the LORD. ¹⁷You shall bring from your settlements two

פִּי־תְבֹאוּ אֶל־הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי נֹתֵן לָכֶם וְקִצְרֹתֶם אֶת־קִצְרֵיהָ וְהִבֵּאתֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קִצְרֹתֵיכֶם אֶל־הַכֹּהֵן: ¹¹ וְהִנִּיף אֶת־הָעֹמֶר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לְרִצְוֹנְכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת יִנִּיפּוּ הַכֹּהֵן: ¹² וְעִשִּׂיתֶם בְּיוֹם הַנִּיפְכֶם אֶת־הָעֹמֶר כֶּבֶשׂ תְּמִים בֶּן־שָׁנָתוֹ לְעֹלָה לַיהוָה: ¹³ וּמִנְחָתוֹ שְׁנֵי עֶשְׂרֹנִים סֶלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה רֵיחַ נִיחֹחַ וְנִסְכּוֹ יֵינִי רְבִיעֵת הַדֵּהוּן: ¹⁴ וְלֶחֶם וְקִלְי וְכֶרֶמֶל לֹא תֹאכְלוּ עַד־עֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה עַד הִבֵּיאֲכֶם אֶת־קִרְבָּן אֱלֹהֵיכֶם חֶקֶת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּכָל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם: ס

¹⁵ וּסְפַרְתֶּם לָכֶם מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת מִיּוֹם הִבֵּיאֲכֶם אֶת־עֹמֶר הַתְּנוּפָה שִׁבְעַ שְׁבָתוֹת תְּמִימֹת תַּהְיִינָה: ¹⁶ עַד מִמַּחֲרַת הַשַּׁבָּת הַשְּׁבִיעִת תִּסְפְּרוּ חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם מִנְחָה חֲדָשָׁה לַיהוָה: ¹⁷ מִמוֹשְׁבֹתֵיכֶם תָּבִיאוּ* | לֶחֶם תְּנוּפָה

v. 17. א' דגושה

10. sheaf Hebrew: *omer*, a bundle of stalks bound together after reaping. Here, the reference is to barley, the first grain to ripen in the spring. **to the priest** The particular priest who officiates at the rite in the sanctuary.

11. The purpose of such rites was to “show” the offering to God, so that it might be accepted.

12–13. The burnt offering (*olah*) was often accompanied by a grain offering (*minḥah*) and a

libation (*nesekh*), as prescribed here. The measure of grain required here is twice the usual amount, to emphasize the importance of grain in this celebration.

14. Until God receives a share of the new grain crop, none of it may be used by humans.

SHAVU·OT FESTIVAL (vv. 15–22)

17. No leaven could be brought up on the

11. the day after the sabbath This starts the counting of the *Omer* (see *Halakhah l'Ma'aseh*, below). The Sages held that “the sabbath” here refers to the *Pesaḥ* festival. Explaining that interpretation, Arama writes, “If the *Omer* were tied to *Shabbat*, symbol of the creation of the world, then the wheat harvest would be seen purely as a natural phenome-

non. Connecting it to the Exodus teaches us to see it, like the Exodus, as an instance of God’s benevolence.” It is through God’s favor, not through our clever manipulation of nature, that the earth yields food for us to eat; that is why we cannot properly enjoy it until we have thanked God for it.

HALAKHAH L'MA'ASEH

23:15. you shall count From the second night of *Pesaḥ* until *Shavuot*, we count the 49 days of the *Omer*. Jewish communities hold varying segments of this time period, known as the *S'firah* (literally, “counting”), as a time of semimourning, during which weddings and festive occasions do not take place.

loaves of bread as an elevation offering; each shall be made of two-tenths of a measure of choice flour, baked after leavening, as first fruits to the LORD.¹⁸ With the bread you shall present, as burnt offerings to the LORD, seven yearling lambs without blemish, one bull of the herd, and two rams, with their grain offerings and libations, a gift of pleasing odor to the LORD.¹⁹ You shall also offer one he-goat as a purification offering and two yearling lambs as a sacrifice of well-being.²⁰ The priest shall elevate these—the two lambs—together with the bread of first fruits as an elevation offering before the LORD; they shall be holy to the LORD, for the priest.²¹ On that same day you shall hold a celebration; it shall be a sacred occasion for you; you shall not work at your occupations. This is a law for all time in all your settlements, throughout the ages.

²²And when you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap all the way to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your harvest; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I the LORD am your God.

²³The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁴Speak to the Israelite people thus: In the seventh

שָׁתַיִם שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרִים סֹלֶת תַּהֲיִינָה חֶמֶץ
תֹּאפִינָה בְּכוּרִים לַיהוָה: ¹⁸ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם
עַל-הַלֶּחֶם שְׁבַעַת כְּבָשִׂים תְּמִימִם בְּנֵי
שָׁנָה וּפָר בֶּן-בָּקָר אֶחָד וְאֵילָם שְׁנַיִם יִהְיוּ
עֲלֶיהָ לַיהוָה וּמִנְחָתָם וְנִסְכֵיהֶם אִשָּׁה
רִיחַ-נִיחֹחַ לַיהוָה: ¹⁹ וְעֲשִׂיתֶם שְׁעִיר-
עֲזִים אֶחָד לְחֻטָּאת וּשְׁנַי כְּבָשִׂים בְּנֵי
שָׁנָה לְזִבַח שְׁלָמִים: ²⁰ וְהִנִּיף הַכֹּהֵן |
אֹתָם עַל לֶחֶם הַבְּכוּרִים תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי
יְהוָה עַל-שְׁנַי כְּבָשִׂים קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיוּ לַיהוָה
לַכֹּהֵן: ²¹ וּקְרֹאתֶם בְּעֶצֶם | הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה
מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת
עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ חֻקַּת עוֹלָם בְּכָל-
מוֹשְׁבֵיכֶם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם:

²² וּבִקְצֹרְכֶם אֶת-קְצִיר אֲרֻצְכֶם לֹא-
תִכְלֶה פֶּאת שְׂדֶךְ בְּקִצְרוֹ וְלִקַּט קְצִירָךְ
לֹא תִלְקַט לְעַנִּי וְלִגֵּר תַּעֲזֹב אֹתָם אֲנִי
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ס

²³ וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ²⁴ דַּבֵּר
אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי

altar. Here, because no part of the offering presented before God ascends the altar, it could be made of “leavened dough” (*hametz*).

18–20. The offerings prescribed in these verses are typical of those included in public rites, in which several different sacrifices are offered together to constitute a more elaborate celebration. The animals, both small and large, are to be offered as burnt offerings and are accompanied by the grain offerings and libations.

20. The priest shall elevate these—the two lambs That is, the two yearling lambs.

they shall be holy to the LORD, for the priest In the first instance, these offerings are the Lord’s,

who, in turn, commands that they be allotted to the priests.

FIRST DAY OF THE SEVENTH MONTH (vv. 23–25)

This section ordains the celebration of three major sacred occasions occurring during the seventh month: (a) the first day of the seventh month (which in the later tradition became the Jewish New Year), (b) the Day of Atonement, and (c) the *Sukkot* festival.

24. Here, the day is presented as one of rest and sacred assembly. It is conceived of not as a new year but as an occasion before the Day of

22. Why are the gleanings of the harvest mentioned here, interrupting the list of festivals? Perhaps because they were gathered at the *Shavu-ot* harvest season, as we read in the Book of Ruth, or because, as the *Sifra* suggests,

when one shares one’s bounty with the poor, it is as if it were offered on God’s altar.

24. The Torah never refers to the first day of the seventh month as *Rosh ha-Shanah*. That term first appears in Ezek. 40:1. In the Torah,

month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts. ²⁵You shall not work at your occupations; and you shall bring a gift to the LORD.

²⁶The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁷Mark, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. It shall be a sacred occasion for you: you shall practice self-denial, and you shall bring a gift to the LORD; ²⁸you shall do no work throughout that day. For it is a Day of Atonement, on which expiation is made on your behalf before the LORD your God. ²⁹Indeed, any person who does not practice self-denial throughout that day shall be cut off from his kin; ³⁰and whoever does any work throughout that day, I will cause that person to perish from among his people. ³¹Do no work whatever; it is a law for all time, throughout the ages in all your settlements. ³²It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; on the ninth day of the month at evening, from evening to evening, you shall observe this your sabbath.

Atonement. The Hebrew term *zikhron t'ru-ah* means, literally, "commemoration by blasting" the *shofar*.

DAY OF ATONEMENT (vv. 26–32)

See Comments to 16:29–34.

בְּאֶחָד לַחֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם שַׁבָּתוֹן זִכְרוֹן תְּרוּעָה מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ: ²⁵כָּל־מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה: ס

²⁶וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ²⁷אָךְ בְּעֶשְׂרֵי לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי הַזֶּה יוֹם הַכִּפּוּרִים הוּא מִקְרֵא־קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה: ²⁸וְכָל־מְלֹאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה כִּי יוֹם כִּפּוּרִים הוּא לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם: ²⁹כִּי כָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר לֹא־תַעֲנֶה בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְנִכְרְתָה מֵעַמִּיהָ: ³⁰וְכָל־הַנֶּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תַעֲשֶׂה כָל־מְלֹאכָה בַעֲצֵם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְהָאֲבֹדְתִי אֶת־הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מִקְרַב עֲמָה: ³¹כָּל־מְלֹאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם בְּכֹל מִשְׁבְּתֵיכֶם: ³²שַׁבָּת שַׁבָּתוֹן הוּא לָכֶם וְעֲנִיתֶם אֶת־נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם בַּתְּשׁוּעָה לַחֹדֶשׁ בַּעֲרֵב מֵעֶרֶב עַד־עֶרֶב

ששׁי תִשְׁבְּתוּ שַׁבְּתֵיכֶם: פ

27. you shall practice self-denial That is, you shall fast.

32. from evening to evening, you shall observe this This verse has been interpreted as setting the norm for every festival in the Jewish religious calendar, namely, that the celebration

it is called "a day of remembrance" or "a day of sounding the *shofar*." Readers may be surprised to learn that *Rosh ha-Shanah* begins the seventh month of the Hebrew calendar rather than the first. It commemorates the creation of the world, which traditionally is believed to have happened in the fall, the beginning of the new agricultural cycle. But the people Israel date their calendar from the Exodus, which

happened in the spring (cf. Exod. 12:2, designating the month of the Exodus as the first month of Israel's calendar).

32. on the ninth day... at evening The *Yom Kippur* fast does not start until the evening (after sunset, at night) after the ninth day. "Eating and drinking responsibly on the day before and the day after *Yom Kippur* are as much of a *mitzvah* as fasting on *Yom Kippur*" (BT Yoma 81b).

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23:24. commemorated with loud blasts This is the source for the ruling that the *shofar* is not sounded on *Rosh ha-Shanah* when it coincides with *Shabbat*, which is itself a commemoration (BT RH 29b). On such a *Shabbat*, we "remember the blasting" in our prayers. It is also the source for the practice during the *Musaf* service on *Rosh ha-Shanah* of reciting 10 biblical verses about each of the themes of God's kingship, God's remembrance, and the *shofar* (BT RH 32a).

³³The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ³⁴Say to the Israelite people:

On the fifteenth day of this seventh month there shall be the Feast of Booths to the LORD, [to last] seven days. ³⁵The first day shall be a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations; ³⁶seven days you shall bring gifts to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall observe a sacred occasion and bring a gift to the LORD; it is a solemn gathering: you shall not work at your occupations.

³⁷Those are the set times of the LORD that you shall celebrate as sacred occasions, bringing gifts to the LORD—burnt offerings, grain offerings, sacrifices, and libations, on each day what is proper to it—³⁸apart from the sabbaths of the LORD, and apart from your gifts and from all your votive offerings and from all your freewill offerings that you give to the LORD.

³⁹Mark, on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the yield of your land, you shall observe the festival of the LORD [to last] seven days: a complete rest on

שש³³ וידבר יהוה אל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ³⁴דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי לַיהוָה חַג הַסֻּכּוֹת שִׁבְעַת יָמִים לַיהוָה: ³⁵בַּיּוֹם הָרִאשׁוֹן מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ כָּל־מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ³⁶שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּקְרִיבוּ אֹשֶׁה לַיהוָה בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרָא־קֹדֶשׁ יְהִי־הִיא לָכֶם וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם אֹשֶׁה לַיהוָה עֲצַרְתָּ הוּא כָּל־מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

³⁷אֵלֶּה מוֹעֲדֵי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר־תִּקְרְאוּ אֹתָם מִקְרָאֵי קֹדֶשׁ לְהַקְרִיב אֹשֶׁה לַיהוָה עֲלֶיהָ וּמִנְחָה זָבַח וּנְסֻכִים דְּבַר־יוֹם בַּיּוֹמוֹ: ³⁸מִלֶּבֶד שַׁבְּתוֹת יְהוָה וּמִלֶּבֶד מִתְּנוּתֵיכֶם וּמִלֶּבֶד כָּל־נְדָרוֹתֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר תִּתְּנוּ לַיהוָה:

³⁹אָךְ בַּחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי בְּאֶסְפְּכֶם אֶת־תְּבוּאת הָאָרֶץ תַּחֲגוּ אֶת־חַג־יְהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּיּוֹם

commences on the evening (actually the night, after sunset) that precedes the day of the festival. Scheduling the Day of Atonement only a few days before the major pilgrimage festival of the year ensured that the sanctuary and the people would be restored to a state of fitness in time for the celebration of the autumn *Sukkot* observance.

SUKKOT FESTIVAL (vv. 33–44)

34. the Feast of Booths The Hebrew word *suk-*

kab, “booth,” derives from the verb סכך, “to cover over,” as with branches. It designates a small, usually temporary, structure that is covered on top and only partially enclosed on its sides.

36. solemn gathering This term derives from the Hebrew verb עצר, “to detain, restrain, confine,” and may refer to the fact that the people are kept together for an additional day.

35. first day Why is it called the “first day” when it is actually the fifteenth of the month? After the slate has been wiped clean on *Yom Kippur*, we begin our relationship with God anew on *Sukkot* (Lev. R. 30:7).

36. solemn gathering The word *atzeret* is usually understood as “concluding event” or “solemn gathering.” But Hirsch here understands it as derived from a root meaning “to gather, to store up.” Even as farmers gather up

the harvest in the autumn to last through the winter months, even as animals store food for the winter, the Israelites are urged to store up the feelings of gratitude and dependence that mark the holiday season—to last them through the months that will follow, months without festival days. (In the biblical period, *Hanukkah* did not exist. It celebrates events that took place after the time of the Torah.)

the first day, and a complete rest on the eighth day. ⁴⁰On the first day you shall take the product of *hadar* trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. ⁴¹You shall observe it as a festival of the LORD for seven days in the year; you shall observe it in the seventh month as a law for all time, throughout the ages. ⁴²You shall live in booths seven days; all citizens in Israel shall live in booths, ⁴³in order that future generations may know that I made the Israelite people live in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt, I the LORD your God.

⁴⁴So Moses declared to the Israelites the set times of the LORD.

הָרֵאשׁוֹן שְׁבֻתוֹן וּבַיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי שְׁבֻתוֹן :
 40 וּלְקַחְתֶּם לָכֶם בַּיּוֹם הָרֵאשׁוֹן פְּרִי עֵץ
 הַדָּר לְכַפֹּת תְּמָרִים וְעֵנָף עֵץ-עֵבֶת וְעַרְבֵי-
 נַחַל וּשְׂמַחְתֶּם לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם
 שִׁבְעַת יָמִים : 41 וְחֻגְתֶּם אֹתוֹ חֹג לַיהוָה
 שִׁבְעַת יָמִים בַּשָּׁנָה חֻקַּת עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם
 בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי תַחֲגוּ אֹתוֹ : 42 בַּסֹּפֶת
 תֵּשְׁבוּ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים כָּל-הָאֶזְרָח בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל
 יֵשְׁבוּ בַסֹּפֶת : 43 לְמַעַן יֵדְעוּ דֹרֹתֵיכֶם
 כִּי בַסֹּפֹת הוֹשַׁבְתִּי אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל
 בְּהוֹצִיאִי אוֹתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲנִי יְהוָה
 אֱלֹהֵיכֶם :

44 וַיְדַבֵּר מֹשֶׁה אֶת-מִעַדֵי יְהוָה אֶל-בְּנֵי

יִשְׂרָאֵל : פ

40. hadar trees Literally, “beautiful trees.” They symbolize the abundance of water and oases and the beauty of the land of Israel. In horticulture, there are no particular trees designated as *hadar*. Traditionally, the “product of *hadar* trees” has been taken to be the citron (*etrog*).

you shall rejoice Rejoicing is explicitly commanded in this chapter only for the celebration

of *Sukkot*. The pressing of the grapes had been completed, and there was no labor to be done until the beginning of the next agricultural cycle. The people had leisure time as well as ample food and wine with which to rejoice.

43. I made the Israelite people live in booths According to Exod. 12:37, *Sukkot* (literally, Booths) is the name of the first stop on the Exodus route from Egypt.

40. The Midrash offers many interpretations of the symbolic meaning of the four species of *Sukkot*. The *lulav* (palm branch) represents the spine—erect but not rigid; the myrtle, the eyes; the willow, the lips; and the *etrog*, the heart. They summon us to use all of our limbs and organs to rejoice before the Lord. Yet another *midrash* compares the *etrog*, which tastes and smells good, to people who possess learning and also do good deeds;

the *lulav*, which has taste but no fragrance, to people who have learning but do not do good; the myrtle, which has fragrance but no taste, to people who do good but lack learning; and the willow, with neither taste nor fragrance, to people who lack both learning and good deeds but who are still to be counted as members of the community in order for the community to be complete (Lev. R. 30:10–12).

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23:40. the product of hadar trees, branches of palm trees, boughs of leafy trees, and willows of the brook This is the source for the commandment to take the citron fruit (*etrog*) with the branches of willow (*aravah*) and myrtle (*hadas*) bound to a palm branch (*lulav*) to fulfill the *mitzvah* of waving the *lulav* during *Sukkot*.

23:42. live in booths seven days One can fulfill this commandment by either sleeping in the *sukkah* (booth) or eating one's meals there during the seven-day holiday. One is exempt from eating or dwelling in the *sukkah* if the weather or other factors cause undue hardship (BT Suk. 25b–26a,29a).

23:44. So Moses declared On festivals, this verse is recited aloud before the *Amidah* during the *Ma-ariv* service, and before the blessing over wine for the *Kiddush* preceding lunch.

you shall observe a sacred occasion when you shall practice self-denial. You shall do no work. ⁸You shall present to the LORD a burnt offering of pleasing odor: one bull of the herd, one ram, seven yearling lambs; see that they are without blemish. ⁹The grain offering with them—of choice flour with oil mixed in—shall be: three-tenths of a measure for a bull, two-tenths for the one ram, ¹⁰one-tenth for each of the seven lambs. ¹¹And there shall be one goat for a purification offering, in addition to the purification offering of expiation and the regular burnt offering with its grain offering, each with its libation.

¹²On the fifteenth day of the seventh month, you shall observe a sacred occasion: you shall not work at your occupations.—Seven days you shall observe a festival of the LORD.—¹³You shall present a burnt offering, a gift of pleasing odor to the LORD: Thirteen bulls of the herd, two rams, fourteen yearling lambs; they shall be without blemish. ¹⁴The grain offerings with them—of choice flour with oil mixed in—shall be: three-tenths of a measure for each of the thirteen bulls, two-tenths for each of the two rams, ¹⁵and one-tenth for each of the fourteen lambs. ¹⁶And there shall be one goat for a purification offering—in addition to the regular burnt offering, its grain offering and libation.

קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם וְעִנִּיתֶם אֶת-נַפְשֹׁתֵיכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ: ⁸וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם עֲלֶיהָ לִיהוָה רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ פָּר בֶּן-בָּקָר אֶחָד אֵיל אֶחָד כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה שִׁבְעָה תְּמִימִם יִהְיוּ לָכֶם: ⁹וּמִנְחֹתָם סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְפָר שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד: ¹⁰עֶשְׂרוֹן עֶשְׂרוֹן לְכֶבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעַת הַכִּבְשִׂים: ¹¹שְׁעִיר-עֲזִים אֶחָד חֲטָאת מִלֶּבֶד חֲטָאת הַכִּפָּרִים וְעֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד וּמִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכֶיהָ: ^פ
¹²וּבַחֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי מִקְרָא-קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם כָּל-מְלֹאכֶת עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וְחַגְתֶּם חָג לִיהוָה שִׁבְעַת יָמִים: ¹³וְהִקְרַבְתֶּם עֲלֶיהָ אִשָּׁה רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ לִיהוָה פָּרִים בְּנֵי-בָקָר שְׁלֹשָׁה עָשָׂר אֵילִם שְׁנַיִם כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי-שָׁנָה אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר תְּמִימִם יִהְיוּ: ¹⁴וּמִנְחֹתָם סֹלֶת בְּלוּלָה בְּשֶׁמֶן שְׁלֹשָׁה עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְפָר הָאֶחָד לְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר פָּרִים שְׁנַי עֶשְׂרֹנִים לְאֵיל הָאֶחָד לְשְׁנֵי הָאֵילִם: ¹⁵וְעֶשְׂרוֹן* עֶשְׂרוֹן לְכֶבֶשׂ הָאֶחָד לְאַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר כִּבְשִׂים: ¹⁶וְשְׁעִיר-עֲזִים אֶחָד חֲטָאת מִלֶּבֶד עֹלֹת הַתָּמִיד מִנְחָתָהּ וְנִסְכָּה: ^ס

v. 15. נקוד על ו' בתראה

and performed exclusively by the high priest (Lev. 16).

7. you shall practice self-denial Literally, “you shall afflict yourselves,” chiefly by fasting.

You shall do no work Literally, “you shall not do any work.” The same phrase is used for *Shabbat* (Lev. 23:3). It indicates a more severe

prohibition of work on these days than on the other festivals.

THE 15th TO THE 21st OF THE SEVENTH MONTH (vv. 12–34)

This sacred occasion is called “the Feast of Booths” (*Hag ha-Sukkot*) in Lev. 23:34 and Deut.

CHAPTER 29

13. Offerings for the week of *Sukkot* are staggering in number, a total of 98 lambs and 70 bullocks. (*Pesah* week requires only 16 bulls; no other holiday requires more than 2.) The Talmud teaches that the 70 bulls represent thanks-

giving offerings on behalf of the 70 nations of the world (BT Suk. 55b). In case some nations forget to be grateful to God, Israel brings a bull-ock offering (the most extravagant of the sacrifices) on their behalf on *Sukkot*, the festival of thanksgiving. One of Israel’s tasks in the world is to remind other nations to be grateful to God.

הַפְּטָרָה לְסוּכּוֹת (יוֹם שֵׁנִי)

HAFTARAH FOR SUKKOT, SECOND DAY

1 KINGS 8:2–21

The events described in this *haftarah* represent a total transformation of sacred life in ancient Israel and the public documentation of its legitimacy. Transference of the ancient holy objects from the temporary tabernacle to the permanent shrine of the Temple formally closes the period of wilderness wandering. It also concludes the transitional phase that King David inaugurated; for in his day, the Ark rested in various locales, including the city of David (Zion). It now finds its permanent home in the grand Temple of Jerusalem. Solomon, to link his actions with ancient authority, presents himself as the very son predicted in 2 Sam. 7:12–13 to realize David's cultic desire. With the transfer of the sacred objects to a new site and the proclamation of the king's divine right, God's word to David is now fulfilled.

Two events stand behind the depiction of Solomon's ceremony here, and add an aura of completion to the new moment. The first event is the processional. In the account of the Ark's transfer from Zion, with Solomon's participation in the accompanying sacrifices, the attentive reader can hardly miss an echo of David's participation in the events that first brought the Ark to the city of David (2 Sam. 6:12–19). The other event takes us back to an earlier time, when the Ark was constructed in the days of Moses. When that work was done, "the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the Presence of the LORD filled the Tabernacle" (Exod. 40:34). This was the sign that the Lord had accepted the work of human hands as a place fit for His dwelling. The *haftarah* alludes to this occasion by stating that when the Ark was deposited in the Holy of Holies "the cloud . . . filled the House of the LORD . . . for the Presence of the LORD filled the House of the LORD" (1 Kings 8:10–11). The wilderness tabernacle and

the Jerusalem temple are thus clearly linked. Implicitly, Solomon is deemed the true heir of Moses as well as David. To underscore this point, the text notes that Solomon's shrine housed the "two tablets of stone" hewn by Moses on Mount Sinai (v. 9).

RELATION OF THE *HAFTARAH* TO THE CALENDAR

The image of the cloud in the shrine (1 Kings 8:10–11) is a sign of God's abundant presence. It draws on old themes of providential guidance, recalling the cloud and the fire that attended the Israelites in the wilderness by day and by night. But it also integrates that image of nomadic movement with another figure of divine presence and protection. In that figure, God's Presence in the shrine overarches the city as a *sukkah*, providing shade and shelter for all (Isa. 4:5–6). Thus the imagery of divine indwelling in Solomon's shrine is raised to a new level, giving the blessing of God's permanent presence on earth.

"The LORD has chosen / To abide in a thick cloud" (1 Kings 8:12). This image of hope is the theological counterpoint to words of lamentation, uttered from the depths of despair: "You [God] have clothed Yourself [*sakkota*] in anger and pursued us, / You have slain without pity. / You have screened Yourself off [*sakkota*] with a cloud [*anan*], / That no prayer may pass through. / You have made us filth and refuse / In the midst of the peoples" (Lam. 3:43–45). Ancient motifs and language have been inverted here, conveying the horror of divine fury and absence. Jewish history has inherited these two biblical images of God's presence and withdrawal, and has lived them.

8 ²All the men of Israel gathered before King Solomon at the Feast, in the month of Ethanim—that is, the seventh month. ³When all the elders of Israel had come, the priests lifted the Ark ⁴and carried up the Ark of the LORD. Then the priests and the Levites brought the Tent of Meeting and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent. ⁵Meanwhile, King Solomon and the whole community of Israel, who were assembled with him before the Ark, were sacrificing sheep and oxen in such abundance that they could not be numbered or counted.

⁶The priests brought the Ark of the LORD's Covenant to its place underneath the wings of the cherubim, in the Shrine of the House, in the Holy of Holies; ⁷for the cherubim had their wings spread out over the place of the Ark, so that the cherubim shielded the Ark and its poles from above. ⁸The poles projected so that the ends of the poles were visible in the sanctuary in front of the Shrine, but they could not be seen outside; and there they remain to this day. ⁹There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets of stone which Moses placed there at Horeb, when the LORD made [a covenant] with the Israelites after their departure from the land of Egypt.

¹⁰When the priests came out of the sanctuary—for the cloud had filled the House of the LORD ¹¹and the priests were not able to remain and perform the service because of the cloud, for the Presence of the LORD filled the House of the LORD—¹²then Solomon declared:

ח ²וַיִּקְהָלוּ אֶל־הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה כָּל־אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל בִּירַח הָאֶתְנָנִים בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי: ³וַיָּבֹאוּ כָּל זְקֵנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּשְׂאוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־הָאָרוֹן: ⁴וַיַּעֲלוּ אֶת־אָרוֹן יְהוָה וְאֶת־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְאֶת־כָּל־כְּלֵי הַקֹּדֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר בְּאֹהֶל וַיַּעֲלוּ אֹתָם הַכֹּהֲנִים וְהַלְוִיִּם: ⁵וְהַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה וְכָל־עַדְת יִשְׂרָאֵל הַנוֹעֲדִים עָלָיו אֹתוֹ לִפְנֵי הָאָרוֹן מִזְבַּחִים צֹאן וּבָקָר אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יִסְפְּרוּ וְלֹא יִמְנוּ מֵרֶב:

⁶וַיָּבֹאוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־אָרוֹן בְּרִית־יְהוָה אֶל־מְקוֹמוֹ אֶל־דְּבִיר הַבַּיִת אֶל־קֹדֶשׁ הַקֹּדְשִׁים אֶל־תַּחַת כַּנְּפֵי הַכְּרוּבִים: ⁷כִּי הַכְּרוּבִים פְּרֻשִׁים כַּנְּפִים אֶל־מְקוֹם הָאָרוֹן וַיִּסְכּוּ הַכְּרוּבִים עַל־הָאָרוֹן וְעַל־בְּדוֹ מִלְמַעְלָה: ⁸וַיֵּאָרְכוּ הַבַּדִּים וַיֵּרְאוּ רֵאשֵׁי הַבַּדִּים מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ עַל־פְּנֵי הַדְּבִיר וְלֹא יֵרְאוּ הַחוּצָה וַיְהִיו שָׁם עַד הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה: ⁹אֵין בְּאָרוֹן רֶק שְׁנֵי לַחֹת הָאֲבָנִים אֲשֶׁר הִנִּיחַ שָׁם מֹשֶׁה בַּחֲרֹב אֲשֶׁר כָּרַת יְהוָה עִם־פְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּצֵאתָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם:

¹⁰וַיְהִי בְצֵאת הַכֹּהֲנִים מִן־הַקֹּדֶשׁ וְהַעֲנַן מָלֵא אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה: ¹¹וְלֹא־יָכְלוּ הַכֹּהֲנִים לַעֲמֹד לְשֶׁרֶת מִפְּנֵי הַעֲנַן כִּי־מָלֵא כְבוֹד־יְהוָה אֶת־בַּיִת יְהוָה: ¹²אָז אָמַר שְׁלֹמֹה יְהוָה אֱמֹר

1 Kings 8:2. Feast Hebrew: *hag*, that is, the festival of Booths (*Sukkot*) in the seventh month (see Lev. 23:34); it becomes the Sages' primary name for this holiday.

Ethanim Here identified with the seventh month, later called *Tishrei*.

4. Tent of Meeting In the Torah, the term refers to the tabernacle.

9. Following the tradition in Deut. 10:1–5.

In the ancient Near East, treaty texts were regularly deposited at the feet of the gods in a shrine; this is the custom behind depositing in the Ark—both in the tabernacle and in the Temple—the tablets elsewhere referred to as “the Pact” (*edut*; Exod. 25:16) or “of the Covenant” (*b'rit*; Deut. 9:11,15).

12. then Solomon declared After God had shown His favor.

“The LORD has chosen
To abide in a thick cloud:
¹³I have now built for You
A stately House,
A place where You
May dwell forever.”

¹⁴Then, with the whole congregation of Israel standing, the king faced about and blessed the whole congregation of Israel. ¹⁵He said:

“Praised be the LORD, the God of Israel, who has fulfilled with deeds the promise He made to my father David. For He said, ¹⁶‘Ever since I brought My people Israel out of Egypt, I have not chosen a city among all the tribes of Israel for building a House where My name might abide; but I have chosen David to rule My people Israel.’

¹⁷“Now my father David had intended to build a House for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. ¹⁸But the LORD said to my father David, ‘As regards your intention to build a House for My name, you did right to have that intention. ¹⁹However, you shall not build the House yourself; instead, your son, the issue of your loins, shall build the House for My name.’

²⁰“And the LORD has fulfilled the promise that He made: I have succeeded my father David and have ascended the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised. I have built the House for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel; ²¹and I have set a place there for the Ark, containing the covenant which the LORD made with our fathers when He brought them out from the land of Egypt.”

18. the LORD said to . . . David Through the prophet Nathan (2 Sam. 7:8–17).

לְשֹׁכֵן בְּעֶרְפֹּל:
בְּנֵה בְּנֵייתִי ¹³
בַּיִת זָבֵל לָךְ
מְכוּן לְשִׁבְתֶּךָ
עוֹלָמִים:

¹⁴וַיִּסַּב הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת־פָּנָיו וַיְבָרֶךְ אֶת כָּל־
קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְכָל־קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ:
¹⁵וַיֹּאמֶר

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּפִי
אֶת דְּוֹד אָבִי וּבִידוֹ מָלֵא לֵאמֹר: ¹⁶מִן־
הַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר הוֹצֵאתִי אֶת־עַמִּי אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל
מִמִּצְרַיִם לֹא־בַחַרְתִּי בְעִיר מִכָּל־שְׁבֵטֵי
יִשְׂרָאֵל לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לַיהוָה שְׁמִי שָׁם
וְאֶבְחַר בְּדוֹד לַיהוָה עַל־עַמִּי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

¹⁷וַיְהִי עִם־לֵבב דְּוֹד אָבִי לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת
לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ¹⁸וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה
אֶל־דְּוֹד אָבִי יַעַן אֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם־לִבְבְּךָ
לִבְנוֹת בַּיִת לְשְׁמִי הִטִּיבְתָּ כִּי הָיָה עִם־
לִבְבְּךָ: ¹⁹רַק אַתָּה לֹא תִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת כִּי
אִם־בְּנֶךָ הַיָּצֵא מִחֻלְצֶיךָ הוּא־יִבְנֶה הַבַּיִת
לְשְׁמִי:

²⁰וַיִּקֶם יְהוָה אֶת־דְּבָרֹו אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר וְאָקָם
תַּחַת דְּוֹד אָבִי וַאֲשַׁב עַל־כִּפְסֵא יִשְׂרָאֵל
כַּאֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר יְהוָה וְאֶבְנֶה הַבַּיִת לְשֵׁם
יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: ²¹וְאָשֵׁם שָׁם
מְקוֹם לְאָרוֹן אֲשֶׁר־שָׁם בְּרִית יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר
כָּרַת עִם־אַבְתֵּינֹו בְּהוֹצִיאֹו אֶתֶם מֵאֶרֶץ
מִצְרַיִם: ח