

**#22 VaYakhel Exodus 35:1-38:20 and #23 Pekudei Exodus 38:21-40:38**

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- \* Unlock the comfort of God through the scriptures
- \* Pray for protection; be a person that supports and sustains others.
- \* Be logical and strategic as God's people.
- \* God is there; don't be deluded into thinking He is not with us.

VaYakhel means "and he assembled" Vayak'hel begins with Moshe (Moses) again reminding the people to keep Shabbat. This is just before they take up a collection for the articles and manufacture of the Mishkan (Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting in the desert). They could possibly think that working on their place of worship was no work at all, but God tells them not to do it.

Moshe goes on to tell them that God has told him that they should take up a free will collection for the things needed for the Mishkan (Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting); and then for the craftsmen to come and make the articles for the Mishkan and the clothing and adornments for the priests. The people came and gave freely for the work of the Mishkan. Women who could make fabric began their work. The leaders brought precious objects such as precious stones, incense, and oil.

B'tzal'el (Bezalel) and Oholi'av (Aholiab) lead the work and they as well as others are filled with the Spirit of God to do the work. People sometimes diminish the power of God and God's ability to work in us and through us. This is incorrect doctrine. My cousin became a believer and after 2 computer specialists worked for 24 hours straight to get a large company computer working, my cousin was called on. He prayed and within 10 minutes he had the problem fixed. That is God at work in us!

The people brought more than they needed so they needed to tell them they had enough. Then the making of the tent, planks and crossbars, and other items for its construction are described. The making of the ark and k'ruvim (cherubs) are described as well as the other items needed including the Menorah and the altar for the Mishkan.

Pekudei means "accountings of." Pekudei begins by giving an account of the offerings made and more descriptions are made of the items for the Tabernacle. They brought all the finished items to Moshe and then Moshe blessed them. The portion ends with the Tabernacle being set up on the first day of the first month, the 1st of Nisan, and when it was set up the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting and the presence of the Lord filled the tent. When the cloud lifted the Israelites would follow it. A cloud appeared over the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting) during the day and fire would appear over the Mishkan at night during their whole time in the desert.

It is good to be sacrificial with our belongings and our lives. Rabbi Shaul (Paul) says that we are to be a sacrificial and generous people in Ephesians 5:1-2 and 2 Cor. 9:8-9. The Messiah Yeshua even gave His life for us so that we could have life and we should be a giving people who imitate Him. Israel following the cloud is a picture of how we are to live our lives. We are to follow God's commandments and also be led by the Holy Spirit every day. There are four Jewish New Years: the 1st of Nisan – the counting of king's reigns; the 1st of Tishrei, also known as Rosh Hashanah – new year for the calendar year; the 1st of Elul – animal tithes (like tax day); the 15th of Sh'vat also called Tu BiShvat; – tree new year, when trees are planted and other ecological things are done.

The Haftarah for VaYakhel is 1 Kings 7:13-26. King Shlomo (Solomon) sends for the Jewish bronze worker Hiram from Tyre to do some of the work on the first Temple. This portion describes the amazing work done on the first Temple. In both the Mishkan (the Tabernacle, Tent of Meeting) and the first Temple we see some beautiful work being done in the name of the true God, Yehovah. Perhaps this should remind us that we being the temple of the Holy Spirit should strive to live lives that befit the beauty that God has bestowed on us (1 Corinthians 6:19).

The Haftarah for Pekudei is 1 Kings 7:51- 8:21. The Haftarah portion for Pekudei concludes with the dedication of the first Temple. The presence of the Lord filled the Temple and Solomon blesses the people. Both the Mishkan and the Temple are filled with the presence of God. Like the Lord filled the Temple, those that believe on the Messiah are filled with the Holy Spirit; the Holy Spirit should not be taken lightly.<sup>1</sup> 1 Kings 8:10-11 CJB says (Cohanim means priests), "When the cohanim came out of the Holy Place, the cloud filled the house of ADONAI, so that, because of the cloud, the cohanim could not stand up to perform their service; for the glory of ADONAI filled the house of ADONAI." This is an example of the overcoming presence of the Holy Spirit which we as believers in the Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) can experience.

After reading the scripture about how the presence of God filled the Temple, we may wonder if any of that type of experience is for believers in the Messiah and the answer is yes. We are to receive the Holy Spirit when we believe in the Messiah Yeshua and it impacts our lives. Kefa (Peter) said in Acts 2:38-39 NKJV, "Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." Some though are not open to the Holy Spirit. It is a commandment of God to receive the Holy Spirit in this Messianic age.

Some of us have experienced the presence of God in amazing ways through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit simply works in our hearts and minds at times, and at other times we can experience a timeless type of presence and peace. If you need that, just acknowledge the presence of God and talk to God. I first experienced God's presence when I did that years ago. Don't let your mind get sidetracked; it is your time with God. God has also given us gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Unlock the comfort of God through the scriptures. Shaul (Paul) said that God can encourage us and comfort us and that we should encourage one another. 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NKJV says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God." It is truly amazing what God can help us with. Shaul said that God got them through some tough situations. "He rescued us from such deadly peril, and he will rescue us again! The one in whom we have placed our hope will indeed continue to rescue us;" 2 Corinthians 1:10 CJB.

We are talking about real troubles here and not just running out of bathroom tissue. God is our Father and He will not leave us. Yeshua said, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.;" John 14:18 NKJV. Yeshua then sent those who believe in Him the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit can give us, "Love, joy,

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<sup>1</sup> "Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, 'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord. And again, 'The Lord will judge His people.' It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God;" Hebrews 10:29-31 NKJV.

peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;" Galatians 5:22-23 NKJV. God can give us peace, but if we work ourselves up, we will not allow the Holy Spirit to give us peace.

Over history, God has been able to help people to be comforted. Psalm 94:19 NKJV says, "In the multitude of my anxieties within me, Your comforts delight my soul." Even more so now in this Messianic age, we can experience God's comfort if we are open to Him and don't allow our peace to be stolen from us. Shaul tells us to not let anxiety overcome us, but pray. He also said to change how we think. If we are thinking about good things, we won't have time to belabor fear and anxiety. Stay your mind, pray and trust God. I've applied the following verses in Philippians many times in my life and they have helped me get through some tough situations. They can help you too.

Philippians 4:6-9 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. Finally, brethren, 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. The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you."

The very nature of our greeting, shalom, which means peace should remind us to be at peace. I'm not talking about blind foolishness. Don't tempt God. We don't jump off a cliff expecting to be rescued by God. God can be merciful though in our ignorance and has helped me at times when I used poor judgment; I've had some amazing miracles happen to me. But, use good sense. Proverbs 16:21-22 CJB says, "A wise-hearted person is said to have discernment, and sweetness of speech adds to learning. Common sense is a fountain of life to one who has it, whereas fools are punished by their own folly." Don't be punished for the consequences of unwise actions or decisions.

Besides having good sense, we need to be in prayer Shaul says. Pray for protection; be a person that supports and sustains others. There have been many times in my life that prayer has freed me from my anxieties just like the scripture tells us to do. After Shaul says God rescued them in 2 Corinthians, he says to keep praying; he is telling them that prayer works! "You also helping together in prayer for us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf for the gift granted to us;" 2 Corinthians 1:11 NKJV. The Bible says we are to pray with supplications (with humble sincerity) and requests. In Ephesians 6:18 NKJV it says, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints."

Be logical and strategic as God's people. Proverbs tells us to have good sense and consider if something is wrong or evil. "A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, but the simple pass on and are punished;" Proverbs 22:3 NKJV. Don't be clueless about life. Use your thinking abilities and be sensible. God gave us a brain, so use it. Watch out for what they call tunnel vision where we mindlessly act on our impulses or fears. Isaiah 5:21 NKJV tells us that can lead to trouble "Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes." A person who thinks they are wise when they are not are in for trouble. Think about doing what is right and commit yourself to it.

God is there; don't be deluded into thinking He is not with us. "Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you:" Deuteronomy 31:6 NKJV. God will lift us up and be with us. "Fear not, for I am with you;

be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand;" Isaiah 41:10 NKJV. Psalm 118:6 NKJV says, "With ADONAI on my side, I fear nothing." God told Joshua to have courage, "Be strong, be bold. So don't be afraid or downhearted, because ADONAI your God is with you wherever you go;" Joshua 1:9 NKJV.

Just like those in the Old Testament portion, God can work in us and use us for His purposes. The presence of God was an overcoming presence at the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting in the desert) and at the Temple. We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit when we believe in the Messiah and the Holy Spirit can work in us just like God worked in those in the Old Testament portion. Sometimes we can have an amazing personal experience just like they did at the Temple because we have the Holy Spirit.

God wants to comfort us and give us peace in every situation. Yeshua told us that He would not leave us as orphans and He gave us the Holy Spirit. God is able to help us supernaturally, so we are to pray and cast our anxieties on God. Be sensible and don't tempt God. You do your part in a sensible manner and let God take care of the rest. Pray for protection and for all things; prayer works! God is with us so don't be deluded into thinking He is not there. It says about our God Yehovah in Psalm 147:4-5 NKJV, "He determines how many stars there are and calls them all by name. Our Lord is great, his power is vast, his wisdom beyond all telling." Be strong and courageous even as Israel was in the desert years ago as they moved forward toward the land God promised them. They were not without doubts and trials, but continued to move forward in faith. So, we also should move forward in faith.