

כִּי תִשָּׂא

Ki Tissa

Exodus 30:11-34: end: following of the instructions for the *Mishkan*
Haftarah: 1 Kings 18:1-39 (20-39 Sephardic rite): Eliyahu at Mont Carmel

When you take a census, *ki tissa* כִּי תִשָּׂא of the people of Israel and register them, each, upon registration, is to pay a ransom for his life to Adonai, to avoid any breakout of plague among them during the time of the census. Exodus 30:12

Our weekly Parasha begins with the census of the children of Israel; it also tells of the sin of the golden Calf and of the broken Tables and the receiving of their replacements; it includes the remembrance of the laws of Shabbat and ends with the shining face of *Moshe*, who had to cover it with a veil to appease the people.

In this census the people were not numbered; only the half shekels were numbered and collected as the basis to build the *Mishkan*. These “half shekels” were only made whole when combined with the offerings brought by others; thus, the nation as a whole participated in the building of the *Mishkan*.

The remainder of the *Mishkan* was built with the free will offerings and, as we saw in our last Parasha *Trumah*, *Betzal El* had a prophetic gift which allowed him to discern the purposes of their hearts when giving and accordingly, the offering would be used for the building of the Arch, the Menorah, or the posts of the courtyard.

Once more the Torah teaches us that service for G-d is to be accomplished together as a team, for a common purpose; two halves becoming a whole when combined, different yet united in the same vision.

Furthermore, the Hebrew word for “is to pay” or “will give” *venatnu* composed of the letters, *vav, nun, tav, nun, vav, וְנָתַנּוּ* can be

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Sefer Shemot

read from both sides, left to right and vice versa; this teaches us of the boomerang effect or the sowing and reaping of the *tzedaka*, the offering that is made from a willing heart. The blessings coming from this offering will reach us in one way or another¹ :

So I thought it necessary to urge these brothers to go on to you ahead of me and prepare your promised gift in plenty of time; this way it will be ready when I come and will be a genuine gift, not something extracted by pressure. Here's the point: he who plants sparingly also harvests sparingly. Each should give according to what he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. {#Pr 22:8 (Septuagint)} Moreover, God has the power to provide you with every gracious gift in abundance, so that always in every way you will have all you need yourselves and be able to provide abundantly for every good cause-- as the *Tanach* says, "He gave generously to the poor; his *tzedaka* lasts forever." {#Ps 112:9} He who provides both seed for the planter and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your *tzedaka*. You will be enriched in every way, so that you can be generous in everything. And through us your generosity will cause people to thank God, because rendering this holy service not only provides for the needs of God's people, but it also overflows in the many thanks people will be giving to God. In offering this service you prove to these people that you glorify God by actually doing what your acknowledgement of the Good News of the Messiah requires, namely, sharing generously with them and with everyone. And in their prayers for you they will feel a strong affection for you because of how gracious God has been to you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:5-15

This redeeming was both common and personal: Israel always functions as a people. Together they were enslaved; were set free; received the Torah which made them a people and practiced it, and together they will receive the revelation of the One they pierced.

The Torah teaches us that we are responsible for our brother and we shall not bear sin because of him². There is a collective responsibility

¹ Baal Haturim

² Leviticus 19:17

as in Achan's sin, where the whole people were responsible; this is the reason for a collective census.

But G-d, foreseeing the coming of the Gentiles to salvation through *Yeshua* and the momentary remoteness of the House of Israel, offered the possibility of personal revelation and salvation; each one is responsible for his own walk with G-d and *Yeshua* tells us that "all our hair is counted".³

We look expectantly, to the day when Israel will return fully to her G-d and when we will become one people, Jews and Gentiles united under His staff.

Next come the commandments concerning the basin and the washings and the preparation of the anointing oil and the incense. The basin speaks of the holiness required for our actions and the purity of our motivations using the image of the washing of the hands and feet:

Therefore, it is my wish that when the men pray, no matter where, they should lift up hands that are holy – they should not become angry or get into arguments. 1 Timothy 2:8

The composition of the oil and incense could not be imitated for personal use; nor was a counterfeit allowed. We have been consecrated and bound to the Messiah:

Moreover, it is God who sets both us and you in firm union with the Messiah; he has anointed us, put his seal on us, and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee for the future. 2 Corinthians 1:21-22

The altar of sacrifices, the basin of washings, the anointing oil and incense, all these things speak of the process of redemption accomplished by *Yeshua*. They lead us to the commandment of the Shabbat just before the receiving of the first two Tables of the Torah.

Tell the people of Israel, 'You are to observe my Shabbat s; for this is a sign between me and you through all your generations; so that you will know that I am Adonai, who sets you apart for me. Therefore you are to keep my Shabbat, because it is set apart for you. Everyone who treats it

³ Matthew 10:30

as ordinary must be put to death; for whoever does any work on it is to be cut off from his people. On six days work will get done; but the seventh day is Shabbat, for complete rest, set apart for Adonai. Whoever does any work on the day of Shabbat must be put to death. The people of Israel are to keep the Shabbat, to observe Shabbat through all their generations as a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the people of Israel forever; for in six days Adonai made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he stopped working and rested. Exodus 31:13-17

All these steps lead to the “rest” that has been given to us through reconciliation with the Creator of our souls. We then acknowledge Him as the Master of all, the One Who delivered us from the oppressor, from Egypt’s yoke and we can enter fully into His peace.

“Come to me, all of you who are struggling and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

{#Jer 6:16} Matthew 11:28-29

So there remains a Shabbat-keeping for God’s people. For the one who has entered God’s rest has also rested from his own works, as God did from his. Hebrews 4:9-10

This Shabbat is also a sign between Israel and G-d; Islam took the Friday and the Christian, Sunday, but Israel remained faithful to the original Covenant. The physical application of this day of rest is the only sign for the highly spiritual meaning of the Shabbat.

It is a sign between me and the people of Israel forever; for in six days Adonai made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he stopped working and rested.’ Exodus 31:17

Moshe has not yet come down from the mountain and the forty days are nearly gone. What is going to happen to the people in the desert? Who will now intercede to G-d? What if all of this was just a mere dream?

The Word tells us that about 3000 souls sinned that day (this represents approximately 1% of the whole population). After the experience on Mount Sinai, the miracles, the lifting in the spiritual realm of the revelations, the feeling of abandonment is too difficult, the maturity of the people too fragile. A golden calf is made with the gold

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Sefer Bereshit

taken from Egypt, but despite Aaron's slowness to make it (he wants to wait for *Moshe's* return and pretends it will be ready only for the next day), the people get up early to commit the irreparable, the reprehensible: an idol is fashioned in the image of a bull (reminding us of both the Egyptian god Apis and Ezekiel's vision, according to the Midrash). They preferred the "safer" laziness of sin (like the slave who has his ear pierced on the doorpost (see our Parasha Mishpatim), whose spark is choked by the worries of the world, rather than the fight for faith.

Although they said with zealous hearts, the words full of promises: *Naaseh veh nishma*, **נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע**: We will do and we will listen (Exodus 24:7), they are now cut from the divine grace and under judgment. They will be saved from G-d's wrath only by *Moshe's* intercession:

Now, if you will just forgive their sin! But if you won't, then, I beg you, blot me out of your book which you have written! Exodus 32:32

Centuries later, *Shaul* (Paul) will also pray the same way, for the salvation of his people:

I am speaking the truth – as one who belongs to the Messiah, I do not lie; and also bearing witness is my conscience, governed by the *Ruach HaKodesh* my grief is so great, the pain in my heart so constant, that I could wish myself actually under God's curse and separated from the Messiah, if it would help my brothers, my own flesh and blood, the people of Israel! They were made God's children, the *Shechina* has been with them, the covenants are theirs, likewise the giving of the Torah, the Temple service and the promises; the Patriarchs are theirs; and from them, as far as his physical descent is concerned, came the Messiah, who is over all. Praised be Adonai for ever! Amen. Romans 9:1-5

Moshe comes down with the two engraved Tables written by the finger of G-d (Exodus 32:16). The word engraved⁴, *charut* **חָרוּת** is written the same way as the word freedom, *cherut* **חֵירוּת**

The Torah has been given to us to set us free from our bondage and to allow us to walk in freedom:

⁴ Rabbi Josuah Ben Lavi, La Voix de la Thora, E. Munk

So if the Son frees you, you will really be free! John 8:36

Yeshua came to initiate this wonderful transformation in our hearts in order to serve Him, free from idolatry, free from materialism, free from human control, free from our past, free from death! This freedom has a price:

"Whoever is for Adonai, come to me! Exodus 32:26

Three thousands souls died that day. All those whose motivations have been purified, all those who do not bend their knees before Baal, all those who don't look for their own interest, but for that of the Kingdom and who are sanctified through obedience to the Word, who put aside their own ambition and bitterness, and demolish any arrogance that raises against the knowledge of the Messiah, these are the ones who will be able to judge:

Yeshua said to them, "Yes. I tell you that in the regenerated world, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

Matthew 19:28

The tribe of Levy which means 'attached', was the only one to follow *Moshe* for the purification of the camp. The violent ones take over G-d's kingdom (Matthew 11:12) and *Yeshua* confirmed it:

"Don't suppose that I have come to bring peace to the Land. It is not peace I have come to bring, but a sword! For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, so that a man's enemies will be the members of his own household. {#Mic 7:6} Whoever loves his father or mother more than he loves me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than he loves me is not worthy of me. Matthew 10:34 -37

Moshe will go up a second time to intercede for the people. This happened from the 18th of Tammuz until the end of the month of Av.

G-d told him that He would not go among the people any more but He would send an "Angel" to lead him to the Promised Land.

The infinite grace of G-d, Who does not want the death of His people! His holiness is so high that He can't remain in a defiled camp; His presence withdraws and He will appear veiled to His people.

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Sefer Bereshit

The Israelites took off their ornament (33:7): the word ornament, *edyam*, עֲדָיִם corresponds to the numerical value of Eden, עֵדֶן, 124, as if the reception of the Torah at Mount Sinai had for a moment clothed the *Bneh Yisra-El* with the original purity, but they fell again. The Torah was predestined to be engraved on their hearts in the future:

Moshe said to Adonai, "Look, you say to me, 'Make these people move on!' But you haven't let me know whom you will be sending with me.
Exodus 33:12

But *Moshe* said, "I beg you to show me your glory! Exodus 33:18

How mysterious this passage is! We learn here that G-d hid a part of Himself in order to preserve His servant from death; his carnal nature lacking to be consumed by the purity of His holiness.

Philip said to him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it will be enough for us." John 14:8

Yeshua will then unveil part of the Father: His glory in Him. This mystery, still as big for our spirits that sleep as it was for the three apostles on the mountain:

As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed; and his clothing became gleaming white. Suddenly there were two men talking with him--*Moshe* and *Eliyahu*! They appeared in glorious splendor and spoke of his exodus, which he was soon to accomplish in *Yerushalayim*. *Kefa* (*Peter*) and those with him had been sound asleep; but on becoming fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him. As the men were leaving *Yeshua*, *Kefa* said to him, not knowing what he was saying, "It's good that we're here, Rabbi! Let's put up three shelters--one for you, one for *Moshe* and one for *Eliyahu*." As he spoke, a cloud came and enveloped them. They were frightened as they entered the cloud; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to him!" Luke 9:29-35

When *Moshe* comes down for the second time with the new Tables, it will be the 10th of Tishri, the day of Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. Forgiveness has been granted, but the new Tables were made by the hand of man this time, a symbol of the temporary human nature of *Yeshua*. The name Adonai, יהוה Exodus 34:5 is mentioned

instead of Elohim as was for the first Tables, showing the measure of grace G-d gave us through *Yeshua*:

The Spirit of Adonai Elohim is upon me, because Adonai has anointed me to announce good news to the poor. He has sent me to heal the brokenhearted; to proclaim freedom to the captives, to let out into light those bound in the dark; to proclaim the year of the favor of Adonai and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, yes, provide for those in *Tziyon* who mourn, giving them garlands instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, a cloak of praise instead of a heavy spirit, so that they will be called oaks of righteousness planted by Adonai, in which he takes pride. Isaiah 61:1-3

He will then answer to Philip:

Yeshua replied to him, "Have I been with you so long without your knowing me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'? John 14:9

This wonderful grace has been given to us so that we can contemplate, with an open face, the One whom the prophets spoke of, of whom Moshe was able to glimpse and Who was before Avraham; the One whose origins come from eternity:

What is more, their minds were made stonelike; for to this day the same veil remains over them when they read the Old Covenant; it has not been unveiled, because only by the Messiah is the veil taken away. Yes, till today, whenever *Moshe* is read, a veil lies over their heart. "But, says the Torah, whenever someone turns to Adonai, the veil is taken away."

Now, "Adonai" in this text means the Spirit. And where the Spirit of Adonai is, there is freedom. So all of us, with faces unveiled, see as in a mirror the glory of the Lord; and we are being changed into his very image, from one degree of glory to the next, by Adonai the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:14-18

May He soon be unveiled to His people!



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Sefer Bereshit