

#19 Terumah Exodus 25:1-27:19

By Moshe Schwab

While praying:

Don't take chances with your spirituality.

Enjoy what God have given you; He is a good God.

Be consistent; be at peace; value your spiritual life over the junk mail of life.

Value understanding the Bible the way it was intended to be understood.

The work of the Holy Spirit is an amazing work; man cannot duplicate the work of God.

The portion begins with God instructing Moshe to take up a free will collection for a holy place (sanctuary) and the items and clothing associated with the ritual practice that Israel was to do. God would live among them. The details are given about how the ark is to be made and what was in it. God would speak to them from above the ark cover. They were also to make a table and dishes, and keep the bread of God's presence on the table. They were to make a menorah (lamp) with seven lamps. They were to make everything with the designs that God showed Moshe on the mountain.

Then specific directions are given for the construction of the tent of meeting. The holy place and the especially holy place were to be separated by a curtain and the table and menorah were to be put outside the curtain with the table to the north and the menorah to the south. They were to make an entrance to the Mishkan and altar with its implements. They were to make a courtyard 150' x 75' with a gate to the east and the surrounding curtains (hangings) around the courtyard were to be 7 1/2' high. The holy place was located inside the courtyard.¹

In this portion the Lord tells Moshe to take up an offering to make the Mishkan (tent of meeting) with very specific directions on how to make it and the articles to be used in it. Perhaps this should remind us that we are not to worship God in the way we choose, but in the way that He chooses. He is not to be worshipped how the pagan gods are worshipped or He is not to be treated without respect. We should not have pagan elements in our meeting places; it is a place of respect where we welcome the presence of God.

It amazes me how God supplied everything that Israel needed, even items for the Tent of Meeting (The Mishkan) in the desert which was no small project. The Egyptians showed favor to Israel and gave them silver and gold and other things when Israel left Egypt (Exodus 12:35-36). According to one midrash the beam for the Mishkan was planted by Abraham.² The Temple built by Solomon was modeled after the Mishkan.

The people gave liberally for the Tent of Meeting; after all, God provided for them liberally. I remember as a young believer wondering if I could make it with my meager finances. Then something strange happened. I was able to get by on what I made and I can only attribute that to God. Perhaps some of you also could see the hand of God helping you out.

God said He would help Israel as they entered the promised land and it is the same God that loves us! "Be strong, be bold, don't be afraid or frightened of them, for ADONAI your God is going with you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you;" Deuteronomy 31:6 CJB. Also in Deuteronomy 7:9 CJB, "From this you can know that ADONAI your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his mitzvot" (commandments), "to a thousand generations." Why would anyone want to mess around with their relationship with almighty God?

¹ Each part of the Tent of Meeting had to do with the ritual significance of creation according to the midrash Rabbah.

² <https://www.hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Parashah/Summaries/Terumah/terumah.html>

Some people minimize the effect that life without God will have on them. Can you imagine Israel being in the desert and not realizing that their very lives depended on a real and true God? Often in our lives, we don't quite see it that way. It has been my experience that God intervenes in the lives of believers and helps them and can direct them through the Holy Spirit. God even works things out in spite of us or even when we go through tough circumstances. "Furthermore, we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called in accordance with his purpose;" Romans 8:28 CJB. God extended grace to Israel (Deuteronomy 7:9) and God still works things out for us. We just have to trust Him.

Don't take chances with your spirituality. Think about what you are doing. If it is not right, don't do it. My dad used to say if someone tells you to jump off a cliff, would you do it? I would always answer no. Would you jump off a spiritual cliff and separate yourself from God? Don't do it.

That scripture in Deuteronomy 7:9 is a classic. It says that God is faithful. He was faithful to Israel; he didn't lead them into the desert to die. He extends His grace (favor) to those who love Him. I can truly say I love Him and His commandments. They are not only a very big help in life, but God puts His power behind doing what is right.

God can give us so much. God can provide, help, strengthen us, do things on our behalf, helps us face things in life, gives us direction and purpose, and also, "the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, humility, self control; Galatians 5:22-23 CJB. I say, "wow!" Who wouldn't want what God can do for us? God is a good God. Ecclesiastes 2:24 CJB says, "So there is nothing better for a man to do than eat, drink and let himself enjoy the good that results from his work. I also realized that this is from God's hand." I say, is there anything that is not from the hand of God?

Be consistent; be at peace; value your spiritual life over the junk mail of life. Every day I get junk mail and email and sometimes I get distracted by it. Most of the time it is just junk. That's what getting sidetracked off our spiritual walk with God is like. It is just getting trapped with the junk of life whatever that may be. "A worthless person digs up evil [gossip] - it is like scorching fire on his lips. A deceitful person stirs up strife, and a slanderer can separate even close friends. A violent man lures his neighbor astray and leads him into evil ways;" Proverbs 16:27-29 CJB.

There are lots of ways to get trapped. It is God's intention that we are set free. 2 Timothy 2:25-26 says, "For God may perhaps grant them the opportunity to turn from their sins, acquire full knowledge of the truth, come to their senses and escape the trap of the Adversary, after having been captured alive by him to do his will."

Instead of being captured and trapped in sin, get set free. I don't think any of us expect sin to trap us, but that is what it does. From the sexual sinner to the drug addict, they know they are trapped in an alternate and often destructive lifestyle. Do you want to look back on your life only to see how you've been trapped and lied to about worldly things or do you want to see how doing things God's way has given you blessings and peace? Your choice. "A person whose desire rests on you, you preserve in perfect peace, because he trusts in you. Trust in ADONAI forever, because in Yah ADONAI is a Rock of Ages." Isaiah 26:3-4 CJB. I want some of that perfect peace; it sounds awesome.

We have a unique opportunity. We can value understanding the Bible the way it was intended to be understood. We've seen how God provided for Israel and that He will help us in all of life. We've read that God will give us grace just like He gave Israel grace – and, didn't He give them great grace! Follow Him

and His commandments. God gives us love, joy, and peace and those without God often have deceit and evil in their lives. It's a logical choice for me, what about you?

Also, the work of the Holy Spirit is an amazing work; man cannot duplicate the work of God. God promises to provide those who believe in the Messiah the help of Holy Spirit. It is a tangible work of God; the Bible says the Holy Spirit manifests in our lives in various ways. The Holy Spirit gives us gifts that are manifested (Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-13). The Holy Spirit leads us, helps us, protects us, inspires us, and gives us hope. "May God, the source of hope, fill you completely with joy and shalom as you continue trusting, so that by the power of the Ruach HaKodesh you may overflow with hope;" Romans 15:13 CJB. It's not just us; it is also the power of God at work in us through the Ruach, the Holy Spirit. The presence of God was with Israel in the desert and the presence of God is with us through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Just like it wasn't just Israel escaping all by themselves and providing for themselves in the desert wilderness, God will be at work in us and through us. Israel didn't rely on themselves, but on God and we can also rely on God and His power. He is the creator; He is able to help us. I just keep going and God helps me and I trust in Him.

Proverbs 3:5-8 are great scriptures to remember always. " Trust in ADONAI with all your heart; do not rely on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him; then he will level your paths. Don't be conceited about your own wisdom; but fear ADONAI, and turn from evil. This will bring health to your body and give strength to your bones." Trust in God with all that is in you. Don't rely on your own thinking, but follow His ways and stay away from evil. God's ways are best for your health. Trust, trust, trust; follow what He says, stay away from what is evil, and do what is right and good.

Treat God with the respect He deserves; He can do all things and He is for us. Deuteronomy 7:9 CJB, "From this you can know that ADONAI your God is indeed God, the faithful God, who keeps his covenant and extends grace to those who love him and observe his mitzvot" (commandments), "to a thousand generations." God is amazing and awesome. Grace from the creator is truly amazing grace.