

While Praying:

- * People are taking chances with God and only cleaning up part of their lives.
- * Our good God looks out for us. He wants to watch out for us.
- * God is a fountain of life who sustains us and refreshes us. He is not far from us, but is near those who love Him.
- * God reaches out to the world; people look for joy and life; they need to look up to our eternal God and King.

Terumah means, "offering." The portion begins with God instructing Moshe to take up a free will collection for a holy place (sanctuary) and the items and clothing associated with the ritual practice that Israel was to do. It says God would live among them. The details are given about how the ark is to be made and what was in it. God would speak to them from above the ark cover. They were also to make a table and dishes, and keep the bread of God's presence on the table. They were to make a menorah (lamp) with seven lamps. They were to make everything with the designs that God showed Moshe on the mountain.

Then specific directions are given for the construction of the tent of meeting. The holy place and the especially holy place were to be separated by a curtain and the table and menorah were to be put outside the curtain with the table to the north. They were to make an entrance to the Mishkan and altar with its implements. They were to make a courtyard 150' x 75' with a gate and the courtyard was to be 7 1/2' high. The equipment and tent pegs were to be made of bronze.

In this portion the Lord tells Moshe to take up an offering to make the Mishkan (tent of meeting) and very specific directions on how to make it and the articles to be used in it. Perhaps this should remind us that we are to worship God in the way God chooses. He is not to be worshipped how the pagan gods are worshipped or treated without respect. He is not to be worshipped in a profane way. Profane means to treat something as ordinary when it is special. Also, this should remind us that we should take care of our place of prayer and worship, it should not have pagan elements in it, and it is a place of respect where we also welcome the presence of God just as it was at the Mishkan. We should also understand that we are to treat our bodies as holy vessels for the Holy Spirit.

The Haftarah for Terumah is 1 Kings 5:26-6:13. God had told David that he was not to build the Temple, but that His son Shlomo (Solomon) would build the Temple. In this portion we see that Shlomo was extremely zealous to prepare for the building of the Temple. This again reminds us that we should be zealous for spiritual things as well.

People sometimes take chances with God and only clean up part of their lives. Many people in our society are only making partial commitments to God. Perhaps we could look at our relationship with God as a written contract. If we don't fulfil the requirements of the contract, God will rescind the contract and void the contract with us.

Jews and Christians alike have acted at times like God has made an unconditional contract with us. Hebrews 12:14 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God." It says that if we don't live holy lives, we won't be with God for eternity. We are to be careful so that we don't fail and so that when we stand before God, we will not be like Esau who sold his birthright just for some temporary earthly satisfaction.

In Hebrews 12:16-17 NKJV it says, "Lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright. For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears." It's not too late in the present to repent and do what is right. It will be too late when we are standing in judgment at the end of time. Esau treated his birthright as something ordinary instead of special. It is a despicable act to treat something special as ordinary. So, it is with God; we should never think of the things of God as something ordinary.

The big catch phrase in Hebrews 12:14 is that without holiness, no one will see the Lord. What is holiness; what did it mean back in Yeshua's (Jesus') time? Here is a quote about holiness from the Quran scrolls. "The men of holiness who walk in perfection, it shall not be merged with that of the men of injustice who have not purified their life by separating themselves from iniquity and walking in the way of perfection." From 4 Q 255-264. Holiness has to do with separating yourself from sin. Yes, it's true that we all fall short. But we are to work at separating ourselves from sin; holiness is the act of separating yourself from sin.

Perhaps we could think of it as eating every day in order to stay alive. In the same way, in order to be holy, we must make the effort every day to do what is right. If we don't, we will fall short of eternal life. Yeshua said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.'" I like an example that I once saw. It had arrows pointing in from all directions toward Yeshua. Those are the people who are trying to follow God and do what is right. They are following God's commandments and doing their best to keep their eyes on Him. In turn, God then looks on us and we are in relationship with God. When the arrow turns the other way away from God, those people have decided to not be in relationship with God and not keep His commandments. We should find it terrifying to give away our relationship with God just as Esau gave away his birthright for a little soup. How ridiculous were his actions. Think though, how ridiculous would it be for us to give up eternal life for some temporary sinful satisfaction.

Being in relationship with God has its benefits. Our good God looks out for us. He wants to watch out for us. "For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him;" 2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV. This is an amazing verse. I have found this verse to be absolutely true. As I have been faithful to keep God's commandments and follow Him, as I have been loyal to Him, He has helped me and even saved my life at times! I had a fire in my house in the middle of the night years ago and God woke me up just in time to save my life and my family. The batteries in the smoke detectors were dead. I make sure all my smoke detectors are working now!

It says in the book of Job, "Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps?" Job 31:4 NKJV. Some people think that God doesn't know what's going on; He does! Parents know what their little ones are up to because they care about their kids. God cares about us and wants us to do what is right. We are to become good vessels for the Holy Spirit. When our bodies are good vessels for the Holy Spirit and not grieving the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) by doing what is wrong, the Holy Spirit will help us. We are sealed for redemption if we don't give it away like Esau gave his birthright away.

Sometimes I wonder how I was able to accomplish some things. Jeremiah 31:25 NKJV says that God is a fountain of life who sustains us and refreshes us; "For I have satiated the weary soul, and I have replenished every sorrowful soul."¹ God ways are restoring, "He restores my soul; He leads me in the

¹ In Jeremiah 31:31, it talks about a new covenant and then in just a few verses below that it says, "If those ordinances depart

paths of righteousness for His name's sake;" Psalm 23:3 NKJV. God says, "Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil. It will be health to your flesh, and strength to your bones;" Proverbs 3:7-8 NKJV. He is not far from us, but is near those who love Him. This is an amazing scripture. "The Lord is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth. He will fulfill the desire of those who fear Him; He also will hear their cry and save them;" Psalm 145:18-19 NKJV. He will be there when we need Him; He works on behalf of the those who are loyal to Him. Why not be loyal to Him?

God reaches out to the world; people look for joy and life; they need to look up to our eternal God and King. Who better knows us than an all-knowing God? I was watching a baseball game the other night and thought how relaxing it was to sit and watch them play instead of watching stress infusing TV shows. Better than that, God can do for us what we can't do for ourselves. He knows what we need and is able to give us the desires of our heart.

Psalm 37:1-5 NKJV:

"Do not fret because of evildoers, nor be envious of the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

How encouraging is that! Who says those who teach others to keep God's commandments don't give encouraging messages? That is ridiculous.

2 Peter 3:10-14 NKJV says:

"But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless."

Just as the Mishkan in the wilderness was to be a beautiful place, we are to be a beautiful people who stay away from sin and are a holy separate people who keep God's commandments. Kefa said in 1 Peter 1:14-16 NKJV, "As obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, " Be holy, for I am holy." Don't take a chance spiritually; make God an important part of your life so you don't fall short and give up our eternal inheritance.

Shaul (Paul) says we are to be living sacrifices who demonstrate who God is (Romans 12:1-2). Our God is a good God who wants to help us and will watch out for us. He knows us and He knows everything we do. So, stay away from doing evil and do what is right. He is never far from us, but is there for us and can give us the desires of our heart. He works on behalf of those who are loyal to Him so be diligent to be a holy person so when we stand before Him at the time of judgment, He will say to us, "Well done good and faithful servant." Yeshua said in a parable in Matthew 25:23 NKJV, "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; ... Enter into the joy of your lord.'"

from before Me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever;" Jeremiah 31:36 NKJV. God says Israel will last forever, so God's commandments will also last forever. "But Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; you shall not be ashamed or disgraced forever and ever;" Isaiah 45:17 NKJV.