

THE BRIDE'S  
ROBE MADE  
WITH  
INTEGRITY,  
COMPASSION  
AND MERCY

SUKKOT 2016

# Amanda Buys' Spiritual Covering

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**It's time for one of the annual cycle of Feasts.**

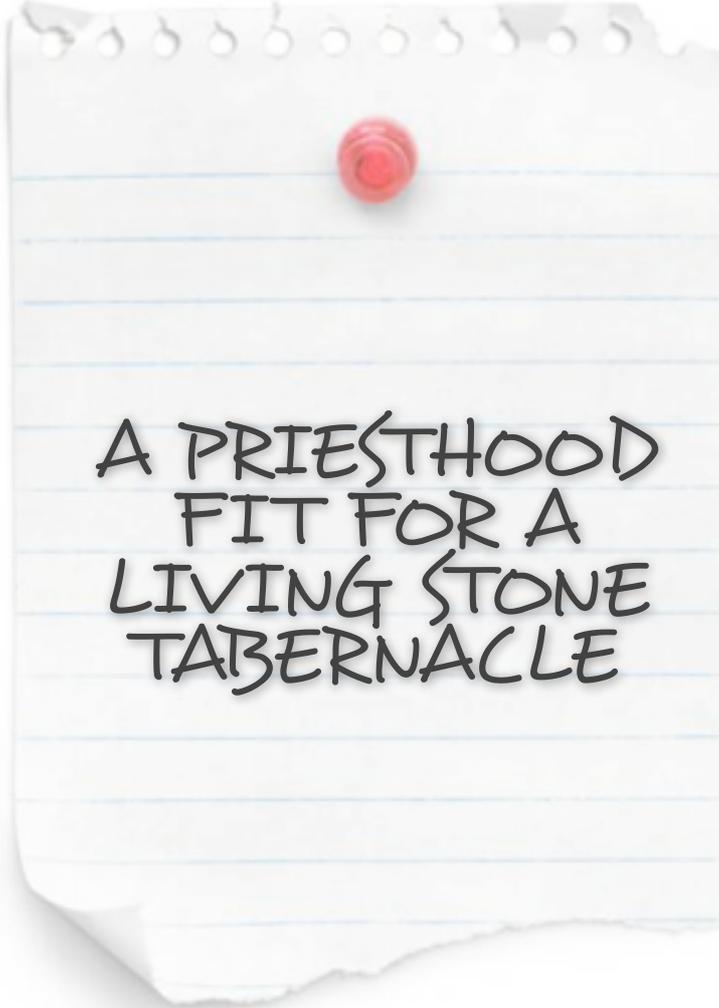
**God destines that man will, in his *worship*, revolve around the Tabernacle during the course of the year being constantly reminded of the basic building blocks of our relationship with Him.**

**The Pesach/Passover allows us to think about our *deliverance* and to annually make sure that we are living as truly "free men".**

**The Shavout / Pentecost allows us to consider whether our diligence to study His Word and listen to the Holy Spirit are still at that level when we can safely say that we hear the Small Still Voice of God**

**This final set of Feasts, Sukkot / Tabernacles reminds us that we are the *Bride*. It is now time to consider whether our wedding robe is pure / unwrinkled and shining. The Feast of Trumpets heralds in this time of INTIMACY.**

**The trumpet is made of pure silver: *is your life reflecting the purity of an expectant Bride?***



A PRIESTHOOD  
FIT FOR A  
LIVING STONE  
TABERNACLE

# A PRIESTHOOD FIT FOR A LIVING STONE TABERNACLE

Our calling to be set apart comes only fifty days into our walk of freedom from slavery. We have been set free from the physical / earthly constraints that kept us bound and captive. Now we are asked to walk in full liberty - in other words, in the full potential that God has planned for us.

*Questions to ask yourself:*

- 🕒 What can you achieve in the Kingdom of God?
- 🕒 How bright will your Menorah's light shine?
- 🕒 How will you be a blessing to the nations? And
- 🕒 What are you doing to reach this goal?

Remember, Paul tells us, some works are wood, hay and stubble, whilst others are silver and gold - this is **potential** in the spiritual realm.

I know that it seems “worldly” to use non-Biblical terms to describe something, but sometimes it is an appropriate analogy. No one accepts a job offer and starts to work, unless the company first fully explains exactly what the tasks are that make up the “job description”. We need **to know exactly** what each different task is that makes up the completed work-piece; we need to be empowered to do each one of the tasks with **appropriate training** and experience, and then we need to be released into the work environment to do our best.

## WHAT IS OUR JOB DESCRIPTION?

***Exodus 19:5-6*** ‘Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep My Covenant, then you will be My own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you will be a Kingdom of cohanim for Me, a nation set apart.’ These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra’el.

- a) **A set-apart people** - God's own treasure (*Segulah*) from among all of the peoples.
- b) **A Kingdom of Priests** (a *Mamkekhet Kohanim*).
- c) **A Holy Nation** (a *Goy Nation*).

These words get repeated often and easily. Many believers “think” that by accepting Y’shua / Jesus as Messiah they are automatically functioning at all three levels. Much of this belief is founded on the misconception that all we need is “grace” without really studying the full “job description”.

## ARE WE FUNCTIONING AT ALL THREE LEVELS OPTIMALLY?

The Torah reveals an **interesting dilemma**. As we progress through the Bible, we will find the terms “*segulah* / treasure” and “*goy Kadosh* / Holy Nation” **quite regularly**, used in relation to Israel as the picture of the Body of Messiah at that time.

These various terms are used to describe (at times) the following:

- 🕒 To exhort someone to a higher level of commitment and holiness,
- 🕒 To identify prophetically, a state of unique purpose.

However, the term “***Mamlekhet Kohanim* / Kingdom of Priests**” **seems to disappear** entirely until we reach the end-time prophets of Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. All of these describe the return of the Messiah, of a restored Kingdom, and of a glorious victory for God.

The prophets, when they spoke, knew little of the Order of Melchizedek, and so in many instances we find a reference to a restored order of Levi... but Messiah Y’shua / Jesus tells us that the old priesthood must be cancelled / set aside for the priesthood that will serve in the Tabernacle of Heaven.

***Malachi 3:2-3*** *But who can endure the day when He comes? Who can stand when He appears? For He will be like a Refiner’s Fire, like the soapmaker’s lye. He will sit, testing and purifying the silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, refining them like gold and silver, so that they can bring offerings to ADONAI uprightly.*



## WHAT HAPPENED AT MOUNT SINAI THAT CAUSED THIS?

The children of Israel walk all the way to Mount Sinai in the form of a cleansing preparation. They are “seeing” a God that is doing miracles for them, and reflects His love and compassion visibly, daily. At the Mountain, they will prepare for this wedding feast. Moses tells them that they will become a Bride - and gives them the “job description” that we spoke about earlier.

The people are excited!! They shout out... **we will do and we will hear—I DO!!!**

**Exodus 19:5-8** *“Now if you will pay careful attention to what I say and keep My Covenant, then you will be My own treasure from among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine; and you will be a Kingdom of cohanim for Me, a nation set apart.” These are the words you are to speak to the people of Isra’el. 7 Moshe came, summoned the leaders of the people and presented them with all these words which ADONAI had ordered him to say. All the people answered as one, “Everything ADONAI has said, we will do.” Moshe reported the words of the people to ADONAI.*

The great day arrives. The mountain is covered with the cloud of Glory - we have the perfect “Chuppah<sup>1</sup>”. The Bridegroom is on time, the Bride (the children of Israel) stand under the **Chuppah**.

The Bridegroom starts to speak, to read the terms of the **Ketubah<sup>2</sup>** — the Words of an Everlasting Promise. But suddenly the Bride steps out from the **Chuppah** and she turns to Moses and says:

**We cannot stay here—will you please go under the Chuppah in our place!!**



**Exodus 20:18-21** *All the people experienced the thunder, the lightning, the sound of the shofar, and the mountain smoking. When the people saw it, they trembled. Standing at a distance, they said to Moshe, “You, speak with us; and we will listen. But don’t let God speak with us, or we will die.” Moshe answered the people, “Don’t be afraid, because God has come only to test you and make you fear Him, so that you won’t commit sins.” So the people stood at a distance, but Moshe approached the thick darkness where God was.*

What Bride does that? What should the Bridegroom do?

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<sup>1</sup> A canopy beneath which Jewish marriage ceremonies are performed. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuppah>

<sup>2</sup> Is a special type of Jewish prenuptial agreement. It is considered an integral part of a traditional Jewish marriage, and outlines the rights and responsibilities of the groom, in relation to the bride. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ketubah>

God chooses to go ahead and to “build” the connection that will enable His people to return... And we will return to this thought a little later.

## THE JOB DESCRIPTION

### a) A set-apart people — *Segulah* - “treasure”

This term defines your *uniqueness from all of the “other” people in the world*. And the way that you achieve this status is **by painting the Blood on the doorposts of your life / heart**.

In today’s terms we say that you accept the Lordship of Y’shua / Jesus in your life, and become an adopted son / daughter of the Covenant. In the terms of father Abraham and his family, we say that you offer the lamb and celebrate the Passover meal.

***We are treasures, because we are Sons / Daughters of Abraham.***

***Let’s look at something interesting for a moment - a coin found recently dating back 2000 years.***



#### ***What about the coin?***

As a piece on its own, it is certainly not worth much. But as evidence of a kingdom of Israelites that ruled and took possession of the Land that GOD gave them, it means a huge amount.

Items such as this verify the Biblical account. In turn, they give us confidence that the story recorded so long ago will be repeated because we serve the same faithful God.

### b) A Holy Nation — *Goy Kadosh*

We need to be a set-apart people that live to the standard of a Divine code. We call this accepting the Yoke of the Torah<sup>3</sup> AND walking in obedience to the Father’s wishes.

This path of obedience is set out for us in those fifty days from the Reed Sea to Mount Sinai.

The entire journey is described in what is known as a “chiastic structure”. Let us set out the **chiastic structure** first, and then analyze the individual steps that lead to Holiness.

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<sup>3</sup> Torah means instructions and teachings in Hebrew.

**Sanctify to Me** -They are Mine - the first born: **Exodus 13:1-2**

*Instructing* the children: **Exodus 13:3-1**

**War** against the enemy (Egypt): **Exodus 14:1-15:21**

*Dealing* with thirst—the water at Marah: **Exodus 15:22-26**



***Mannah***

*Dealing* with thirst – the water at Horeb: **Exodus 17:1-7**

**War** against the enemy (Amalek): **Exodus 17:8-16**

*Instructing* the people—Judges **Exodus 18:1-27**

**You will be unto Me...** and you will be to Me... Entering Canaan: **Exodus 19:1-6**

## THE WALK OF BECOMING HOLY

### A. **We are called to renew our hearts, souls and minds.**

It starts off with the concept of making the life-long decision **to set aside my own ideas / goals / ego—the so-called “Old Man”, and renew my mind** in a way that allows me to seek out the God-given ideas and plans that I should be following.

### B. **We are called to be role models.**

We **set the example** for the direct family as well as those who we lead in the broader community. This lifestyle of walking in obedience to the Commandments, of searching for the truth in the Torah, of worshiping in Spirit and Truth at all times, as well as our willingness to repent and ask forgiveness whenever we have failed, will set the norm for those who follow.

This same concept applies to the **role of judge... to protect those who have less, and to be scrupulous in our search for truth.**

### C. **We are called for war.**

Firstly, we are called to cleanse the Land of Promise. In the physical this means dealing with the Canaanites, while in the spiritual this means that we put on the armour of God and go to war against the hierarchy of the kingdom of darkness.

Importantly, we understand that there is a spirit that will attack the Body of Messiah at all times - **the spirit of the Amalekites**. This spirit is not about the individual, **but about the destruction of the concept of the Glory of God, and seeks to remove the Body of Messiah entirely.**

#### **D. We are called to drink the Water of the Word / Torah.**

We do this in order to experience the sweetness thereof, to revel in the healing that comes when God throws His stick into the muddy waters of our past and hurts / wounds. The truth is that it is only the Word of God that can deal with the bitterness in our lives. We live in a broken world.

**The potential to get wounded and hurt remains a daily risk of living. We must therefore be prepared to go to the Waters-of-the-Word on a regular basis in order to receive healing.** Sanctification is a continuous process of meeting with God.

#### **E. We eat daily of the MANNA.**

This wilderness walk is focused on the satisfaction of the physical man. It gave life to those who needed some nourishment. Consider that the Israelites left with many sheep / cattle / camels and so on—yet it seems that none of these were consumed during the march. People lived on what they received daily.



In this process, two very important lessons were taught:

1. Everyone in the household had to collect their own portion.
2. Everyone understood the requirement to rest on the Shabbat. (By not collecting any Manna.)

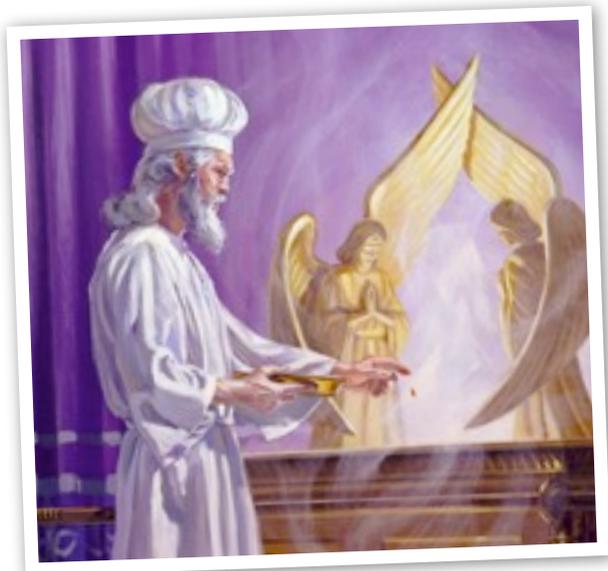
As we listen to the Words of Y'shua / Jesus, we understand that this manna, **was in fact spiritual food...it was a physical form of the Word of God / Torah / Bible.**

It is all about digesting the Commandments of God, until the time that all that comes out of your mouth and out of your heart is the Word of God. After feeding the people with physical bread again - (remember there are two incidences when the people are fed) He says:

**John 6:26-40** *Yeshua answered, "Yes, indeed! I tell you, you're not looking for Me because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the bread and had all you wanted! **Don't work for the food which passes away but for the food that stays on into Eternal Life, which the Son of Man will give you. For this is the One on whom God the Father has put His Seal.** 28 So they said to Him, "What should we do in order to perform the works of God?" Yeshua answered, "Here's what the work of God is: to trust in the One He sent!"*

**30** “They said to him, “Nu, what miracle will You do for us, so that we may see it and trust You? What work can You perform? **Our fathers ate manna in the desert** — as it says in the Tanakh, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ Yeshua said to them, “**Yes, indeed! I tell you it wasn’t Moshe who gave you the Bread from Heaven. But My Father is giving you the genuine Bread from Heaven; for God’s Bread is the One Who comes down out of Heaven and gives life to the world.**” **34** They said to him, “Sir, give us this Bread from now on.” Yeshua answered, “**I am the Bread which is Life! Whoever comes to Me will never go hungry, and whoever trusts in Me will never be thirsty.** I told you that you have seen but still don’t trust. Everyone the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will certainly not turn away. For I have come down from Heaven to do not My Own will but the Will of the One Who sent Me. And this is the Will of the One who sent Me: that I should not lose any of all those He has given Me but should raise them up on the Last Day. Yes, this is the Will of My Father: that all who see the Son and trust in Him should have Eternal Life, and that I should raise them up on the Last Day.”

### c) Functioning as a Kingdom of Priests.



We have noted that the Torah becomes **silent with the usage of this terminology**, until we see the prophetic end-time messages that speak of the New Jerusalem.

Can this really mean that we cannot function in this position? Surely not!!! After all, the Apostle Peter tells us about the Living Stone Tabernacle, about the Great High Priest Y’shua / Jesus, and that we form this end-time vision.

We are described as a Kingdom of Priests:

**1 Peter 2:4-10** As you come to Him, the Living **Stone**, rejected by people but **chosen** by God and **precious** to Him, you yourselves, as living **stones**, are being built into a spiritual house to be **cohanim** set apart for God to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Him through Yeshua the Messiah. This is why the Tanakh says, **Look! I am laying in Tziyon a Stone, a Chosen and precious Cornerstone; and whoever rests his trust on it will certainly not be humiliated.** **7** Now to you who keep trusting, he is **precious**. But to those who are not trusting, **The very Stone that the builders rejected has become the Cornerstone;** **8** Also He is a **Stone that will make people stumble, a Rock over which they will trip.** They are stumbling at the Word, disobeying it — as had been planned. But you are a **chosen people, the King’s cohanim a holy nation, a people for God to possess!** Why? In order for you to declare the praises of the One who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light. Once you were **not a people**, but now you are **God’s people**; before, you **had not received mercy**, but now you **have received mercy.**

## PRIESTS NEED A TABERNACLE

Earlier we saw that the Bride has “walked away” from the Chuppah. The Bride must be intimate with the Bridegroom—must engage fully with heart, soul and mind.

### Can you give yourself completely to the Bridegroom?

The fear to give of yourself is a reality, still today. That moment of absolute commitment will still cause anxiety. The degree of **trust and transparency** that each party has shown towards the other, will determine the level of anticipation, ... or the level of fear.

**\*\*NUGGET\*\*** The Tabernacle is not a response to the sin of the Golden Calf. Follow the order of the events as they are recorded in Exodus chapters from 25 through to 30, where we see that the detail of exactly how the Tabernacle is to be constructed is being laid out for Moses.

It's only later in Chapter 32 that we read of the so-called Sin of the Golden Calf, i.e. that we read of all of the events at the foot of the mountain.

The Tabernacle was God's plan from the beginning, in order to bring mankind back into a 'type of the Garden of Eden INTIMACY'.

This sin, temporarily suspended the right of the firstborn to serve in the Tabernacle and allowed for a substitute priesthood—that of the Levites, to serve until Y'shua / Jesus came to reinstate the priesthood in the Order of Melchizedek.

## THE TABERNACLE IS THE WAY TO INTIMACY

Let us just make sure that we are all on the same page. The Tabernacle is the **evidence** that there is a **permanent, and intimate bond between God and His people**. In other words, is a form of a wedding ring!!!

But in order to be valid, legitimate, **the Tabernacle must be fully functional**. That means, we must be *bringing offerings*, we must be *filling the Menorah* with new pure oil, we must be *breaking open the shew-bread of Life*. More importantly, the **priests must be Holy and Clean**.

## CAN WE EXPAND ON THE JOB DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIESTS?

Let us look at a number of passages that define the role of the priest. We will take these individual aspects and then flesh them out to help us understand our end-time role in the Tabernacle of Living Stones.

**Hosea 2:16** On that day, says ADONAI you will call Me, 'Ishi [my husband]'

**Jeremiah 2:1-2** The word of ADONAI came to me: “Go and shout in the ears of Yerushalayim that this is what ADONAI says: **‘I remember your devotion when you were young; how, as a bride, you loved me; how you followed me through the desert, through a land not sown.’**”

**Malachi 2:1** Now, cohanim, this command is for you. If you won’t listen, if you won’t pay attention to honoring My Name,” says ADONAI-Tzva’ot, “then I will send the curse on you; I will turn your blessings into curses. Yes, I will curse them, because you pay no attention. I will reject your seed; I will throw dung in your faces, the dung from your festival offerings; and you will be carted off with it. Then you will know that I sent you this command to affirm My Covenant with Levi,” says ADONAI-Tzva’ot. “My Covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave him these things. It was also one of fear, and he feared Me; he was in awe of My Name. The true Torah was in his mouth, and no dishonesty was found on his lips; he walked with me in peace and uprightness and turned many away from sin. A cohen’s lips should safeguard knowledge, and people should seek Torah from his mouth, because he is the messenger of ADONAI-Tzva’ot.”

**Malachi 2:8** “But you turned away from the path, you caused many to fail in the Torah, you corrupted the Covenant of Levi,” says ADONAI-Tzva’ot. “Therefore I have in turn made you contemptible and vile before all the people, **because you did not keep My Ways but were partial in applying the Torah.**”

Have you ever noticed that every time the prophets speak of the Israelites that have deviated from God’s path, they use the terminology, a people who “*break the marriage covenant*”?

Our “**faith**” – Hebrew: “**emunah**”, does not therefore mean a set of rules / Commandments that must be “kept”. Instead our **faith** should reflect the values of the marriage covenant - words such as **fidelity, faithfulness, honouring your spouse, loyalty, trust, love.**

**The “job description” of the priest should include these acts of love!!!** Now, let us make a list of some of the activities that define a priest:

A Priest:

### **1. Seeks to call God, “my Husband”.**

All too often leadership becomes all about the leader. Followers follow the leader, **instead of been pointed in the direction of the Tabernacle and the Great High Priest, Y’shua / Jesus.** The greatest gift of a leader is being able to fade away from the limelight and let the people have an uninterrupted view of the Holy of Holies.



**This only happens when we are sold out in a Covenant Marriage and all that matters is that your “other half” is blessed. We seek to call Him “husband”.**

***Have you ever done this?***

## **2. Follows God faithfully through the wilderness times.**

The wilderness journey is revealed in a process of many stops and starts, of times of victory and deep moments of darkness as we fail the test of the day. Each stage is a different test, or a different level of the same test. **Our character is developed in the hot sun of the day and the cold air of the wilderness nights.**

We are faithful when we are able to keep our eyes permanently on the Cloud / Fire. We may see interesting sights, pretty scenery, but we should be careful not to wander too far from the camp...

**We must always have a line of sight to the Tabernacle.**

## **3. Honors God’s Name.**

For many years people have associated this with the understanding that we should not use God’s NAME in vain. Honouring God’s Name really means something more:

- 🕒 It means that I should **live daily** in a **manner so that His Glory can be seen in every action that I take.**
- 🕒 It does not help that I can say some nice words, but my actions do not reflect **the art of loving my neighbour.**

## **4. Has the Truth of God’s Word on his lips, always!**

The Torah is the Truth. We should avoid the traditions of man, we should avoid relying on others to interpret the Bible for us, and we should not allow the fear of man to cause us to follow the masses of man’s thinking.

**The Torah is ageless.** Some of the Commandments are written in terms and examples of generations ago. The **principles behind the Commandments** are still valid.

*Think. Think. Think.*

**Enquire from God / Holy Spirit for an updated explanation of the principles of the Commandments - these principles are the Truth. Walk in them!!! Speak them!!!**

## **5. Walks in righteousness.**

One tends to think that this concept is purely about making the correct choices for oneself. Think however, differently - to walk in righteousness also means that I make good Godly choices in respect of my direct neighbour as well as the broader community - what is good for them.

It means seeking justice for those who are less privileged, as well as judging fairly in all circumstances. It means seeking the Truth in God's WORD and only speaking that which the Holy Spirit reveals.

## **6. Turns away from sin.**

Man is blessed with the **gift of freedom of choice**. At times this gift seems like an onerous burden. Tests come our way, and the opportunity for gain (financially, positional, and so on,) is great, and this makes choice more difficult.

For this reason, man must learn to do two things:

- 🕒 **Build a value-based character** – this will help you in times when pressure decisions need to be made.
- 🕒 Define all areas of sin that can tempt you and **then build pathways in your mind** to help make the choice to turn away automatically.

## **7. Safeguards knowledge.**

We all become zealous to proclaim the goodness / faithfulness of God as soon as we experience the joy of salvation and the realization that we have been blessed with a purpose.

Our studies reveal the principles and the beauty of the Covenant, and as soon as we understand our position as a Son / Daughter, that is also a Bride, then it's hard not to declare your love to all and sundry.

God warns us—*“Do not throw your pearls before the swine,”* It sounds harsh... But God is suggesting that **you are slow to speak, quick to hear, and that if you listen to the guidance of the Holy Spirit you will know when / what to speak that will build and not break the Kingdom of God.**

Joining the family is freedom of choice. It is up to each person to use his or her discretion. We should avoid unnecessary arguments that would destroy *Shalom*

## **8. Applies the Complete Torah.**

Man tends to form opinions. Man tends to develop theories and models that they think will explain their position to others. Man then creates the “proof” for his idea by selectively **choosing verses that support the plan and discarding those that do not.**

Y'shua / Jesus tells us, not to “add to” or “take away from” the WORD of God. Simply said, the complete Torah is the Glory of God. Stay with it, and the Torah will Covenant with you.

### **Priests must have:**

- 👤 The **capacity** to enter the Chuppah,
- 👤 The **will** to enter into Divine encounters with God,
- 👤 The **desire** to close the distance between themselves and God,
- 👤 The **ability** to teach and lead others down the same path towards the Garden of Eden.

And what will we see when the Kingdom of Priests operate in their calling?

**Zechariah 8:20-23** ADONAI-Tzva'ot says, 'In the future, peoples and inhabitants of many cities will come; the inhabitants of one city will travel to another and say, "We must go to ask ADONAI's favor and consult ADONAI-Tzva'ot. I'll go too." Yes, many peoples and powerful nations will come to consult ADONAI-Tzva'ot in Yerushalayim and to ask ADONAI's favor.' ADONAI-Tzva'ot says, 'When that time comes, ten men will take hold — speaking all the languages of the nations — will grab hold of the cloak of a Jew and say, "We want to go with you, because we have heard that God is with you."

## PRIESTS NEED A VISION

We have grown up inside of a worldly system of leadership. This system is structured on the ego and desires of mankind, heavily influenced by culture, and modern humanistic thinking.

If we take the worldly model for leadership / business / values, and try to apply it to God's purpose to build the Body of Messiah, and impact the nations, then we will surely fail.

God says: "**You are to be a blessing to all nations.**" This statement is very often seen as the call of taking the Gospel to the nations—in other words evangelization. Clearly, there is much more to understanding of this statement: it is the call that we will **bless** by revealing the Glory of God in what we **do**, in actions that change people's circumstances.

**Zechariah 14:6-11** On that day, there will be neither bright light nor thick darkness; and one day, known to ADONAI, will be neither day nor night, although by evening there will be light. On that day, fresh water will flow out from Yerushalayim, half toward the eastern sea and half toward the western sea, both summer and winter. Then ADONAI will be King over the whole world. On that day ADONAI will be the Only One, and His Name will be the Only Name. **10** All the land will be made like the 'Aravah, from Geva to Rimmon in the Negev. Yerushalayim will be raised up and inhabited where she is, from Binyamin's Gate to the place where the earlier gate stood, and on to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hanan'el to the king's winepresses. People will live there, the curse will be broken, and Yerushalayim will live in safety.

## *A FINAL THOUGHT*

There are **THREE parts** to the calling to be Priest or Bride. We need to function in all three. We must develop the zeal and desire to approach the King.

1. We must **repent** of every time that we choose to stand back and allow someone else to represent us under the Chuppah:

*“Father, **forgive us for being fearful**. Grant us the courage to stand and be true to our calling.”*

2. We must enter the Tabernacle. It’s the only place where He will be!!!

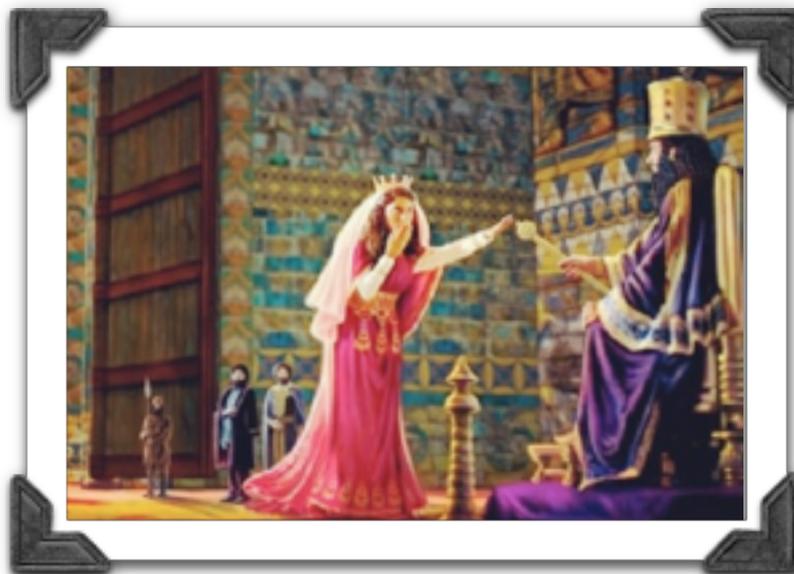
3. **Sacrifice** your own will on the altar. Therefore, **Mikveh**<sup>4</sup> in the Waters of the Torah!

**Take note:** the seal of the High Priest was the symbol of the Menorah.



Bring **fresh oil** for the Menorah. Bake a new **shew-bread** of the Word of God, and may the Fruit of the Holy Spirit be a glorious First Fruit offering. Pour out **the incense of a Life of loving obedience**.

*And enter in....*



*His scepter is raised towards you today.*

## **SHALOM.**

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<sup>4</sup> Please see J2F 4 Understanding Water (Mikvah) Baptism And The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit <http://www.kanaanministries.org/downloads/?did=171>

# *The Priestly Blessing ...*

*Numbers 6:24-26*

“<sup>24</sup> The LORD bless thee, and keep thee: <sup>25</sup> The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee: <sup>26</sup> The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.”

# *The Priestly Blessing ...*

Hebraic Translation<sup>5</sup>

"YHVH will kneel before you presenting gifts, and He will guard you with a hedge of protection, YHVH will illuminate the wholeness of His Being toward you, bringing order, and He will provide you with love, sustenance, and friendship, YHVH will lift up the wholeness of His Being and look upon you, and He will set in place all you need to be whole and complete."

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<sup>5</sup> Translation by Jeff A. Benner, for more information, please see [http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/12\\_blessing.html](http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/12_blessing.html)

# The Priestly Blessing<sup>1</sup>

יְבַרְכֶּךָ יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמְרֶךָ:

and may he guard you the LORD may he bless you

May the LORD<sup>2</sup> bless you<sup>3</sup> and keep you<sup>4</sup>

יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיַּחַנְךָ:

and show you favor on you his face the LORD May he shine

May the LORD make His face<sup>5</sup> shine<sup>6</sup> upon you and be gracious<sup>7</sup> to you

יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם:

peace for you and establish on you his face the LORD may he lift up

May the LORD lift up<sup>8</sup> his face to you and give you peace<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This blessing is (ritually) recited (by the kohanim) during synagogue services during *Nesiat Kapayim* ("the Raising of the Hands"), though it is also recited over children on Friday night before the start of the Shabbat meal or as a bedtime blessing.

<sup>2</sup> The name *YHVH* (יהוה) represents God's attributes of love and mercy (מִדַּת הַרַחֲמִים), in contradistinction to the name *Elohim* (אֱלֹהִים), which represents God's attribute of justice and power as our Creator.

<sup>3</sup> בְּרַכָּה (*b'rachah*). Jewish tradition considers this both material and spiritual prosperity. Pirkei Avot 3:15 says, "If there is no flour, there is no Torah," by which is meant that material benefits are intended to help you pursue study of Torah. The first occurrence of the word "blessing" in the Scriptures pertains to *pru urvu* (פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ), "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:22).

<sup>4</sup> שָׁמַר (*shamar*): To guard, protect, heed, as in the exercise of diligent care. Only God has the power to secure the conferred blessing and keep it from turning sour or from fading away.

<sup>5</sup> The word for "face" (פָּנִים) is plural with the 3rd person singular ending. It is considered metaphorical since God is incorporeal. The plural form is thought by some to indicate God's revealed and hidden attributes in creation.

<sup>6</sup> The hiphil verb (יָאֵר) comes from the word "light" (אֹר), and is thought to refer to God's wisdom. "May God enlighten you" with His wisdom, i.e., the Divine Light that preceded the work of creation (Gen. 1:3).

<sup>7</sup> May God grant you grace or favor (חֵן), i.e., to understand the "breadth and length and height and depth" of God's love (Eph. 3:18). Grace refers to the bestowal of an undeserved gift. The blessing is bestowed even though unearned or unmerited.

<sup>8</sup> Since one's face is an indication of the heart's attitude, Rashi says that this means God will suppress His anger by "looking at you" (if God is angry at you, He "turns His face away" and refuses to admit your presence). The "lifting of face" also pictures God lifting you up as a father might lift up his child in joy. The "showing of face" indicates spiritual intimacy.

<sup>9</sup> All of the other blessings are useless without the establishment of inner peace, and therefore it is the seal of the blessing. Shalom (שְׁלוֹם) is not simply the absence of strife, but a balance and harmony between the finite and infinite, the temporal and the eternal, the material and the spiritual realms. Shalom is a gift from Sar Shalom (שָׂר שְׁלוֹם), the Prince of Peace.