



#21 Ki Tissa Exodus 30:11-34:35
Torah Teaching and Teaching, Keys to a Good Life
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
Yĕhōvâh – God's real name forever (Ex. 3:15)
Yochanan – John

Terms

Haftarah – reading from the prophets
Menorah – 7 candle Israelite lamp
Tanakh – Old Testament portion of Bible
Torah – 1st 5 books of the Bible
Torah portion – there are 54 portions of the
Torah
Ki Tissa – the 21st Torah portion
(We also use transliterations from Hebrew)

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. It was intended to be a memorial for the Mishkan. The word atonement is the Hebrew word, לְכַפֵּר (l'kha-fair) and means to cover as in make reconciliation. So it was a memorial ritual they would do for what the Mishkan provided for them; namely, the opportunity to make reconciliation. We need reconciliation to God so that we can be in the future eternal kingdom of God.

We will not see the whole picture until we arrive in the future kingdom. We can sometimes look at photographs or videos of something, but there is nothing that compares to experiencing what it is like. There are some things in life that are so startling that they are worth seeing again and again. We used to go to Niagara Falls occasionally years ago. They are immense natural waterfalls and the river leading up to the waterfalls moves so swiftly that it is also an exciting and breathless experience. You might try to imagine what it would be like, but only by being there will you know what it is truly like.

Isaiah 2:2-4 NKJV says,

Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

Why did God pick Jerusalem to be a special place in the future kingdom? Psalm 14:1 NKJV says, "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none who does good." God has looked at the hearts of those who do not follow God and they are evil. God chose Israel to bring His commandments to the world, but the world rejected our God who cares about mankind; God wants people to keep His good commandments. The Hebrew John from Vatican Ebr. 100, translated by Rensburg says in John 1:10-11, "The world does not recognize Him neither the power of His words—even those who do not receive Him." So, it is the world that has rejected the Messiah and our God. It was Abraham that accepted the true God and his descendants, and the people of Israel who accepted the true God.

Notice how the antisemitic Greek manuscripts were changed by heretics to say the Jews rejected God. The Jews did not reject God; it was just the opposite. So, God made Israel the center of His future kingdom because they were the people who accepted the true God. Also, when Shaul quotes Psalm 14:1 in Romans, it is unbelievers who are sinning. His point is for them to not be like the Gentile sinners and to be humble and believe in the Messiah Yeshua. Remember, theology is a man-made idea of what the Bible says. In this case, people take what Shaul said in Romans out of its biblical context and say nobody is good.

If you do what is right and keep God's commandments, then you are doing what is "good." Deuteronomy 6:17-18 NKJV says, "You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you." What is a good way to help someone who wishes to become a believer. Tell them to learn and do what is good and to treat others how they want to be treated; see Leviticus 19:18.

Some theology is good and some is not. In the case where they say no one can do good, their theology is just trash because they misapply the scriptures. The Bible says we can do good by keeping God's commandments. Yeshua came to the people of the world and the world wants to do things their own way, and they seem to want to interpret the scriptures out of context as well. Psalms 2:1 NKJV says, "Why do the nations rage, and the people plot a vain thing?" That is why the world is so messed up. They do not want to do things God's way and they follow misapplied man-made theology instead of truth.

Be careful with Shaul's teachings. They are complicated Jewish arguments and some of the wording has been changed by the heretics of the Roman Empire. We must understand that Shaul never said the Torah was done away with. In fact, he said the opposite. Shaul in Romans 3:31 NKJV says, "Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law." The law is established. Do not listen to the followers of lies.

God's Temple will be established on the mountain of Yěhōváh and nothing else will be there it said in Isaiah Chapter 2. God's law will be taught in Zion and go out to all. Those who want to keep God's commandments will be keeping the real Sabbath and not Sunday the day of the sun god Mithras that was passed down into Christianity from the Roman Empire.

The future kingdom will be a wonderful and amazing experience.

Isaiah 66:22-23 NKJV says,

"For as the new heavens and the new earth which I will make shall remain before Me," says the LORD, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me," says the LORD.

Have joy for what we have. Live in the truths of the scriptures and the power of God. Do not live as though God is not there. We have a lot to be thankful for. Psalm 30:12 NKJV says, "To the end that my glory may sing praise to You and not be silent. O LORD my God, I will give thanks to You forever." If you are doing things your own way instead of God's way, what are you to be thankful for. People who do not keep God's commandments are bringing evil into the world by their disobedience to God. Psalm 5:9 says, "For there is no faithfulness in their mouth; their inward part is destruction; their throat is an open tomb; they flatter with their tongue." Some of us have met people like this. They seem okay and are fluid in speech, but they are not interested in bringing good into this world. Do not be like them. Instead of bringing peace and refreshing, they bring destruction and fire.

The direction you take in life determines whether you are securing what is beneficial or not. Are you putting together your life the way it is intended? God knows what is best for us and doing things God's way is the way we are designed to live. Psalms 100:4-5 NKJV says, "Be thankful to Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting, and His truth endures to all generations." Notice it says, "to all generations." God was good to Israel and He continues to be good in this Messianic era. I have met people who say that God no longer does things for His people. This scripture in the Old Testament portion says otherwise.

If we do not keep God's commandments, we are bringing evil into the world and our lives. evil seems to be the way of the world. People will try to brainwash people into sin for their own benefit. They will tell you that there are no consequences to sin. Some sins can bring terrible consequences on the lives of the people who commit them and the people they influence. Drugs, sexual sin, and violent crimes are a few of the things that often bring terrible consequences.

In some areas of the United States some extremely intoxicating drugs are legal. Marijuana is now grown for its potency and it is so strong an intoxicating drug that some people are literally losing their minds and going crazy. I read a story about a teenage boy who became so disoriented for life by smoking marijuana that he opened the car door while his mother was driving and tried to get out of the car. Some people are now getting such high doses that they are not able to function for the rest of their lives. This is even happening to people who only tried marijuana once.

Sexual sin often traps people in these behaviors because they become attached to these deviant behaviors. Teenagers in order to make friends, conform to sinful behaviors that affect them the rest of their lives. Some even take drugs to modify how their body works and they have to take these drugs the rest of their lives. The consequences for their decision can cause all kinds of medical problems including cancer and death. People are being brainwashed to

believe that anything is okay. God designed mankind for a man and a woman to marry and to have a loving family relationship with children. We were foster parents at one time and the 11 children we had over time all wanted to be part of their family or an adoptive family. There is a natural drive for people to be part of a family.

Violent crimes bring terrible anguish into people's lives. I read a story of a young man standing in a church parking lot and getting shot by a drive by shooter. I know of someone who lost their daughter through a violent relationship. They are in mental anguish every day over their daughter's death and it has been more than a year since this happened.

There are lots of writings with good intentions. Only God knows what is right. I remember this person talking about how to reduce anxiety in life. He wrote over a 300 page book on how to do that. The Bible gives us a right and good way to live through God's commandments. They have been proven to work for thousands of years. Deuteronomy 7:9 NKJV says, "Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments." A thousand generation it says; that is a long time.

Some people get confused by the word covenant. Covenant means agreement. I make a personal agreement every morning when I pray, to live the way God tells us to live. I renew my agreement to follow God daily. I encourage you to make frequent affirmations to God that you will keep His commandments and that you believe.

We do not have to make up our own set of rules. We can trust in God and ask for God's help. In Psalms, it talks about someone who found their way in life through God's commandments. When they made up their own rules it brought them problems. Now they know that God's word and His commandments brings goodness into their lives, and they know that God is good. Psalms 119:66-68 NKJV says, "Teach me good judgment and knowledge, for I believe Your commandments. Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I keep Your word. You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes."

Also, God is good and will answer some of our prayers. Psalms 5:2-3 NKJV says, "Give heed to the voice of my cry, My King and my God, for to You I will pray. My voice You shall hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning I will direct it to You." It is a good idea to pray in the morning or at any time of day. I used to do research and I was feeling stressed at work. I began praying every day on my way to work and my day went better. Unknown to me, my peace was noticed by some who did not like me being at ease and smiling. Isn't that crazy. Worldly people do not like peace and joy. I think that would be a great way to live.

The Jews were a praying people. Rabbi Shaul tells us in Ephesians 6:18 NKJV, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. Pray, pray, pray. Shaul also says in Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV, "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Make prayer an important part of your life. Have joy that we have a God who is there for us.

More to Consider

Make a proclamation of faith in Yeshua as Messiah, our God, and our King. Have joy in your decision.

James 2:18-24 NKJV:

But 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? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. And he was called the friend of God! You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

Our declarations of faith are important. Prayers on believing lips are sometimes answered by our almighty God.

Even the little things that God does are amazing by mankind's standards. People miss the obvious greatness of God as they go through life because their thoughts are focused on life apart from God; so, God becomes hidden to people. All the while, God's greatness should be evident. Mankind often values what is esoteric, what is rare or not normal. The things of God are both wonderful and amazing. They are not rare but are all around us. People miss the greatness of God because their focus contradicts the knowledge of God.

Don't settle for second rate spiritual food. Seek truth and not filler which is nothing more than spiritual food wrapped as appealing sawdust. It may give you something to chew on, but there is no spiritual sustenance.

Deuteronomy 8:1-4 NKJV:

Every commandment which I command you today you must be careful to observe, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land of which the LORD swore to your fathers. And you shall remember that the LORD your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD. Your garments did not wear out on you, nor did your foot swell these forty years.

Remember that this life is a test. God gives us His commandments and the Holy Spirit to see if we will follow Him. We need to live out our lives with fear and trembling. Psalm 2:11 NKJV says, "Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling." If we fear God, we will listen to Him. We can then have joy in our humility towards Gods.

There are things that stick out to us and appeal to us, but we should want plain truths and not just frills or good ideas. When Shaul talks about us being judged, he is talking about the Old

Testament commandments because that is the context. Just a few verses before in 2 Timothy 3:14-15 NKJV, Shaul tells him, "But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures." Timothy's mother was Jewish (see Acts 16:1) and there was no New Testament portion at the time. The Old Testament then is, "Profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work;" 2 Timothy 3 16-17 NKJV.

Then begin Chapter 4. We are to teach the Old Testament commandments it says. Shaul says in 2 Timothy 4:1-4 NKJV:

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

The scriptures give us a straight forward message and are not hard to figure out. Some though are always busy reading into the scriptures and making them difficult to understand. While some developed understandings are interesting, the simple and discernable message is to follow God by keeping His commandments. For example, in this portion it tells us to guard God's Shabbat. So today, I may have something to fix, but I will leave it for tomorrow. Sometimes we need to talk to God about what needs to be done before we rush into doing them.

We will do all kinds of things to make our lives appealing and even go extremes to try to conform to worldly expectations; what about trying a little harder to stand before God and make our lives more appealing to our God and King.

The Bible says we will have to give an account to God for our actions (Romans 14:12). So, no matter how you look on the outside, it is what is on the inside that matters and shows itself in our lives. Romans 14 is about some people who were vegetarian because they did not want to take the chance of eating meat that came from pagan temples. Rome was a pagan city. Shaul was okay with eating meat that God said was okay to eat by the standards of the Torah, often called kosher meat, but they were not to tempt these people in Rome who were vegetarian so they did not condemn themselves. Yeshua said in Revelation 2:14 NKJV, "But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality." God forbids us to eat meat associated with pagan practice in the Torah. Yeshua taught people to keep the Torah.

Kefa calls us pilgrims; we are on a temporary journey. Our fleshy desires are at war against us. 1 Peter 2:11-12 NKJV, "Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable

among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation." He then tells us that the pagans consider us evil doers. They speak against us and against keeping God's commandments. They are the ones who are evil. We can treat them in a nice and respectful way, but do not listen to their false ideas.

Some things are pretty straightforward in the Bible, but other scriptures need context. The pagans saw the believers as evil unbelievers in their pagan gods. The word visitation can be translated inspection according to Strong's. Their inspection of us will turn into a testimony that glorifies God because we keep God's good commandments! God's commandments are right and good.

What is in our heart and mind is most important. 1 Peter 3:3-5 NKJV says, "Do not let your adornment be merely outward—arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel — rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves." We are to be beautiful on the inside. 1 Samuel 16:7 NKJV says, "But the LORD said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.'"

A good scripture to remember is Proverbs 4:23 NKJV, "Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life." Keep evil out of your mind. Keep your heart and mind in the right place spiritually. Proverbs 11:20 NKJV says, "Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the LORD, but the blameless in their ways are His delight." The perverse are those who don't want to do what is right. They oppose doing what is right and good. They are an abomination, they are despicable and disgusting to God. Those who follow God's commandments are a delight to Him! Wow isn't that wonderful. We can be a delight to the almighty creator God!

Torah Study

Who knows why God does what he does. In this portion both rich and poor give the same amount for atonement. Perhaps this means that God accepts all believers equally. Some things that God does are obvious while others are not. That does not mean they do not have a purpose or an effect. There is a tendency for people to value those who are extraordinary. In this portion, the credit for those who led the work on the Mishkan was given to God; it was God who gave them the wisdom. There is a lot we could say about this. Did not God give mankind the ability to work out things mentally. Even more so, God can help us so much more than just what natural knowledge has to offer. Spiritual wisdom is over and above natural wisdom and is unfathomable in its work and effect.

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. It was intended to be a memorial for the Mishkan. The word atonement is the Hebrew word, לְכַפֵּר (l'kha-fair) and means to cover as in make reconciliation.

So, it was a memorial ritual they would do for what the Mishkan provided for them; namely, the opportunity to make reconciliation to God. 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 that was to only be used for the High Priest and later also for the king. They were to make a special incense which was only to be used at the Mishkan. Bezalel and Oholi'av were given special spiritual wisdom for the work of the Mishkan and the others working on the Mishkan would also receive wisdom from God to do the work.

It says in Exodus 20:11 NKJV that they were to keep Shabbat for, "In six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it." This is quoting Genesis 2:3 from the time of creation; Shabbat was meant for all believers for all of time.

Shabbat is not just an agreement between Israel and God. Since the creation, mankind knew that God rested on the seventh day (which is our Friday night and Saturday during the day) and they observed Shabbat; also, the Bible says we are to imitate God. Leviticus 20:26 NKJV says, "And you shall be holy to Me, for I the LORD am holy, and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be Mine." Yeshua said in Matthew 5:48 NKJV, "Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect." God rested on the 7th day and made it holy. We are to keep God's holy days.

The 7th day is not Sunday; the day of rest was changed by a **pagan to honor the s-u-n god**. " On March 7, 321, however, Roman Emperor Constantine I issued a civil decree making Sunday a day of rest from labor, stating: all judges and city people and the craftsmen shall rest upon the **venerable day of the sun**." I found this at wikipedia.org under, "Sabbath_in_Christianity"

Then God gave Moshe the stone tablets made by the "finger of God." The tablets were inscribed by the finger of God in stone both times (see Exodus 31:18, 34:1); it shows God's immense power as stone is one of the hardest materials to work with. For example, concrete is used in all our buildings and most of our roads because of its rock hardness.

God can do what no person can do.

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 then decides not to punish Israel. We should remember that God is merciful. We should repent, decide to do things right, and ask God for forgiveness. We commit sin against God by not trusting in Him and by not keeping His commandments. Therefore, we must seek God's forgiveness. We may need to make reparations and seek others forgiveness as well. Not everyone will be amenable to our efforts, or it may not be possible at times because of circumstances; at that point we can only ask God for forgiveness.

Moshe then comes down the mountain and is angry and throws the tablets down and destroys the golden calf. The Bible suggests Moshe should not have broken the tablets. What he did though shows us his devotion and zealous feelings that he had for Yēhōvāh. Moshe had the

golden calf ground down into powder and threw it into the water and made the people drink it. Aharon blames Israel for the idolatry. 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 idolatry; He is the one true God, and we should be careful not to give credit to any other god or power. Right after the sin of golden calf, God has Moshe tell them to keep Shabbat. That is the day that God rested after He created everything. Honoring Shabbat says that we believe that God is the creator. Those that keep the day of rest on the pagan day of the sun god think they are honoring God. Deuteronomy 18:9,12 "You shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. Verse 12 says, "For all who do these things are an abomination to the LORD. I am just quoting what the Bible says. Read your Bible.

Moshe asks for those who are for Yĕhōváh to support him and the Levites that support him put to death 3,000. At the real Mt. Sinai, there is an ancient graveyard. 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 of Canaan and drive out the inhabitants, but the people instead mourn. God is displeased with Israel and tells them to remove their extra adornments (ornaments). Before the Mishkan was built, Moshe would go outside the camp to meet with God in his (former) tent. The cloud would descend at the entrance to the tent when Moshe entered; God would then speak to Moshe. The people would watch Moshe go out to the tent and the cloud would then descend at the entrance. Joshua would also stay at the tent.

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 because he broke the first ones, the Lord passes before Moshe and proclaims His goodness. From Exodus 34:6-7 the Jews have put together the 13 attributes of God's mercy. Moshe comes down the mountain and his face is shining from when Yĕhōváh passed before him.

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 Yĕhōváh and our Messiah Yeshua. Messiah refers to the Hebrew word HaMashiach which means the anointed one. Yeshua is our anointed King who died for our sins so we could be forgiven. He rose from the dead and will someday return as our ruler and King. Like Moshe has gone away for a short time, Yeshua has gone away until the restoration of the future kingdom. Will you remain faithful?

Yeshua the Messiah is our anointed King.

Finally, in this portion, God is to be their "banner" in all they do. 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 the 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. There are two accounts of God writing the 10 commandments with His finger; Moshe went up the mountain several times and not just twice.

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 and water 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. The stones that burned up perhaps remind us of the commandments that God inscribed in stone with His finger. 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 too.

1 Kings 18:38-39 NKJV says, "Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!" They declared that 'Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is Elohim, Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is Elohim.' They used God's true name and said that Yě-hō-váh is the true God. It says in Exodus 3:15 that Yě-hō-váh will be God's name forever. The word LORD or ADONAI in all capital letters (depending on the translation you are using) is Yě-hō-váh in the Hebrew.

**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.)**

God tells 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. A half shekel in modern terms is a little less than a half dollar. They were not to give more or less so the rich were to give the same as the poor. Perhaps this was to demonstrate that each person is valuable. It was intended to be a memorial for the Mishkan. The word atonement is the Hebrew word, לְכַפֵּר (l'kha-fair) and means to cover as in make reconciliation. So, it was a memorial ritual they would do for what the Mishkan provided for them; namely, the opportunity to make reconciliation. We need reconciliation to God so that we can be in the future eternal kingdom of God. Exodus 30:11-12. Yeshua the Messiah makes restitution for us in this Messianic era and we are to do a remembrance ceremony whenever we do kiddush (see Luke 22:17-19).

Hebrews 7:24-28 NKJV referring to Yeshua it says,

But He, because He continues forever, has an unchangeable priesthood. Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them. For such a High Priest was fitting for us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens; who does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who have weakness, but the word of the oath, which came after the law, appoints the Son who has been perfected forever.

They were to wash their hands and feet when serving at the Sanctuary. Perhaps the washing of hands can be applied to anyone who handles food because the Cohen and people were to eat from the sacrifices. Exodus 30:19-20.

They were to make a special holy anointing oil for the High priest and the King. Another anointing oil should be used on other occasions and for others. Exodus 30:25.

The anointing oil for the High Priest is not for anyone else. Exodus 30:32-33.

The incense for the Mishkan is not to be copied and used for anything else. Flowers and sweet fragrances are enjoyable, but to not use pagan incense holders or containers. Pagans use incense in their worship so we should not use incense at our meetings. Exodus 30:37-38. We are commanded not to do what the pagans do. Leviticus 18:24-25 NKJV says, "Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants." Also in Jeremiah 10:2-4 NKJV it says, "Do not learn the way of the Gentiles; do not be dismayed at the signs of heaven, for the Gentiles are dismayed at them. For the customs of the peoples are futile; for one cuts a tree from the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the ax. They decorate it with silver and gold; they fasten it with nails and hammers so that it will not topple."

They were not to worship another god or make any other god. Exodus 34:14, 17.

They are not to eat anything that was offered to an idol and not eat with idolators. Exodus 34:15-16. In Yeshua's time they ostracized believing Gentiles who were not idolators which was wrong. It was an extra misapplied man-made law made up by Torah breakers. Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV says, "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you." This was the issue in Galatians Chapter 2 when Kefa and others got up from eating with Gentile believers when the Torah breakers showed up. The Gentiles in Galatians Chapter 2 were believers and not idolators.

They were to keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread for 7 days, every male that opens the womb of man and animal belong to God, but may be redeemed, the 7th day is a day of rest, they are to keep the Feast of Weeks, three times they were to appear before Yēhōvāh. Exodus 34:18-23.

No sacrifices are to contain leaven, they were not to do the fertility god practice of boiling a goat in its mother's milk, and they were to bring their first fruits to the house of God. Exodus 34:25-26. The extra law of not having dairy with meat is a misapplied law. God gave them the law to not boil a goat in its mother's milk to make sure they did not observe the Canaanite fertility ritual. The rabbis say that since God repeated the command there must be a reason, so they made up the law of not having dairy with meat. Repetition is a form of encouragement and not a license to make up doctrine.

Keys to a Good Life
(Accompanying teaching for the Torah Portion Ki Tissa.)
By Moshe Schwab

God wants to give us blessings; seek Him.

The Psalms are songs. It is a type of writing or genre. The psalms are emotional expressions inspired by God involving life and dealing with God's truths. In the psalm here, the word "selah" just means the music is paused (stops) for a moment. It is not spoken.

Psalm 67:1-7 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 in the future, all people will come to know Yĕhōvâh; all people will someday turn towards God. God brings great joy to His people; He does what is right, righteous means to do what is right. Someday, Yeshua will govern the earth as HaMashiach, the anointed King, and the earth will be blessed.

We see in this Psalm the truth about the goodness of God. The world at present does not 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 and our Messiah king of our lives and serve Him. As we turn to Him, He will bless us. Who does not want blessing in their lives? God's ways unlock the keys to living life.

It is 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 in life and follow His commandments. I wonder if people have considered what mankind has brought that on themselves by not listening to God.

We have the COVID-19 virus because people were doing something with bats. That is something that God tells us not to eat. There was the pig or 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" (see Deuteronomy 6:18) so when we keep God's commandments, 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. God did not bring this on them. 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. God knows what is best.

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. Stay strong chaverim (friends). God passes in front of Moshe and says, "The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation." Exodus 34:6-7 NKJV. God brings good; we see His good attributes in those scriptures.

Here are some more attributes of God:

Yĕhōvâh Rafah – Yĕhōvâh 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 would not have them if we followed God properly. Many of the ancient rabbis thought Isaiah 53 was about the Messiah. 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. Perhaps thousands are healed everyday through the power of the Messiah Yeshua.

Yĕhōvâh Yireh – Yĕhōvâh will provide

It is used for when God provides a sacrificial ram to take the place of Isaac. Perhaps we can understand from this that God is the provider for our relationship with Him. Also, God 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 through the Messiah Yeshua to help us live right. The Holy Spirit is our helper (see John 14:26). God provided a sacrificial ram to take the place of Isaac and the Messiah Yeshua took our place as a sacrifice for our sins. God continues to provide for a relationship with Him.

El Shaddai – God Almighty

There is some disagreement on its exact meaning. The ancient rabbis say that El Shaddai is Almighty God. 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. Atheists say the world was created by the "big bang," but where did the big bang come from. It takes an act of faith to believe in the big bang. Why not believe in an eternal God?

El Elyon - God most high

God is over all and is worthy of our worship. We are to be humble towards our God.

Adonai - Master

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

Yĕhōvāh Nissi – Yĕhōvāh is my banner

This is in our portion for today. God is with us, protects us, and gives us victory. God gave Israel victory; He is the banner for His people forever. Deuteronomy 20:4 CJB says, "God is going with you to fight on your behalf against your enemies and give you victory." Shaul says in 1 Corinthians 15:57 NKJV, "Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." We can have victory through the Messiah and the help of the Holy Spirit.

The world is busy trying to put together the puzzle of life; God has given us great light.

People should understand that, but they do not 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 the truth from God. Deuteronomy 4:6 NKJV says about God's commandments, "Therefore be careful to observe them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding ... 'Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.'" We are now to be people of light which means understanding. We understand the things of God and learn God's commandments which is acceptable to do. We are not to partake of the worthless works of those who live without understanding and live in darkness and sin. 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 light and understanding, and His understanding and commandments show us the way to live. Stop sleeping spiritually; stop doing worthless works of darkness which are worthless works of sin. The Messiah came to give us light to help us keep God's commandments. Our God and Messiah has given us great light.

People are searching to unlock the keys to life.

The God of the Bible has given us the keys to a blessed life. Not only that, eternal life! If only mankind would listen to God. I have had lots 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 is 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 so much more. If only we listened to God; the Bible tells us to:

*"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)

God's ways work better than mankind's' ways. Mankind does not understand this.

We are supposed to have peace with each other, love one another, help each other through serving each other, be kind, respect each other (giving preference), be like minded, do not be proud, accept each other, encourage each other. This all sounds pretty good. I do not know about you, but I want what God wants for us. What is wrong with people?

They just do not want to understand do they. God told Isaiah:

"Go, and tell this people:

'Keep on hearing, but do not understand;

Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'

Make the heart of this people dull,

And their ears heavy,

And shut their eyes;

Lest they see with their eyes,

And hear with their ears,

And understand with their heart,

And return and be healed." Isaiah 6:9-10 NKJV

Is it any different today? Isaiah wrote this about 2,600 years ago. Mankind just keeps doing things its own way. Some say the COVID plague was developed in a lab. What were these people thinking? We need to start listening to God and it starts with us.

The sin of 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 mankind. Seek God and His goodness and blessings. Mankind 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 would listen to God and understand the keys to a good life. God's ways work better than mankind's ways. God knows what is best for us. If only mankind would come to understand the keys to life and be people of light.

The Aaronic Blessing

ADONAI or LORD in all caps in our Bibles is the name for God which is pronounced Yě-hō-váh. Yě-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, Yě-hō-váh is God's true name forever. Of course, we should use His name with respect. Yě-hō-váh is an acronym formed from the Hebrew verb hayah. Yě-hō-váh means, He existed, He exists, and He will exist. I want to honor God's name.

The ancient rabbis say that Yě-hō-váh (יהוה) is God's name. 2,363 different manuscripts of the Bible point God's name as Yě-hō-váh, once as Yě-hō-věh, never as Yahweh. The church Fathers said God's name is Yě-hō-váh. Yeshua said in Matthew 23:39 NKJV, "You shall see Me no more till you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'" Yeshua is quoting Psalm 118:26; the word "LORD" in that verse in Psalms is Yě-hō-váh (יהוה). I encourage you to use God's real name with respect at times.

Numbers 6:27 says we are to put God's name on His people.

Let's say the Aaronic Blessing from Numbers 6:24-26:

יְבָרֶכֶּךָ יְהוָה, וַיְשַׁמְרֶךָ
 יְאָר יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלֶיךָ, וַיַּחַנְךָ
 יִשָּׂא יְהוָה פְּנֵי אֶלֶיךָ, וַיִּשֶׂם לְךָ שְׁלוֹם

Yě-hō-váh bless you and keep you.

Yě-hō-váh make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you.

Yě-hō-váh lift up His face upon you, and give to you peace. Amen.