

OFF-RAMP TORAH

A JUDICIOUS DEPARTURE FROM
THIS WEEK'S TORAH PORTION

October 03, 2026



**"Fostering diverse modes of attention to textual details cultivates
correlative forms of attention to the world and divine reality"**

Michael Fishbane (1943-), *Sacred Attunement: A Jewish Theology*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לַעֲסוֹק בְּדִבְרֵי תוֹרָה:

TO START: Parashat-haShavu'a Stats



walking through together

Weekly Portion: Sh'mini 'Atzeret

Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17

supplemented by details of the
sacrificial offerings prescribed
for this holiday in

Numbers 29:35-30:1

WHERE WE'RE GOING INSTEAD, and why

I Kings 8:54-66

Context: Sh'mini 'Atzeret is a stand-alone holiday, prescribed in the Torah as a de facto eighth—and therefore concluding—day for the week-long Feast of Sukkot.

Content: That theme of 'Atzeret ("conclusion; completion" - from the Hebrew ע-צ-ר "stop-ping") finds its parallel in the assigned Haftarah selection for the day. It describes how King Solomon concludes his prayer to God, in dedication of the newly built Jerusalem Temple, with a blessing to the people who had labored together to build it.

- Setting the Stage -



בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי מִקְרָא קֹדֶשׁ יִהְיֶה לָכֶם
עֲצָרַת הוּא

A) Leviticus 23:36 - ...and on the Eighth Day
[following the week of Sukkot] you are to observe
a sacred occasion...a Feast of Cessation.

יוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצָרַת תִּהְיֶה לָכֶם

B) Numbers 29:35 - The Eighth Day [of
Sukkot] will be for you a Feast of Cessation....

- more over

וּנְמַלְתֶּם אֶת בָּשָׂר עֲרֻלְתְּכֶם וְהָיָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם

C) Genesis 17:11 - The flesh of your foreskins is to be circumcised, as the sign of the Covenant between me and yourselves;

וּבְן שְׁמֹנֶת יָמִים יְמוּל לָכֶם כָּל זָכָר לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם
throughout the generations, at age **eight days** your every male is to be circumcised.

מִלֶּאֱתָדָּה וְדִמְעָדָּה לֹא תֵאַחֵר בְּכוֹר בְּגִידָה תִּתֵּן לִי

D) Exodus 22:28-29 - Of all your profits and gains, you are not to delay in presenting Me the first-born of your progeny [in dedication after thirty days].

כִּן תַּעֲשֶׂה לְשֶׁרֶד לְצֹאֲנֶךָ שִׁבְעַת יָמִים יִהְיֶה עִם אִמּוֹ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי תִתְּנוּ לִי
You shall do the same for the [first-born of] your herd and your flock: **for seven days** it will remain with its mother— then, on **the eighth day**, you are to present it to Me.

E) Exodus 29:37 -

שִׁבְעַת יָמִים תִּכְפֹּר עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
וְקִדַּשְׁתָּ אֹתוֹ

For those seven days you are to perform dedication rituals for the Altar, **in order to consecrate it,**

וְהָיָה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים כָּל
הַנִּגַּע בַּמִּזְבֵּחַ יִקְדָּשׁ

so that the Altar will become most **sacred**; any who touch it, will be consecrated.

F) Leviticus 9:1-2 -

וַיְהִי בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי קָרָא מֹשֶׁה
לְאַהֲרֹן . . . וַיֹּאמֶר אֶל אֶהֱרֹן

Then, on **the eighth day** [succeeding the seven-day ordination ritual], Moses summoned Aaron and told him:

קַח לָךְ עֵגֶל בֶּן בָּקָר לְחֻטְאֹת וְאַיִל
לְעֹלָה תְּמִימִם וְהִקְרִב לִפְנֵי יְהוָה

“Take yourself an unblemished ox and ram for a burnt-offering, and **present them before The Eternal One.**”

I Kings 8

King Solomon kneels in prayer before the Altar of God for the dedication of the Temple in Jerusalem

from *Biblische Geschichte*
by Christoph von Schmid
1859



8:54] - When Solomon finished offering all this prayer and supplication to The Eternal One, he rose from where he had been **kneeling** in front of the Altar of The Eternal One with **his hands spread out** heavenward.

וַיְהִי כְּכֹלֹת שְׁלֹמֹה לְהִתְפַּלֵּל אֶל
יְהוָה אֶת כָּל הַתְּפִלָּה וְהַתְּחִנָּה
הַזֹּאת קָם מִלִּפְנֵי מִזְבֵּחַ יְהוָה מִכְרַע
עַל בְּרָכָיו וְכִפְּיוֹ פְּרָשׁוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם

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“kneeling” כָּרַע
in Christian prayer



“raising the hands” رَفَعَ اليَدَيْنِ
in Sunni Muslim prayer

וְאֵנַחֲנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים וּמוֹדִים

G) from the 'Aleinu prayer - ...whereas we **kneel**, and prostrate ourselves, and give thanks לפני מֶלֶךְ מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא before the King Who is the **King** over kings— The Holy And Blessed One!

כְּמַעֲשֵׂה אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁבַּתֶּם בָּהּ לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ

H) Leviticus 19:3 - **You are not to** emulate the practices of the land of Egypt where you used to live,

וְכַמַּעֲשֵׂה אֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מֵבִיא אֲתֶכֶם שָׁמָּה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ וּבַחֲקֵיתֵיהֶם **לֹא תֵלְכוּ**

nor of the land of Canaan to which I am taking you— **for you are not to walk in their paths.**

8:55] - Standing, he blessed the entire assemblage of Israel aloud: [8:56] - “Praised be The Eternal One, who has given respite to His People, in accord with what He spoke. Not a single word has failed of all the gracious promises He had made through His servant Moses!

וַיַּעֲמֵד וַיְבָרֵךְ אֶת כָּל קְהַל יִשְׂרָאֵל קוֹל גָּדוֹל לֵאמֹר בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר נָתַן מְנוּחָה לַעַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל כָּכֹל אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר לֹא נִפְל דְּבַר אֶחָד מִכָּל דְּבָרוֹ הַטּוֹב אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר בְּיַד מֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ

וְעַבְרַתֶּם אֶת הַיַּרְדֵּן וּיִשְׁבַּתֶּם בְּאֶרֶץ אֲשֶׁר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מְנַחֵל אֶתְכֶם

I) Deuteronomy 12:10 - For you will be crossing this Jordan River to settle into this land, with which The Eternal One, your God, is endowing you;

וְהֵנִיחַ לָכֶם מִכָּל אֹיְבֵיכֶם מִסָּבִיב וּיִשְׁבַּתֶּם בְּטָח

He will give your respite from all your enemies ‘round about, so that you dwell securely.

8:57a] - “May The Eternal One, our God, be with us, as He was with our forebears.

יְהִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ עִמָּנוּ כְּאֲשֶׁר הָיָה עִם אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל שֶׁר צָבָאוֹ אֶל אַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה

J) Genesis 21:22 - [The Philistine king] Avimelech and his army commander Fee-Kole told Abraham: **“God is with you**, in everything you do....”

גִּיּוֹר בְּאַרְצָה הַזֹּאת וְאֵהְיָה עִמָּךְ וְאֶבְרַכְךָ

K) Genesis 26:3 - [God told Isaac:] “Reside in this land, and **I will be with you**, to bless you.”

וְהִנֵּה אֲנִי עִמָּךְ וְשָׁמַרְתִּיךָ בְּכָל אֲשֶׁר תֵּלֵךְ

L) Genesis 28:15 - [God told Jacob:] “Behold, **I am with you**, to guard you, wheresoever you may go.”

וְיִהְיֶה יְהוָה אִתְּךָ יוֹסֵף וְיִהְיֶה אִישׁ מַצְלִיחַ וְיִהְיֶה בְּבֵית אֲדֹנָיו הַמִּצְרִי

M) Genesis 39:2 - **The Eternal One was with Joseph**, so that he was successful in his work in the house of his Egyptian master.

8:57b] -May we never be abandoned or forsaken. [8:58] - May our hearts be inclined to God, that we may walk in all God’s ways and keep the commandments, the laws, and the rules that were enjoined upon our forebears.

אֶל יַעֲזֹבֵנוּ וְאֶל יִטְשֵׁנוּ לְהַטּוֹת
לְבָבֵנוּ אֵלָיו לָלֶכֶת בְּכָל דְּרָכָיו
וּלְשָׁמֵר מִצְוֹתָיו וְחֻקָּיו וּמִשְׁפָּטָיו
אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֶת אֲבוֹתֵינוּ

8:59] - “And may these words of mine, which I have offered in supplication before The Eternal One, be close to The Eternal One, our God, day and night, **to do justice by His servant and by His People Israel**, [providing for] **enough for each day’s needs**—

וְיִהְיוּ דְבָרֵי אֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִתְחַנַּנְתִּי
לִפְנֵי יְהוָה קְרִבִּים אֶל יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה לַעֲשׂוֹת
מִשְׁפָּט עֲבָדָיו וּמִשְׁפָּט עַמּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל
דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ

N) Exodus 16:4 - Behold, I am raining down bread for you from the sky;
וְיֵצֵא הָעֵם וְלָקְטוּ **דְּבַר יוֹם בְּיוֹמוֹ**
when the people will come forth, **they will be gathering enough for each day’s need**,
לְמַעַן אֲנִסֶּנּוּ הַיֵּלֶךְ בְּתוֹרָתִי אִם לֹא
in order that I may ascertain **whether they will follow my rules or not**.

Τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον

O) Matthew 6:11 - Give us, this day, **our daily bread**.

וַיָּשָׁב יְהוּדָה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לְבֵטֶחַ אִישׁ תַּחַת גִּפְנוֹ וְתַחַת תְּאֵנָתוֹ מִדָּן וְעַד בְּאֵר שֶׁבַע
כָּל יְמֵי שְׁלֹמֹה

P) I Kings 5:5 - Throughout all the reign of King Solomon, all of Judah and all of Israel dwelt in security, **each under his vine and his fig-tree**.

8:60] - “to the end that **all the peoples of the**

לְמַעַן דַּעַת כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי יְהוָה

- continued

earth may know that The Eternal One alone is
God— there is no other.

הוא האלהים אין עוד

וידעתם כי אני יהוה	“then you [Israelites]	shall know that I am God”
וידעו כי אני יהוה	“then they [Israelites]	shall know that I am God”
וידעו מצרים כי אני יהוה	“then the Egyptians	shall know that I am God”

שָׁמְעוּ עַמִּים יִרְגָּזוּן
חֵיל אַחֲזוּ יִשְׁבִּי פִלְשֶׁת

Q) Exodus 15:14-15 -

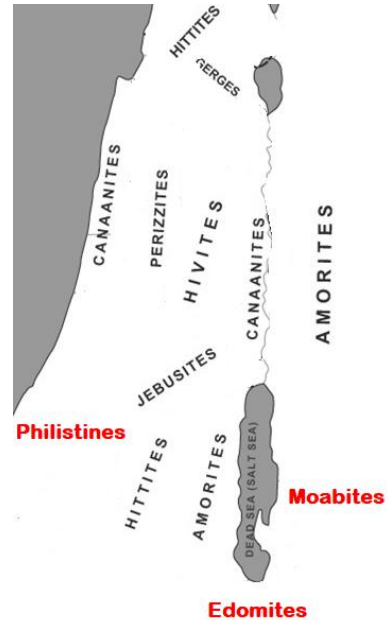
The nations heard of it, and were anguished;
trembling seized the residents of **Philistia**;

אֶז נִבְהָלוּ אֱלֹפֵי אֲדוֹם
אֵילֵי מוֹאָב יֶאֱחָזְמוּ רָעַד

The chieftains of the **Edomites** became dismayed;
the nobles of **Mo'av** were seized with shuddering;

נִמְגּוּ כָל יִשְׁבֵּי כְנָעַן

All the inhabitants of **Canaan** were aghast!



וְהִמָּתָה אֶת הָעָם הַזֶּה כְּאִישׁ אֶחָד וְאָמְרוּ הַגּוֹיִם
אֲשֶׁר שָׁמְעוּ אֶת שְׁמֶעֱד לֵאמֹר

R) Numbers 14:15-16 - Now if You kill off this people, to the last man, then those nations who have heard of Your repute will say:

מִבִּלְתִּי יִכָּלֵת יְהוָה לְהַבִּיא אֶת הָעָם הַזֶּה אֶל הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁבַּע לָהֶם וַיִּשְׁחָטֻם
בַּמִּדְבָּר

“It must have been because The Eternal One was unable to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, that He slaughtered them in the wilderness.”

אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד זֹלָתִי אֵין אֱלֹהִים אַאֲזָרְךָ וְלֹא יִדְעָתִנִּי

S) Isaiah 45:5-7 - [Inform Cyrus of Persia:] I am The Eternal One, and there no other besides Me. I am God, Who encircles you (even though you do not understand it).

לִמְעַן יֵדְעוּ מִמְּזֶרֶחַ שָׁמֶשׁ וּמִמַּעֲרֹבָה כִּי אֶפֶס בִּלְעָדִי אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עוֹד

In order that all may know— from the rising of the sun to its setting— that there is no other besides Me; I am The Eternal One, and there is no other.

יוֹצֵר אוֹר וּבוֹרֵא חֹשֶׁךְ עֹשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם וּבוֹרֵא רָע

Forming light, and creating darkness; promoting peace, and creating “evil”:

אֲנִי יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה כָּל אֵלֶּה

I, alone—The Eternal One— do all these.

וְהִיא בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים יְהִיָּה הָרַב יְהוָה נֶכּוֹן בְּרֹאשׁ הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂא הוּא
מִגְבְּעוֹת

- more over

T) Micah 4:1-2 - It will come to pass, in the time to come, that the Mountain of the House of The Eternal One will be established as highest of the mountains, exalted above the other peaks.

וְנִהְיוּ עָלָיו עַמִּים וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ

For peoples will flow to it; many nations will constantly say:

לָכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל הָרִי יְהוָה וְאֶל בֵּית אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב וְיֹרְנוּ מִדָּרְכָיו וְנִלְכֶּה בְּאַרְחֹתָיו
 “Come, let us go up to the Mountain of The Eternal One—to the House of the God of Jacob—
 Who will teach us of His ways, so that we may walk in His paths!”

כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תּוֹרָה וּדְבַר יְהוָה מִירוּשָׁלַם

For Torah shall go forth from Zion, and the Word of The Eternal One from Jerusalem.

8:61] - “Thus may you be wholehearted with The Eternal One, our God, by walking in God’s ways and keeping God’s commandments, even as now.”

וְהָיָה לְבַבְכֶם שָׁלֵם עִם יְהוָה
אֲלֹהֵינוּ לָלֶכֶת בְּחֻקָּיו וּלְשָׁמֹר
מִצְוֹתָיו כִּיֹּם הַזֶּה

8:62] - The king and all Israel with him were offered sacrifices before The Eternal One.
 [8:63a] - Solomon sacrificed, as celebration-offerings to The Eternal One, **22 thousand oxen** and **120 thousand sheep**.

וְהַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל יִשְׂרָאֵל עִמּוֹ זִבְחִים
זָבַח לִפְנֵי יְהוָה וַיִּזְבַּח שְׁלָמָה אֶת
זִבְחֵי הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר זָבַח לַיהוָה
בָּקָר עֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁנַיִם אֵלֶף וְצֹאֵן
מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים אֵלֶף

וַיְהִי לֶחֶם שְׁלָמָה לַיּוֹם אֶחָד שְׁלֹשִׁים כָּר סִלֹּת וְשָׁשִׁים כָּר קֶמַח

U) I Kings 5:2-3 - Now Solomon’s provisions each day[— furnished by his tributaries, as sustenance for the royal family and his household staff and retainers—] consisted of 30 *kor* [= 55-gallon drums] of whole-wheat flour [@ 8 gallons/bushel, and 42 lb./bushel = 4.3 tons] and 60 *kor* of fine flour [@ 60 lb./bushel = 12.4 tons];

עֶשְׂרֵה בָּקָר בְּרֵאִים

10 stall-fattened oxen;

וְעֶשְׂרִים בָּקָר רְעִי

20 pasture-fed oxen;

וּמֵאָה צֹאֵן

and **100 sheep;**

לְבַד מֵאֵיל וּצְבִי וְיַחֲמוֹר וּבְרֶבְרִים אֲבוּסִים

not including [such miscellaneous game and meat items as any number of] deer, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened geese.

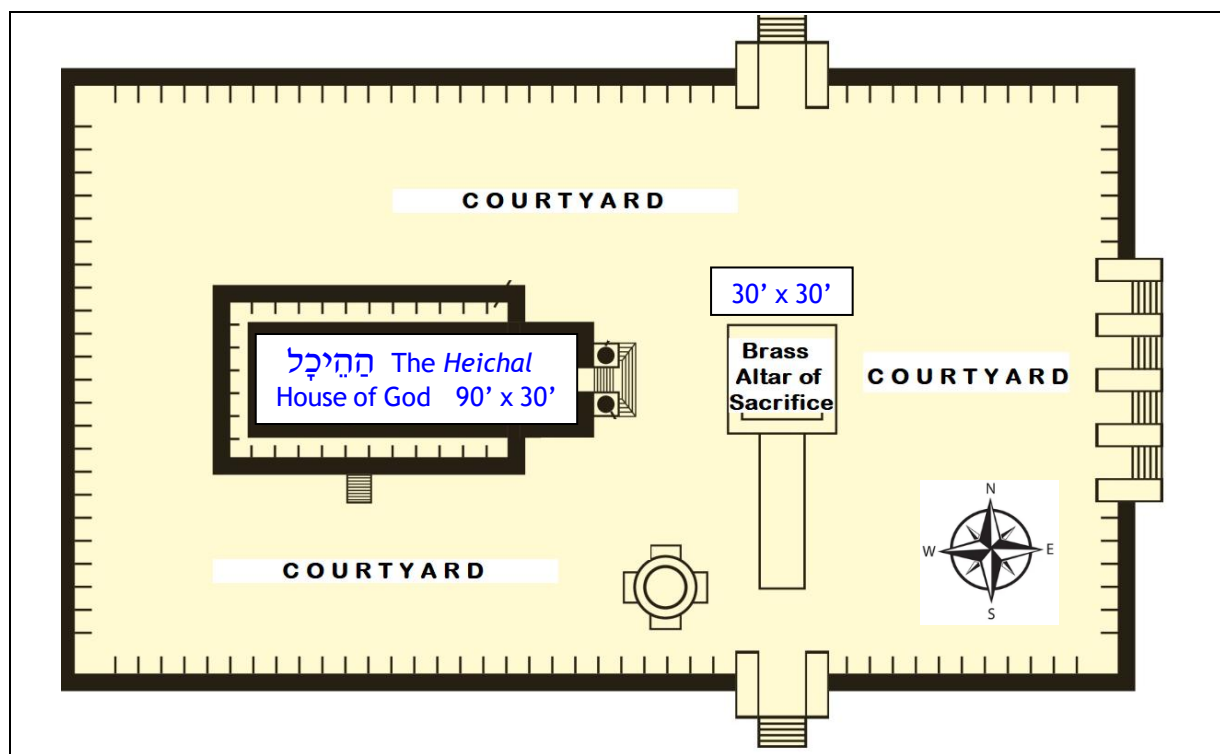
8:63b] - Thus did the king and all of Israel consecrate the House of The Eternal One.
 [8:64] - (And for that one day, the king also had to consecrate the area of the courtyard that framed the House of The Eternal One— for it was there that he presented the burnt offerings; the grain offerings; and the fat parts of the

וַיַּחֲנֹכוּ אֶת בֵּית יְהוָה הַמֶּלֶךְ וְכָל
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא קִדְּשׁ
הַמֶּלֶךְ אֶת תּוֹךְ הַחֲצַר אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי
בֵּית יְהוָה כִּי עָשָׂה שָׁם אֶת הָעֹלָה
וְאֶת הַמִּנְחָה וְאֶת חֲלָבֵי הַשְּׁלָמִים
כִּי מִזְבֵּחַ הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה

- continued

celebration-offerings— for the bronze Altar in the Presence of The Eternal One was too **small to accommodate** such a vast quantity of sacred offerings).

קטן מהכיל את העלה ואת המנחה ואת חלבי השלמים



ויעש שלמה בעת ההיא את החג וכל ישראל עמו קהל גדול מלבוא חמת עד נחל מצרים לפני יהוה אלהינו **שבועת ימים**

8:65] - At that time **Solomon celebrated the Feast** [of Sukkot] (and all Israel with him: a great assemblage, from L'vo-Chamat to the Brook of Egypt) in the Presence of The Eternal One, our God, **for its seven days**—

ושבעת ימים ארבעה עשר יום
(then yet another seven days, for fourteen days in all).

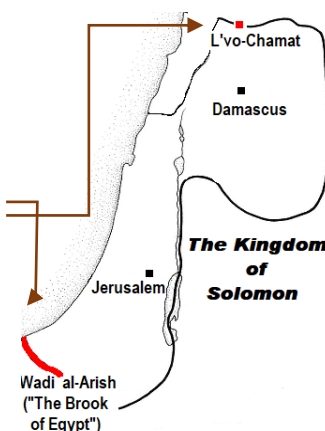
ביום השמיני שלח את העם

8:66a] - **On the eighth day** [of those fourteen,] he released the people[, in accord with the Torah's provision of *Sh'mini 'Atzeret* as a distinct celebration marking the conclusion of the Sukkot festival].

8:66b] - [The people] **blessed the King,**

and then went home, **joyful and glad of heart**

for all the goodness that The Eternal One **had shown** to His servant David and **to Israel, His People.**



ויברכו את המלך

וילכו לאהליהם **שמחים וטובי לב**

על כל הטובה אשר עשה יהוה
לדוד עבדו ולישראל עמו