

#21 Ki Tissa Exodus 30:11-34:35

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- * God wants to give us blessings; seek Him
- * The world is busy trying to put together the puzzle of life; God has given us great light.
- * People are searching to unlock the keys to life.
- * God's ways work better than mans' ways. Mankind does not understand this.

Ki Tissa means "when you take." This portion begins by God telling Moshe to take up a census of everyone over 20; everyone was to give a half shekel as an atonement which was to be used in the service of the Mishkan (the Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle in the desert). Then it says they were to make a copper laver for the priests to wash their hands and feet at the Mishkan, and also make a specific anointing oil and incense which was not to be used except at the Mishkan. Bezalel and Oholi'av were given special spiritual wisdom for the work of the Mishkan and the others working who helped out would also receive wisdom to do the work.

They were to keep Shabbat for, "ADONAI made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he stopped working and rested." Deut. 31:17. Then God gave Moshe the stone tablets made by the "finger of God." Meanwhile, while Moshe is on the mountain, the people become impatient and make a golden calf to worship. Moshe intercedes for the people and God renounces punishing Israel. Moshe then comes down the mountain and is angry and throws the tablets down and destroys the golden calf; he had is ground down into powder, and threw it into the water and made the people drink it. Aharon blames Israel for the idolatry.

Moshe asks for those who are for Yehovah to support him and the Levites that support him kill 3,000. Again, Moshe intercedes for Israel. Some end up dying from a plague as result of the idolatry that was committed. The Lord tells the Israelites to take the land and drive out the inhabitants, but the people instead mourn. God is displeased with Israel and tells them to remove their extra adornments (ornaments). Moshe would go to the Tent of Meeting and meet with God and the cloud would descend on the Mishkan when Moshe entered. Joshua would also stay at the Mishkan.

Moshe asks that the Lord go before them and the Lord says that He will. When Moshe goes up the mountain with two tablets that he had made, the Lord passes before Moshe and proclaims His goodness. God promises the land to Israel and He says that He will drive out the inhabitants. Israel was not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and Israel was to destroy their idols. They are to observe the three main feasts and not come empty handed to them; the firstborn of everything belong to Lord; they were to redeem their firstborn sons. Moshe is again on the mountain for forty days and God inscribes the tablets. When he comes down his face shined and it scared the Israelites, so he put a veil over his face.

In this portion we aren't told the reason for the atonement for the census, but perhaps it is to keep them humble and their need for God; He is to be their "banner" in all they do. The reason for Shabbat is not just an agreement between Israel and God. Since the creation, man knew that God rested on the seventh day (our Friday night and Saturday during the day) and so we are to imitate God. Shaul tells us to imitate Yeshua in Ephesians 5.1.

The tablets are inscribed by the finger of God in stone both times; it shows God's immense power as stone is one of the hardest materials to work with. For example, concrete is used in all of our buildings and most of our roads because of its rock hardness. God was displeased with the idolatry of the golden calf and also because Israel did not trust in His power. God is especially displeased with the idolatry; He is the one true God and we should be careful not to give credit to any other god or power. God is present

and the people witness His physical presence at the Mishkan every day. We learn of a good God in this portion, that He is a God of mercy and that His people can count on Him. We should also remember that we can count on Yehovah and our Messiah Yeshua. Messiah refers to the Hebrew word HaMashiach which means the anointed one.

The Haftarah for Ki Tissa is 1 Kings 18:1-39. In these verses Elijah challenges 450 prophets of Baal and the first one whose god responds with fire is the true God. The prophets of Baal fail even though they are very zealous for Baal. Elijah taunts the prophets of Baal and when it comes to his turn, God burns up the sacrifice and even the stones that surrounded it.

In this Torah portion, we see God demanding the respect He deserves and that He is a merciful and good God. In the Haftarah God evens burns up the stones at the sacrifice. It perhaps reminds us of the commandments that God inscribed in stone with His fingers. We should know that our God is the true God and there is no other god, but Him. Israel was to be faithful and trust in Him and we should be faithful to Him and trust in Him.

1 Kings 18:36-39 CJB says,

"Then, when it came time for offering the evening offering, Eliyahu the prophet approached and said, 'Adonai, God of Avraham, Yitz'chak and Isra'el, let it be known today that you are God in Isra'el, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Hear me, Adonai, hear me, so that this people may know that you, Adonai, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back to you.' Then the fire of Adonai fell. It consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones and the dust; and it licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "Adonai is God! Adonai is God!"

God wants to give us blessings; seek Him. The Psalms are songs. In the psalm here, the word "selah" just means the music is paused (stops) for a moment. It is not spoken.

Psalms 67 NKJV says,

"God be merciful to us and bless us, and cause His face to shine upon us, Selah.
That Your way may be known on earth, Your salvation among all nations. Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Oh, let the nations be glad and sing for joy! For You shall judge the people righteously, and govern the nations on earth. Selah.
Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You. Then the earth shall yield her increase; God, our own God, shall bless us. God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear Him."

We ask God to be merciful to us and bless us because we have turned toward Him. This is a Messianic song that asks God to bring blessings to the nations and that someday all people will come to know Yehovah; all people will someday turn towards God. God brings great joy to His people; He does what is right (righteous). Someday, Yeshua will govern the earth as HaMashiach (the anointed one) and the earth will be blessed.

We see in this Psalm the truth about the goodness of God. The world at present doesn't know the true God, but someday the people of the world will know God and the world will be a world of incredible blessing. Until Yeshua comes to reign, we can make God the king of our lives and serve Him. As we turn to Him, He will bless us.

It's hard to believe that the world will someday be a place of blessing for all, but that was God's intention from the beginning. We can take part in that now to some extent by turning to Him for how we live and follow His commandments.

Presently, the world seems to be in somewhat of a panic over a new strain of virus. I wonder if people have considered that mankind has brought that on themselves by not listening to God.

We have the COVID-19 virus because people were eating bats; something that God tells us not to eat. There was the pig (swine) flu; God says we are also not to eat pig. Then there is Ebola which comes from eating monkey; that is also a food that we are not supposed to eat. God gave us the food laws to protect us. The Old Testament laws were given to us because God cares about us. God's commandments help us to do what is right and good so when we do them, we are doing good works. Israel committed idolatry with the golden calf in this portion and 3,000 ended up dying because of their sin. Sin brings pain and death.

Homosexual practice is wrong according to the Bible and 32 million people have died as of 2018 because of AIDS that was spread initially by homosexual practice. Those who say that homosexuality is okay have participated in the deaths of those people. They say it is okay, so more people keep dying. It is unfortunate that people continue to do disobey God and bring these things on themselves. God didn't do it; they did it to themselves. God knows what is best for us because He created us. Why is there so much pain in the world; it is because mankind has brought it on themselves. Man knows better than God, NOT!

The world will be a better place when God rules the earth. In the meantime, we need to seek God with all our heart to secure the blessings He wants for us.

Here are some of the attributes of God;

Yehovah Rafah – Yehovah heals

God says that Israel will not have the diseases of the Egyptians if they follow Him. This brings to mind some of our present-day diseases. We wouldn't have them if we followed God properly. Isaiah said the Messiah would heal us in Isaiah 53:5 NKJV, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed;"

In the book of Matthew 8:16-17 NKJV it says, "When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon- possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.'" Yeshua still heals us! One of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is Gifts of Healings.

Yehovah Yireh – Yehovah will provide

It is used for when God provides a sacrificial ram to take the place of Isaac. Perhaps we can deduce from this that God is the provider for our relationship with Him. He has given us His commandments so that we can do what is right and be in relationship with Him; He has given us the Holy Spirit to help us live right.

El Shaddai – God Almighty

There is some disagreement on its exact meaning. God is the mighty and true God and not a God of wood or stone. Perhaps that is why Abraham calls God El Shaddai because Abraham rejects idolatry and follows the true God.

El Olam – Forever God

God will not change; He is God forever and there is none like Him.

El Elyon - God most high

God is over all and is worthy of our worship.

Adonai - Master

God is our master and we must follow Him and obey Him. We are not slaves to the world, but to our God and King.

Yehovah Nissi – Yehovah is my banner

God is with us, protects us, and gives us victory. God gave Israel victory and He is the banner for His people.

The world is busy trying to put together the puzzle of life; God has given us great light. People should understand that, but they don't know God. What is this light? Shaul (Paul) talks about it in Ephesians 5. Ephesians 5:7-14 NKJV:

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says: 'Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.'"

He says that we were once without understanding about the truth from God. We are now to be people of understanding (light) about the things of God and learn God's commandments (what is acceptable to do). We are not to partake of the worthless works of those who live without understanding (darkness). We are to learn and do the truths from God and identify sinful things. The works of those who live without God's commandments are shameful and it is shameful to even speak of those things. God's commandments give us understanding (light) and His understanding and commandments show us the way to live. Stop sleeping spiritually; stop doing worthless works of darkness (dead worthless sinful works); the Messiah came to help us understand how to keep God's commandments Our God has given us great light.

People are searching to unlock the keys to life and the God of the Bible has given us the keys to a blessed life. If only mankind would listen to God. I've had a number of conversations about doing things God's way. I tell people that God wants us to love others and that the world would be a better place if we all did that. People often agree with that statement. It's not too hard to understand that doing things God's way unlocks the keys to life.

I think about how I can be good to my friends and family every day. The Bible tells us to love one another and much more.

If only we listened to God; the Bible tells us:

*"Have peace with one another." Mark 9:50 NKJV

*"Love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. John 13:34 NKJV

*"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness." Romans 12:6-8 NKJV.

*"Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another. Romans 12:10 NKJV

*"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Romans 12:15-16 NKJV

*"Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." Romans 15:7 NKJV

*"That you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another."

Romans 15:14 NKJV (admonish means to caution and encourage)

We are supposed to have peace with each other, love one another, help each other through service, be kind, respect each other (giving preference), be like minded, don't be proud, accept each other, encourage each other. This all sounds pretty good. I don't know about you, but I want what God wants for us. God's ways work better than mans' ways. Mankind does not understand this. What is wrong with people? They just don't want to understand do they.

The sin of the idolatry caused the death of 3,000 for Israel in this Torah portion. Sin in our world has caused untold sickness, pain, and death. God gave us His commandments because we need His help; that is an understatement. God is not trying to take away our fun, but protect us. Someday the world will be a great place to live when God is in charge and not man. Seek God and His goodness and blessings. Man is all the time trying to figure out life, but God has already given us the map to having a good life and that life is through Him. If only we'd listen to God, we'd understand the keys to a good life. God's ways work better than mans' ways. God knows what's best for us. If only mankind would come to understand this.