

Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation

(Under same management for over 5779 years)

SHABBAT SERVICE

February 23rd – 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"

12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat



"Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless; who live by the Torah of Adonai.

Blessed are those who observe His instruction; who seek Him with all their heart." Psalm

Ki Tasa - When you elevate -- Exodus 30:11 - 34:35

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

Va-y'daber Adonai el Mosheh lemor,

and spoke the Lord to Moses to say,

The Lord spoke to Moses saying.

כִּי תִשָּׂא אֶת-רֹאשׁ בְּנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל לִפְקֹדֵיהֶם

ki tisa et-rosh b'nei-Yisra'el lif'kudeihem,

when you elevate head(s) of sons of Israel to count them,

"When you take a census of the sons of Israel to number them,

וְנָתַנוּ אִישׁ כֹּפֶר נַפְשׁוֹ לַיהוָה בִּפְקֹד אֹתָם וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה בָהֶם נֶגֶף בִּפְקֹד אֹתָם:

v'nat'nooesh kofer nafsho la-Adonai bifkod otam,

v'lo-yih'yeh va-hem negef bifkod otam.

then will give man a covering for soul-his to the Lord in counting them, so not will be among them

a plague when counting them

then each one of them shall give a ransom for himself to the Lord, when you number them.,

that there may be no plague among them, when you number them."



40 Days In The Wilderness With God

While Moses was up on Mt. Sinai with God for 40 days and 40 nights, God taught him the Torah; His principles of living the Godly, Jewish way of life. God gave Moses detailed instructions, so that Moses could administrate the

building of God's tabernacle (**Mishkan**), the place where God could dwell with His people. This week we conclude the design of God's dwelling place with the laver, the anointing oil, and the incense. God also gave Moses instructions for collecting the monetary resources necessary for maintaining His ministry. Lastly, God named two men, whom He chose to craft His "home" among His people.

Atonement For the Soul

The "ransom" or "atonement" money in Hebrew is "**kofer nafsho**," literally "a covering (or atonement) for his soul." The instructions for this collection are given here and implemented in Numbers 1:3. Every adult male 20 years and older, whether wealthy or poor, was to give a half-shekel as a "flat tax" for the purpose of maintaining the service of the tabernacle. It is called "atonement money" in verse 16. Some think "atonement

money" is used because it would be used to maintain the Levitical, sacrificial services necessary to provide atonement for the people. Others see this "atonement money" paid by warriors 20 years old and over as money paid for atonement for the anticipated shedding of blood in battle. The half-shekel was an amount that everyone could contribute, regardless of their financial status. Later in scripture the "atonement money" evolved into what was called the "temple tax" in Matthew 17:24-27, where Yeshua, who as Messiah would be considered part of the "Royal family" and therefore exempt from the tax, nevertheless, paid the tax in order to avoid giving offense. The temple tax was collected from each family for the physical support of God's ministry. The **principle for us today** is that everyone should give towards the support of God's ministry among His people. Everyone in the congregational family should have a part! Just as God is committed to every one of His people, all of God's people must show their commitment to Him! No person is too poor that he cannot have a part. No person is so wealthy that he has the whole part. And no person tells us how much we should give. Rather, we are admonished to inquire of God. Some may also give their time and talents in support of our Sabbath services, but everyone should also contribute what God directs them to contribute for God's on-going ministry. God's ministry should be joyfully supported by God's people....all God's people!

Clean Before Our God

In the courtyard between the bronze altar and the entrance to the tent of meeting stood the laver filled with water. The laver was made of bronze from the bronze mirrors of the women (Ex.38:8). Before entering the tent to minister, the priests had to wash themselves, so as to be undefiled when doing God's work of ministry. Ritual washings were for the purpose of making the priest ceremonially clean. Only a sanctified person, who has been set apart for the service of the tabernacle could approach God, and they must be "clean." The Jewish tradition of hand washing before meals, netilat yadayim, is a remembrance of the use of the laver, considering that the dining table is like the altar. **For believers** in the finished work of Yeshua, we realize that no amount of our own work can serve to sanctify us. Sanctification is a process by which we are continually conformed into the likeness of Messiah through the "washing" of the word of God. **John 15:3** tells us that we are clean because of the word that Messiah has spoken to us. **John 17:17** states that we are sanctified (set apart for God's service) "in the truth," and that God's "word is truth." **Ephesians 5:26** states that believers (the bride of Messiah) are set apart (sanctified) "by the washing of water with the word..." So rather than a physical, ritual washing, believers in Messiah should "bathe" themselves in God's word, as a continual process of being made into the image of Messiah. When in prayer we come into God's presence, whether in our homes or at services, we should always be aware that we are in the presence of our Holy God. We come before Him in reverence and awe. We come before Him as sanctified sinners made "clean" by the blood of the Lamb of God, the Messiah, Yeshua.

The Sweet Aroma of God's Satisfaction

An anointing oil and incense were made from specific blends of fragrant spices used only for this purpose. All of the furniture used in God's service was to be anointed. Also the priests ministering in the tabernacle were anointed with the oil, "consecrated,"....."that they may minister as priests to Me" (vs. 30). Incense made into a perfume was used in the altar of incense before the ark of the testimony. Maimonides in his "Guide to the Perplexed" suggested that without the fragrant anointing oil and incense, the whole tabernacle area would have had the foul smell of a slaughterhouse combined with the continual burning of animal flesh. He says that through the power of "teshuvah" (repentance), there is sublimation of the "foul odors" of man's failings. Yet God's provision of a fragrant oil that ascended to Him as a "soothing aroma," expressed His satisfaction with the completed sacrifice, and also provided a sweet aroma for God's people participating in His work of redemption. The Hebrew word "Mashiach," which we translate "Messiah," means "the anointed one." Our Messiah is the Anointed One, who sits down beside God the Father, having finished His atoning work as the Anointed High Priest in the heavenly tabernacle (Hebrews 10:12), representing the sweetest possible aroma of God's satisfaction!



The (**Ruach**) Spirit of God

Chapter 31 introduces us to the two supervisors of the building of the tabernacle, Bezalel and Oholiab. God called these two individuals personally and "filled" them with the "Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship..." (vs.2). Remembering that these two men formerly were slaves in Egypt, they would not have been capable of accomplishing their work of crafting the gold, silver, bronze, and fine-worked material as God had instructed without supernatural power. Therefore, "in the hearts of all who are skillful, I (God) have put skill, that they may make all that I have commanded you..." (vs.6). God filled those, whom He knew possessed the proclivity to accomplish His work, with all the necessary knowledge and skill required to accomplish it. **Today**, under the renewed covenant of our risen Messiah, **all believers are filled with God's supernatural power to accomplish His work**. We call this the filling of the "**Ruach HaKodesh**" or Holy Spirit. Just as the above two individuals were willing to be used in God's service, so we today must be willing vessels in God's service for the Holy Spirit to minister God's work effectively through us. God takes the innate and acquired skills of His servants and uses them, as we allow, supplementing us supernaturally as required.



Shabbat: A sign of our Commitment to God

The last part of this Chapter reminds God's people to keep the Sabbath as a sign of the perpetual, covenantal relationship between God and His people. God took six days for creation and rested on the seventh. He expects us to do the same, as a sign of our unique relationship with Him. Even those with a special assignment from God like Bezalel and Oholiab must keep God's Sabbath. Under the Mosaic Law, the relationship of God to His Jewish people was unique and exclusive. After Messiah's finished work on earth, this relationship of God to man is available to all believers both Jew and Gentile, for we know that it is the same "**Adonai mekadeshem**;" "the same Lord who sanctifies you (vs. 13)." For some who believe that God's law expired with death of Messiah, keeping the Sabbath as a sign of our commitment to God also expired. So how would they explain God's words "perpetual" (verse16) and "forever" (verse 17) in relation to keeping the Sabbath? Keeping the Sabbath is a sign of our commitment to Godforever!



Written in Stone

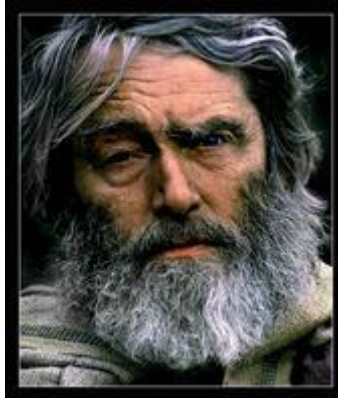
When God finished giving Moses His instructions for the building of the tabernacle, He presented Moses with two stone tablets "written by the finger of God." While some take literally that God's "finger" wrote the Ten Commandments on the two stone tablets, others see this expression to mean that the Ten Commandments were written by God's power or by His Spirit. They would point back to the same words used in Ex.8:19 by the magicians to Pharaoh as an acknowledgement that the third plague was due to God's ("finger") power. More important, however, was that God wrote the Ten Commandments into stone tablets. Why stone and not wood? Why did God not have Bezalel or Oholiab engrave them like they engraved the names of the twelve tribes? They were written in stone by God, Himself, to illustrate for His people both **then and now** the importance and the permanency of God's commandments! The Ten Commandments **were and are today** God's plumb line, defining for all time God's expectations for His people.



The Golden Calf, Moses's Intercession, Aaron's Excuses

In **Chapter 32** we read that while Moses was still on Mt. Sinai receiving the two tablets of God's law, the people, who had previously confessed obedience to God's law, had "corrupted themselves" (vs.7). They had Aaron make them a golden calf as a god. They sacrificed and worshipped it with immoral behavior, breaking their covenant with God, and declaring that this calf was their god that brought them out of Egypt. How could God's people, who were delivered from slavery in Egypt and from Pharaoh's army by God's Almighty hand, so quickly turn from Him to worship an idol? Do we see this type of thing happening in our lives today? If so, how can we guard ourselves against forsaking God? Perhaps we should remember how God has delivered us in the past, and by faith trust Him to continue to be our God. If our faith in God remains strong, we will not be overcome by the evil of the world. Previously we spoke of God's delivered people at Sinai as people of shallow faith, whose faith stemmed more from the miracles of God than from their putting their faith and trust in Him. They followed Moses as their leader. But when Moses "disappeared" for 40 days, they were leaderless, and the shallow foundation of their faith was exposed. **Matthew 7:26-27** described a situation of shallow faith, where a house was built on a foundation of sand, rather than on "The Rock." Adversity shows us

whether our faith is strongly grounded in God. The faith of the people, redeemed from Egypt by God, was in the leadership of Moses, rather than in the God of Moses. Let us today be aware that our faith is not shallow; that we do not trust in our leaders. Those who build their houses on "The Rock" trust only in Him! They are never leaderless!



Moses Intercedes for the People

When Moses heard that the people had deserted God and were worshipping an idol, he immediately interceded with God to spare the people. Except for the intercession of Moses, God was ready to destroy all of the people and make a great nation out of Moses. Notice the elements of Moses's prayer of intercession with God. **Today we can make intercession** with God using these same elements of prayer, according to God's will: 1) God's grace 2) God's name and reputation 3) God's promises. In verse 11, Moses reiterates to God the grace He has already given to His people by delivering them from Egyptian slavery. In verse 12, Moses tells God that His name and reputation will be denigrated by the Egyptians, if He kills His people after having freed them. In verse 13, Moses reminds God of His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to multiply the people and give them the "promised land" as their inheritance forever. When God relented from destroying the people, it seemed from the prospective of Moses that God had "changed His mind." Yet from God's prospective, His plans and purpose are unchangeable.



When Moses came upon the sight of the people in open idolatry and immorality, his "anger burned, and he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain" (vs.19). He burned the idol, ground it up, scattered it over water, and made them drink it. Now that was an object lesson!



When Moses confronted his brother, Aaron, as to why Aaron had listened to the people and made the idol for them, Aaron gave him three excuses: 1) The people are evil. 2) They made me do it. 3) It just happened. **Today** we might hear, "It's just the way of our world. Everybody's doing it. I just went along." Moses didn't buy Aaron's excuses, and neither should we buy the excuses of the world.



Moses stands at the gate of the camp and proclaims, "Who is on the Lord's side?" The Levites take a stand and move over towards Moses, who instructs them to exact punishment on those who "rose up to play" (vs.6) and "were out of control" [Literally, their clothes were "broken loose"](vs.25). About three thousand men were killed. Can you figure out how the Levites decided which ones fit the above description? The ones who died were the ones without clothes ("broken loose"). Although Moses offered himself to God on behalf of the people as atonement, God held each individual responsible for his sin (vs. 33) and still does today.

The Prayers of a Righteous Man Availed Much

In **Chapter 33** there was another illustration of God seemingly changing His mind. In verse 3, God seemingly has decided not to remain in the midst of His people because of their obstinacy. If God had not remained among His people, there would have been no need to build a tabernacle in which He would dwell. When the people heard this news, they repented and went into mourning. Moses talked with God and reminded Him of His words. God had said that He knew Moses in a special way (by name), and Moses had found favor in His sight. Moses asked God to allow him to know Him in a more intimate way, and also asked that God reconsider and remain among His people. Moses reminded God that God had called this people His people. God decided that His presence would remain with His people because of His relationship with Moses. To illustrate their relationship, God put Moses in a cleft of rock while He passed by, showing Moses His passing glory. **Today** we also can have an intimate relationship with God. We, too, can "see God" in an intimate way. For the more intimate we become with Messiah, the more intimate we are with God. Yeshua tells us "He who has seen me has seen the Father..."
(John 14:9).



Relationship with God Restored

God's people had repented of their sin and mourned. Moses led intercessory prayer on their behalf. The result was that God again "turned His face towards His people." The prophet Zechariah foretold that the house of David would ..."look on Me (Messiah) whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son..." (Zech.12:10). **Even today, we can have a restored relationship with God, if we repent from sin, mourn for God to again come into our lives, and look (fix our focus) towards Messiah in prayer.**

In **Chapter 34** God renewed His covenant with His people. Moses went up Mt. Sinai the third time, taking with him two stone tablets. As God passed in front of Moses, He proclaimed His personal covenant-keeping name: "YHVH," saying "YHVH" is God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in loving-kindness ("chesed"--covenant-keeping lovingkindness) and truth... (verse 6). Notice that it is from God's Holy Name, YHVH, that the attributes of His character flow to us. God's fundamental essence is holiness! This perfectly explains why sinful people cannot expect to receive God's compassion and loving-kindness apart from Messiah's sacrificial atonement for sin. Unatoned sin separates man from the fundamental essence of God!

Moses was again with God for forty days, so long that his face showed the radiance of God's glory. When Moses came down to the people, they were afraid of him because his face shone. Perhaps this is an **example for us.** We should endeavor to maintain such a

close relationship with God that the surrounding community can observe our Godly character and demeanor, as our close relationship with God "rubs off" in our daily lives. One might notice that when Moses came back down from Mt. Sinai this time, there was no mention of anyone being "out of control." Evidently the people got the message! So should we!!

SHABBAT SHALOM

