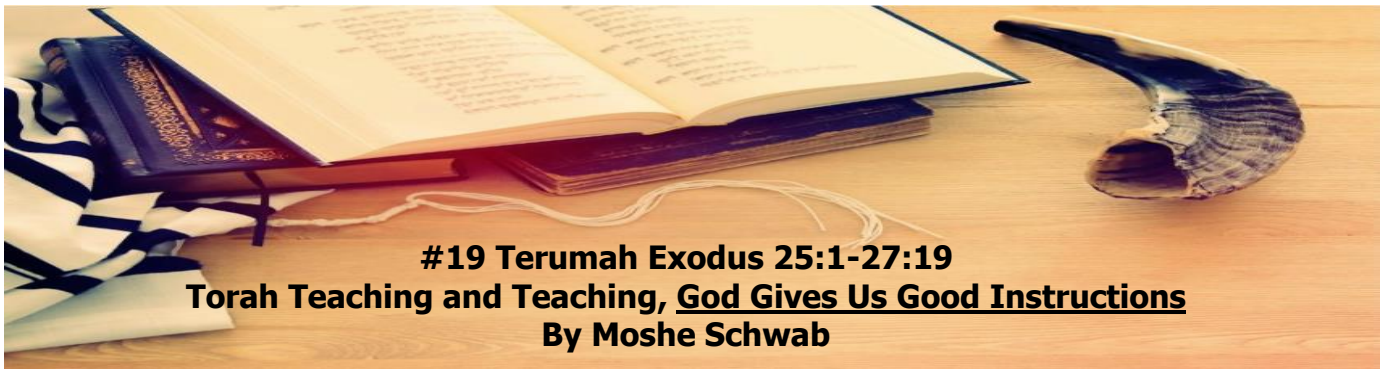

#19 Terumah Exodus 25:1-27:19
Torah Teaching and Teaching, God Gives Us Good Instructions
By Moshe Schwab

Names
Kefa – Peter
Messiah – English for Mashiach; anointed one; Christ in the Greek means to be smudged
Mishkan – Tent of Meeting in the desert
Moshe – Moses
Shaul – Paul
Yeshua – Jesus' real name
Yĕhōváh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms
Haftarah – reading from the prophets
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the Torah
Terumah – the 19th Torah portion

The portion for today, Terumah, means contribution. God has Moshe receive contributions necessary for the building of a holy place, the Mishkan, which would be located within the camp of Israel.

I would like to begin today by talking about how there is order to life and how we do things. The Torah portion for today suggests there is order to what God does and how He wants things done. The Mishkan that Israel built in the desert was to be made by God's pattern. Mankind is created in the image of God, so our lives are made in a specific pattern, and we are to live life according to God's pattern. That means that there are certain norms for life.

Get the proper rest and eat right. You probably already have a plan in place for getting the proper rest and nutrition. If we do not have a good plan, we will not be as productive as we should. Also, we should be applying God's commandments to these areas of life.

Let's look at some of the perspectives on this. In general, sleep habits are important for the body to restore itself. Sleep is restoring and refreshing. The need for sleep in each person may vary with some needing less sleep than others to feel good, but it is generally accepted that 8 hours is the typical sleep cycle necessary for our bodies to restore itself. Some only need 7 hours of sleep, and some need a little more than 8 hours. Because children are growing, they need more sleep.

Our bodies have an internal clock, so it is a good habit to go to bed and get up at the same times every day. If you cannot sleep, at least close your eyes and rest. Sometimes that is enough to help us get to sleep. Some people find it difficult to get a good night's sleep, but they still need a proper night's sleep in order to restore their bodies properly. If you are thinking too much, try praying yourself to sleep. I often speak in tongues quietly to myself to get to sleep.

Our bodies manufacture melatonin in order to induce sleep and that can be taken in vitamin form. 3 to 10 milligrams is the typical dosage. Taking more than that does not hurt a person, but it also does not help get a person to sleep any better. Try different dosages to find the one that works for you. If you are a person that wakes up in the middle of the night and cannot sleep, try melatonin to help you get back to sleep. You will eventually feel sleepy. Keep your eyes closed and clear your mind. People that do not get enough sleep often do not feel good during the day. I had a friend of mine who only slept for 1 hour a day and he had medical problems because of it. He went to bed at 11 PM and woke up at midnight. He would take a nap during the day.

The Bible talks about getting a restful sleep. Find ways to calm your anxieties. Pray with faith and stop obsessing over a situation. Psalms 4:8 NKJV says, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety." Do not be overstimulated at bedtime. Find ways to calm yourself down. Fear and anxiety will keep you from sleeping or having a good restful night's sleep. Proverbs 3:24 NKJV says, "When you lie down, you will not be afraid; yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet." Think about the good possibilities that are ahead of you. Having hope quiets our mind. Jeremiah 31:17 NKJV, "There is hope in your future, says the LORD." Then Jeremiah 31:26 NKJV says, "After this I awoke and looked around, and my sleep was sweet to me."

Some people overdo their activities. This may be necessary for short periods of life, but God designed us to have a sweet and restful sleep. Psalms 127:2 NKJV says, "It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows; for so He gives His beloved sleep." Form the habit of going to bed and getting up at the same time. Some people feel sleepy in the morning. They need to get up and begin moving around so they start to feel more awake. Decide that you will accomplish something with your life. Proverbs 20:13 NKJV says, "Do not love sleep, lest you come to poverty; open your eyes, and you will be satisfied with bread." Getting too much sleep steals the opportunity of enjoying and using your life to accomplish things in life.

Eating right is also important. First and most importantly, instead of using fads to develop your eating habits, eat what God says is okay to eat. Trust in what He is okay with us eating. When people ask me about the commandments in the Bible about what we can and cannot eat, I often just say I trust in God and not in what people say. Did you ever stop to think that the creator God knows what is best for us?

Do not overdo starchy vegetables. Starchy foods cause people to gain weight which causes all kinds of medical problems. I remember watching this video claiming that people were only meant to eat vegetables and their proof was that the people in Sweden had less cancer because they did not eat meat during World War 2. The Germans during World War 2 took their meat. It turned out that they had very little food. It was not because they did not eat meant. Do not get me wrong. If you only want to eat vegetables, do it responsibly. I ate very little meat for a few years, but I had better weight control by eating more meat and fewer starchy vegetables.

Israel raised cattle and that was their main source of food. The only reason not to eat meat was when meat was associated with pagan ritual or if it was meat that God tells us not to eat.

Yeshua is disgusted with those who eat meat sacrificed to idols. Revelation 2:20 NKJV says, "You allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols." That was the issue with Daniel. He lived in a pagan city. He ate vegetables because he did not want to eat meat that came from a pagan temple.

Believers who lived in Rome, also lived in a pagan city. Romans 14 was about some people only eating vegetables because they did not want to take any chance that the supposedly okay meat had come from a pagan temple. Shaul was okay with eating what the Bible says is okay to eat. He never would have eaten anything that was not proper to eat. If you like a particular fad associated with your diet, do it responsibly. You can hurt yourself with some diets, especially by depriving yourself of regular meals.

Be ready to apply yourself appropriately to the things of life. We need to do all the things necessary to take care our lives and for those we care for. We should do all the things that come with life like getting around, communicating, doing various tasks, and work. It also includes believing in God and the Bible and what God says is appropriate. We do not live by what we think is okay to do.

The creator God's ideas on life are what it true and important. That is why we will be judged by God's commandments and not the notions of mere people. Psalms 119:73 NKJV says, "Your hands have made me and fashioned me; give me understanding, that I may learn Your commandments." We are to have minds that are full of good thoughts and not evil. Rabbi Shaul says in Philippians 4:8 NKJV, "Whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things." This is a Jewish teaching. After all, he was Jewish.

Shaul is giving us an application of Leviticus 19:18 on loving others. According to Philo, synagogues in the time of Yeshua were called schools of virtue because they helped people to treat each other like it says in Leviticus. The commands in the Bible are the best way to treat others because they were given by an all-knowing creator God who knows what is best for us.

Part of caring for ourselves and our family is to observe God's holy day of rest, the seventh day which is also called Shabbat, our Friday from sunset to Saturday at sunset. Genesis 2:3 NKJV says, "Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made." Also, Shaul uses harsh words for those who do not take care of their families properly. 1 Timothy 5:8 NKJV says, "But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever."

Protect your mind and your family spiritually. Isaiah 26:3 NKJV says, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." Proverbs 29:25 NKJV says, "The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe." How do we trust in Yĕhōváh? We trust that His commandments are true, and we follow them. We trust

in the leading of the Holy Spirit. We should also act like we trust in God and that includes acting emotionally like we trust in God.

Emotionally, we should have a peaceful heart instead of a troubled mind. Sometimes, we can inflict unnecessary anguish on our minds by what we focus on. In Matthew 6:24-34, Yeshua talks about worry. He talks about worrying about the little things in life like food and clothing; Yeshua talks about how the glory of a flower is greater than Solomon who was a king and had all the things of his kingdom at his disposal. Some worry about little things and others worry about the things they have. He ends by saying to do what is right (be righteous). So, no matter what is on your mind, remain at peace and do what is right. Then in conclusion in Matthew 6:33-34 NKJV it says, "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

The recipe for a proper life is following God, but we don't have to live in the woods to do that. We will not live in a perfect world until we live in the future kingdom of God. Some think that if they go off by themselves, they can live a better and more holy life. Why not be determined to live right in whatever circumstance you find yourself in. 1 Chronicles 16:10-12 NKJV says, "Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! Seek the LORD and His strength; seek His face evermore! Remember His marvelous works which He has done."

We should seek God everyday of our lives. We turn towards Him and look to Him. We don't turn our backs to Him. Many people have turned away from God; they have turned their backs to Him instead of seeking His face. Many hide from God as though He is not there. Psalms 14:2-3 NKJV says, "The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one." The context is about unbelievers who do evil. This is a song that they sang because just like those who do not believe in God and do evil, there are some people who may have unbelieving hearts; don't be one of them; and do not be like an unbeliever. It is to remind us that in all we do, we are to be strong and do what is right, follow God.

When Shaul quotes this in Romans, he is trying to get people to do what is right and accept the Messiah Yeshua. Some say that nobody can do what is right based on Shaul's quote in Romans. Again, it is a quote about those who do not believe and do evil. When someone tells you that you can do nothing right, be wary of them. Perhaps they cannot do what is right and it may be their way of justifying their sinful behaviors. Do not follow them to the lake of fire.

Since people do not understand the Bible the way it is intended, they make up false doctrine. Hebrews 10:26 NKJV says, "For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins." Those who live in sin will not be in God's future kingdom. Hebrews 12:14 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." If a person does not live a holy life by following God's commandments, they will not be in God's future kingdom.

A person can repent and God will forgive them. Psalms 103:11-12 NKJV says, "So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us." We are to fear God and have a deep respect for God, do what He says, and keep His commandments. After all, God is the creator of the universe. But a person who does not repent will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone."

So, especially apply yourself well spiritually. Just like we can apply ourselves well in the things we do, we can also apply ourselves well spiritually. In this portion, God gives specific instructions for the making of the Mishkan in the desert — the tent of meeting, also called The Tabernacle. It was a magnificent tent where God's presence was. Later God's presence was at the Temple in Jerusalem.

The word Mishkan means Tabernacle and it was a beautiful place. In this portion it is referred to as, The Sanctuary. The word sanctuary is the word, *miqdash*, and comes from the word *kadosh* which means holy. The Mishkan was a holy place of God's presence. The Mishkan is also referred to as the *Ohel Moed* in the Torah which means Meeting Place. In Genesis 1:14 it says that the lights in the heavens were created for, "signs and seasons." The word seasons is the Hebrew word *moedim*, the plural of *Moed*. So, the lights in the heavens were created so we would know when to have our meetings with God.

God created mankind to live in His presence, to be in fellowship with Him, and He created us "very good;" see Genesis 1:31. His creation is very good; it says that each time He creates something. So, there is nothing wrong with the way you look. It is important to understand that God expects us to also be beautiful on the inside and do what He tells us to do.

Have you ever met someone who was good looking or seemed confident and capable on the outside, but they were actually an ugly and messed up person? To be a complete person we need our inside to be beautiful. Joshua 1:7-8 NKJV says,

> Only be strong and very courageous, that you may observe to do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you; do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

Torah Study

This portion for today, Terumah, means contribution. God gives Israel specific instructions on how to make the *Mishkan* which means dwelling place; they would make their sacrifices there. In Exodus 25:8, it says that God would *Shakhan* (dwell) among them. God wants to be among His people. Isn't that exciting! God was among His people at the Mishkan in the desert, at the Temples in Jerusalem, through the Holy Spirit given by the Messiah Yeshua in this Messianic age, and at the Temple in Jerusalem in the future kingdom. Revelation 21:1-3 NKJV says, "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also, there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out

of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men."

The Ark was placed toward the back of the Mishkan away from the entrance to the Mishkan; it was placed in the most holy place; the holy of holies. The focus of modern Messianic congregations is often on what they call an Ark that is placed in the front of the meeting place behind the podium. The Ark in Messianic congregations is an enclosure that contains the Torah scroll. They will take the scroll from the Ark during the service and may have a Torah procession and then read from the Torah scroll.

The procession and reading of the Torah is a time to show God and His word respect. The prophet Nehemiah instituted the weekly readings; so, we know that is something instituted by God. The prophets were scrutinized for what they said under penalty of death. The Torah scroll is often handwritten in Hebrew by a scribe, the original language of the Bible. Everything is copied exactly the same as the ancient scrolls that were passed down to us. It takes 2 years to become a Torah scribe.

We now have many New Testament manuscripts written in Hebrew. We now know that the gospels were all originally written in Hebrew including a number of the books of the New Testament. The first Hebrew New Testament was put together around 150 AD and called the Itala text. In the later 200s, the Hebrew text was translated into Greek, but because it was different from the heretic Greek text, the Roman Empire destroyed these copies. Those who had Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament were killed and the Hebrew manuscripts were destroyed by the Roman Empire because the Roman Empire was trying to replace the true manuscripts of the New Testament with a false version of Christianity.

The Greek text was often corrected by the Hebrew manuscripts because they had been tampered with. Jerome who lived from the mid-300s to the early 400s says:

> "Matthew, who was the first in Judea to produce a Gospel of Christ in Hebrew letters. **We must confess that as we have it in our (Greek) language it is marked by discrepancies**, and now that the stream is distributed into different channels **we must go back to the fountainhead**."[1]

The language with the discrepancies that he is talking about are the Greek manuscripts; the Roman Empire was a Greco-Roman Empire at the time. They must go back to the original Hebrew scriptures (the fountainhead) and correct the Greek manuscripts.

Jerome must have corrected the Greek text to some extent with the Hebrew, but not all was corrected. The Greek manuscripts still contain anti-Jewish elements because in general, those in the Roman Empire were anti-Jewish. They also changed what it said in some places to make it more acceptable to the Empire. The story of the woman caught in adultery was not put into the Greek text until some time later, the 5th or 6th centuries. It was added because it was in the Hebrew New Testament.

Of course, those who hate the Hebrew scriptures continue the persecution and dissonance of the Roman Empire who killed and burned anyone caught with Hebrew

[1] Jerome, Commentary on Matthew, 12.13, 2.5

copies of the New Testament. The Roman Empire wanted to make themselves into the true faith. They are not. Why talk about this? The devil tries to spread lies about our faith. Yeshua said the devil was a liar (John 8:44).

We have a number of books of the Bible that have been translated into English from Hebrew manuscripts of the New Testament portion including the Epistle of James. Ya'akov was James' real name and when Shaul wanted his issue about the Gentiles decided upon, Shaul went to Jerusalem in Acts 15 and Ya'akov made the final decision. Ya'akov was the authentic leader of our early faith and not Peter.

From the Hebrew James 1:25 it reads,
"But anyone who observes himself by the whole Torah, which is the instruction of the Examiner, and stands in torah, not hearing it [the Torah] in forgetfulness, for if he works the work, his happiness is in his actions." From, The Epistle of James (YA'AKOV) A Translation from the Hebrew, by Doctor Miles Jones, page 24.

The Greek reads in James 1:25 KJV,
"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."

Look at the difference! James from the Hebrew has us following the Jewish Torah and God's commandments. The Greek was changed to give us the impression that the Torah has been done away and that we do not have to keep God's feasts and keep His other commandments. Heretics did this in order to establish their pagan Roman/Greek religion as authentic. It is not the authentic faith. We have inherited heretic lies into our doctrine.

It is always worth mentioning that Shaul taught that we are to keep God's Old Testament commandments. Shaul says in Romans 3:31 NKJV, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." Even Yochanan says in 1 John 3:4 that, "Sin is lawlessness." Those who do not keep the law, the Torah, are sinning. Anytime we think that it is saying we are not to keep the Old Testament commandments, it is either because of errors in the manuscripts, mistranslation by the translators, or a misunderstanding of the scriptures. Also, theologies which are just man-made ideas about what the Bible is saying confuse and brainwash people. There are many scriptures that we can understand; focus on those. Do not let those who are trapped in false doctrine confuse you.

Instead of incorporating pagan practice, Israel was to put together something different. Have we ever thought about how we might apply this as believers in the Messiah? I was watching this video about culture in the Caribbean Islands this one time and they showed these people practicing Voodoo and singing until they began dropping on the floor or shaking or doing other strange things. Is some of modern Christianity adopting pagan Voodoo into its practice? I was very much surprised by what I saw on that video. What are Christians welcoming during their times of singing?

I was taught early on in my faith that we are not to give ourselves over to possession, but there are some people who do this regularly when they go to church. I was at this one church

meeting where a young woman fell down and began making noises like a parrot. This is not the true God. I have experienced great peace while praying or singing, but it did not come by working myself into a frenzy as some do when they go to church. There was a religious movement not long ago where people were accepting all kinds of strange things like barking or roaring like a lion. Some denominations recognized this as improper ritual practice and not from the true God.

We can experience God.

There are some things people can experience when they do encounter the true God. We might feel the presence of the Holy Spirit just like Israel did at the Mishkan in the desert and at the Temple. They were overwhelmed. God's presence and gifts of the Holy Spirit can be overwhelming at times too. God's gifts involve mostly voluntary actions; people are not possessed like the woman who was making noises like a parrot. For example, I was in England standing by the grave of an early believer from the 4th century. I felt like I should prophesy. So, by my own free will, I gave a prophesy there. Nobody seemed to care what I was doing.

I encourage you to check our prayer class online that contains information on praying for others and using God's gifts of the Holy Spirit. Being connected to God through the power of the Holy Spirit is part of our heritage. Acts 1:8 NKJV says, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." Our prayer class also teaches how to be appropriate when praying for others. Being appropriate is good in all areas of life. Doing what is right and good, teaching and following the Old and New Testament scriptures, and living by the power of the Holy Spirit makes full use of the light of God in our lives.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit will speak to us and we either respond or we do not. It turned out that the story behind this person who was buried there was that he had led many to believe in the true God and he had healed many people in the name of Yeshua. I think God wanted to me to know that He remembers what we do in His name. It says in Hebrews 6:10 NKJV, "For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister." Also, God will not forget Israel's labor of love; for their faith when they were in the desert and also when they took up a collection for the Mishkan in the desert. Think about how much faith was involved for 2 million people to leave Egypt and trust in God!

It was an amazing miracle of faith
for the some 2 million who left Egypt.

Terumah means, "offering." This portion begins with God instructing Moshe to take up a free will collection for a holy place (sanctuary – the Mishkan) and the items and clothing associated with the ritual practice that Israel was to do. Exodus 25:2 NKJV says, "From everyone **who gives it willingly with his heart** you shall take My offering." It is close in language to what Shaul says in 2 Corinthians 9:7 NKJV, "So **let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity**; for God loves a cheerful giver."

The biblical practice was supposed to be the giving of a little over 10 percent. Some years they were to give to the poor and the Levites and other years they were to bring their giving to Jerusalem. The rabbis made it so that they always gave to Jerusalem. Much of Christianity does the same thing and asks their members to give all of their 10% to their church. We should remember that whether we give to our congregation or to the poor, we should give willingly from the heart. That is what the Old Testament portion teaches us. Shaul used the Old Testament scriptures as his basis for life.

It says God would live among them. The details are given about how the ark is to be made and what was to be put 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 a table there. They were to make a menorah (lamp) with seven lamps. They we to make everything with the designs that God showed Moshe on the mountain.

Then specific directions are given for the construction of the Mishkan. 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 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 and do what He commands us to do. 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 the presence of God was at the Mishkan.

Just as the presence of God was at the Mishkan, the presence of God is in us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We should also understand that we are to treat our bodies as holy vessels for the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJV says, "Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." We glorify God by doing what He tells us to do. We are to behave like we are members of the family of our Father God. It makes sense; we are His people if we do what He says and keep His commandments. When we do that, we make God king of our lives as He should be. When we do not keep God's commandments, we state by our actions that we do not respect God for who He is and we have turned our backs on God.

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 perhaps should remind us that we should be zealous for spiritual things as well. Being zealous for spiritual things keeps us in line with reality. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 NKJV says, "For our light affliction,

which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal." Our eternal destiny is far more valuable than what the world has to give.

Commandments, Implied Commandments, Permissions, and other Concepts. (We can also understand commandments are being implied from other scriptures in the Bible. There are other possible concepts than what is shared here.)

Israel was commanded to give gifts for building a holy place, the Mishkan, in the desert where God would dwell among the people (see Exodus 25:8). This implies that we are to give gifts for God's purposes. God will give us more specifics on giving in the Torah +portions to come.

God desires that He would dwell among His people. God also had Israel build a Temple in Jerusalem. In the present, we are to believe in the Messiah Yeshua and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit so that God will dwell among His Messianic believers (see Acts 2:38-39). I should note that having the Holy Spirit does not mean we will automatically be in His future kingdom. We must do what is "right and good" and follow God's commandments, and also follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Hebrews 12:14 NKJV says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord."

Also, God will be among His people in the future kingdom. Yeshua now serves in the heavenly Temple that will come to earth. Hebrews 8:1-2 NKJV says, "We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man." This heavenly tabernacle will come down from heaven and be in the New Jerusalem. Revelation 21:1-3 NKJV says, "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men.'"

The future Temple will not be built by man. Also, there seems to be a possible double meaning in these verses in Revelation about what will tabernacle with men. Namely, both the Temple and Yeshua. Ezekiel details the future heavenly Temple (see Ezekiel 40-48). It says in the gospel of John that Yeshua tabernacled among us. Yeshua tabernacled among us when He came the first time, and He will also tabernacle among us as our future king.

They were not to remove the poles that carry the Ark. Exodus 25:15. Perhaps this carries with it the idea that we are to always be ready to follow God just as Israel was to be ready to follow where God was leading them in the desert.

The Mishkan was to be built in a particular way. It demonstrates that there is to be order to the way we do things and our lives. We are designed by God in a particular way and are to live in a particular way.

God Gives Us Good Instructions

(A teaching to accompany the Torah portion Terumah.)

I was thinking some about my introduction. Some people and denominations think that just anything is okay to do, but God had very specific instructions for how He wanted Israel to build the Mishkan. What makes people think that is any different with His commandments? Since He is God, He knows what is best for us and gives us good commandments.

The Bible says that God is love so He is giving us loving instructions to help us. Theology turns that around and says only the New Testament is from a loving God. That is not true; God was a loving God who gave us good commandments and His commandments are still good. It says about God's good commandments in Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples who will hear all these statutes, and say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" The Bible says God does not change so why are people saying the opposite.

When we take matters into our own hands spiritually without regard for how God wants us to do things, we are only making mental ascension in our faith with God. Ya'akov said in James 2:18-20 NKJV, "Someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"

Hardly anyone who has any sense would want to associate themselves with the devil. Yeshua said in John 8:44 NKJV, "You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it." The devil is a murderer and a liar. Those who say we do not have to act in faith towards God and keep God's commandments are not keeping the works that God tells us to keep. They are lying. James 3:1 NKJV says, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." If these false teachers are sending people to the lake of fire by what they teach, what will happen to them?

In case you forgot, those who are lying will end up in the lake of fire. Revelation 21:8 NKJV says, "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone." I tell you this because I care about you. Warning others is the most loving we can do. People reverse this concept and say it is not loving to warn people. Would you tell someone not to open their parachute while skydiving and tell them they will be just fine? Encouraging others to keep the commandments of our good and loving God is a loving thing to do.

God gives us His commandments
because He is a kind and loving God.

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 do not 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 do not live holy lives, we will not be with God for eternity. We are to be careful so that we do not fail and so that when we stand before God, we will not be like an Esau who sold his birthright just for some temporary earthly satisfaction. It goes on to talk about Esau.

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 is 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 treat God in a profane way and 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 Qumran 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 is 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. It is interesting how the language of the Qumran community was like that of Shaul. In the Qumran scrolls, they talk about the grace they have received; it was the law from Mt. Sinai they were talking about. The Old Testament portion says that Israel received grace, and also Noah received grace because he did what was right. Genesis 6:8 NKJV, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD." Some mistakenly believe that God's grace only came from Yeshua.

Perhaps we could think of being holy as eating every day 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 do not, 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.

It is an honor and privilege to be in relationship with the Creator.

Our good God looks out for us. He wants to watch out for us.
Being in relationship with God has its benefits. "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 times 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 does not know what is 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. Our bodies are to be good vessels for the Holy Spirit and not grieve the Holy Spirit (see Ephesians 4:30). When we do what is right, we are in fellowship with God and the Holy Spirit. We are sealed for redemption if we do not give it away like Esau gave his birthright away.

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.
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." That is what God gave to His people through the Old Testament commandments.

In Jeremiah 31:31, it talks about a new covenant, and then in just a few verses below that it says in Jeremiah 31:36 NKJV, "If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the Lord, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever." God says Israel will last forever, so God's commandments will also last forever. Isaiah 45:17 NKJV says, "But Israel shall be saved by the Lord with an everlasting salvation; you shall not be ashamed or disgraced forever and ever." You do not have to make up life. Our good God has given us the way to replenish our life by keeping His commandments and doing what is right.

God's ways are restoring, Psalm 23:3 NKJV says, "He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake." God says in Proverbs 3:7-8 NKJV, "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." He is not far from us but is near those who love Him. This is an amazing scripture. Psalm 145:18-19 NKJV says, "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." It says God will be there when we need Him; He works on behalf of the those who are loyal to Him. Why not be loyal to God?

God can work supernaturally on our behalf.

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 better than an all-knowing God? There are better things in life than what the world has to offer. God can do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He knows what we need and **can 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! God gave us good commandments in the present. What God has in store for us will be amazing.
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." Do not take a chance spiritually; make God an important part of your life so you do not fall short of your eternal inheritance.

Our God is a good God.

Shaul says we are to be living sacrifices who demonstrate who God is (see Romans12:1-2). 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 about reaching the goal and being part of God's future kingdom in Matthew 25:23 NKJV "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; … Enter into the joy of your lord;'". It will be a time of great joy, so be faithful!

Finally, the Aaronic Blessing.
ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yĕ-hō-váh. Yĕ-hō-váh is used over 6,000 times in the Old Testament portion. Since God's name is used that many times, it is evident that we should be using His real name.

According to Exodus 3:15, Yĕ-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yĕ-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb *hayah.* Yĕ-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name. The ancient rabbis say that Yĕ-hō-váh (יְהוָה) is God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yĕ-hō-váh, once as Yĕ-hō-vĕh, never as Yahweh . Even one of the church Fathers said God's name is Yĕ-hō-váh. Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing now:

יְבָרֶכְךָ יְהוָה, וְיִשְׁמְרֶךָ

יָאֵר יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וִיחֻנֶּךָּ

יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פָּנָיו אֵלֶיךָ, וְיָשֵׂם לְךָ שָׁלוֹם

Yĕ-hō-váh bless you and keep you.
Yĕ-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.
Yĕ-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace.