

While praying:

- * God wants to pour His goodness on us. There are some that say we have to follow made up rules instead of receiving the simple care and love of the simplicity of God's commands.
- * God gave Israel a covenant. He has now instituted a Messianic covenant. There are people who only want a religious covenant.
- * What God does is wonderful and amazing. We need to keep ourselves in what God has done.
- * God's word applies to all of life. There is power in His word

Ki Tissa means “when you take.” The portion begins by God telling Moshe to take up a census of all makes over 20; They were to give a half shekel as an atonement which was to be used for the Mishkan (Tent of Meeting, Tabernacle). Usually countries take a census as a measure of prosperity. People can be thought of as a resource. They were not to think that way; instead they were to be humble and see their need for God and atonement.

Then it says they were to make a copper laver for the priests to wash their hands and feet at the Mishkan. This is how they were to begin their service at the Mishkan. In similar fashion, Yeshua washed the feet of His talmidim (disciples) and told them to be servants to others (John 13:1-17). They were to make a specific anointing oil and incense which was not to be used except at the Mishkan. Bezalel and Oholi'av were given special spiritual wisdom for the work of the Mishkan and others working who helped out would also receive wisdom to do the work.

They were to keep Shabbat for, "ADONAI made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day he stopped working and rested." Deut. 31:17. Keeping Shabbat on the right day testifies to our belief that God is the creator. Then God gave Moshe the stone tablets written by the “finger of God.” Meanwhile, while Moshe is on the mountain, the people become impatient and make a golden calf to worship. God calls them a stiff-necked people, not willing to accept what they should accept (Exodus 32:9)¹. Moshe intercedes for the people and God says He will not punish all of Israel. Moshe then comes down the mountain and is angry and throws the tablets down and destroys the golden calf. He had it ground down into powder and then threw it into the water and made the people drink it. Aharon blames Israel for the idolatry.

Moshe asks for those who are for Adonai to support him and the Levites that support him kill 3,000. The Levites are rewarded for being faithful (Exodus 32:26). Again, Moshe intercedes for Israel. Some end up dying from a plague as result of the idolatry that was committed. Like Moshe, Yeshua the Messiah intercedes for us (1 John 2:1). Moshe built the Mishkan, Yeshua built the world we live in (Hebrews 3:1-6; Colossians 1:16). It is comforting to know that just as God heard Moshe's intercession for Israel, Yeshua the Messiah speaks (intercedes) on our behalf.

The Lord tells the Israelites to take the land and drive out the inhabitants, but the people instead mourn. God is displeased with Israel and tells them to remove their extra adornments (ornaments). Moshe would go to the Tent of Meeting and meet with God and the cloud would descend on the Mishkan when Moshe entered. Joshua would stay at the Mishkan after Moshe left.

Moshe asks that the Lord go before them and the Lord says that He will. When Moshe goes back up the mountain, the Lord passes before Moshe and proclaims His goodness. "ADONAI passed before him and proclaimed: "YUD-HEH-VAV-HEH!!! Yud-Heh-Vav-Heh [ADONAI] is God, merciful and

¹ Stiff-necked is an idiom for someone who listens, but refuses to agree. They watch and listen, but their necks don't move in agreement.

compassionate, slow to anger, rich in grace and truth; showing grace to the thousandth generation, forgiving offenses, crimes and sins; yet not exonerating the guilty;" Exodus 34:6-7 CJB. From this the ancient rabbis were inspired to write the "13 Attributes of Mercy." Also as it says, (יְהוָה) YeHoVAH passed before Moshe. YeHoVAH is our God and that is how God wants to be known forever it says in Exodus 3:15.²

God promises the land of Canaan to Israel and God says that He will drive out the inhabitants. Israel was not to make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they were to destroy any idols. They are to observe the three feasts and not come empty handed to them. The firstborn of man and animal belong to the Lord and they were to redeem their firstborn sons. Moshe is again on the mountain for forty days. God has him make two tablets and God again inscribes the tablets. Note, Moshe went up the mountain a number of times not just once or twice.³

When he comes down Moshe's face shined and it scared the Israelites, so he put a veil over his face. Shaul (Paul) uses a Jewish argument to say that we are not like those who have a veil over our hearts and don't believe in the Messiah. We are changed through the work of the Holy Spirit and can see the Holy Spirit at work in our lives as a in a mirror (2 Corinthians 3:3-18).

After all God had done for Israel, the people made up their own god in the form of a golden calf. God wants to pour His goodness on us and mankind seems to always want to do things their own way. A lot of what man makes up often has nothing to do with what God intended in the first place. For example, where should we put the podium or the flowers; of course, we think they have to be in the right place. Some say we can't turn on a light on Shabbat because we would be igniting a spark.⁴ What's so important about not igniting a spark? It can just go on and on can't it. God kept it simple. If we keep it simple and apply only common-sense applications of God's commandments it would be okay.

One of God's commandments is to love others. Leviticus 19:18 CJB says, "love your neighbor as yourself." Shaul applies that command and says, " Don't let love be a mere outward show. Recoil from what is evil, and cling to what is good. Love each other devotedly and with brotherly love; and set examples for each other in showing respect;" Romans 12:9-10 CJB. Other ways that we can apply loving others is to be kind, patient, and be gentle with our words and actions (Galatians 5:2-23).

Remember, Shaul was a leading Jewish teacher in his time (Acts 23:6)⁵ and would have taught applications of the Old Testament portion. There are also inappropriate ways to apply the Torah. For example, what does walking a mile to congregation instead of driving (so as not to ignite a spark) have to do with God? It's a man-made rule. Since it makes us work unnecessarily on Shabbat, (if we have a car) it is wrong. The law has not been applied properly.

God gave Israel a covenant and right from the outset they started making up their own rules. Both Jews and Christians are still making up their own rules. They make up doctrines of man and not God. God has now instituted a Messianic covenant and people take the Bible out of its Jewish biblical context and make up their own doctrines. Have you ever wondered why there are so many Christian denominations? It is

² יְהוָה has been found in 1,721 manuscripts to date with only one exception according to Nehemiah Gordon.

³ Moshe went up the mountains numerous times, probably more than the 8 times mentioned. Exodus 3:4,19:3,8,20; 20:18 (21); 24:9, 15; 34:2.

⁴ The scripture about not making a fire is in the context of work on the Mishkan, the Tent of Meeting in the desert, God did not want them to smelt metal and do work on the Tabernacle. The proper application of this is to also not do work on our meeting places on Shabbat. I understand that some also break that command.

⁵ The Jewish leaders didn't argue about Shaul saying he was a Jewish leader. Instead they argued about the resurrection.

because they are making up man-made rules by taking what they read in the Bible out of its proper context. It seems there are people who only want a religious covenant. They want a golden calf instead of what God tells us to do.

Shaul (Paul) says to Timothy, "For the time is coming when people will not have patience for sound teaching, but will cater to their passions and gather around themselves teachers who say whatever their ears itch to hear. Yes, they will stop listening to the truth, but will turn aside to follow myths;" 2 Timothy 4:3-4 CJB. The context is about people who do not follow the Old Testament portion. Timothy's mother was Jewish (Acts 16:1) and the scriptures she shared with him was the Torah. In the context, Shaul says to Timothy, "But you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, recalling the people from whom you learned it; and recalling too how from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures;" 2 Timothy 3:14-15 CJB. God in this age wants us to have the Holy Spirit through the Messiah Yeshua and some people still refuse what God tells us to receive.

What God does is wonderful and amazing. God brought Israel out of Egypt with great wonders and provided for them in the desert miraculously. Yeshua died for our sins, rose from the dead, and now is our representative in heaven. He gives us the Holy Spirit when we believe in Him which is the undeniable presence of God in our lives. Kefa (Peter) said, "Turn from sin, return to God, and each of you be immersed on the authority of Yeshua the Messiah into forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Ruach HaKodesh!" Acts 2:38 CJB. "Ruach HaKodesh" means the Holy Spirit.

They were to be immersed in the authority of Yeshua the Messiah. Basically, we make a proclamation as to who Yeshua is. We are to be baptized with water and the Holy Spirit and make a confession of faith.⁶ Also, Kefa said we are to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This is not optional; it was God's plan to give us the Holy Spirit to help us live right. Through the Holy Spirit, God can remind us to keep His commandments; He can help us deal with the moment by moment matters of life; He can give us information that will protect us; He will help us make the big decisions in life and much more. It says in Ephesians 3:12 we can even, "Have boldness and confidence when we approach God."

We need what God has done for us; it is good. " "Is there any father here who, if his son asked him for a fish, would instead of a fish give him a snake? or if he asked for an egg would give him a scorpion? So if you, even though you are bad, know how to give your children gifts that are good, how much more will the Father keep giving the Ruach HaKodesh from heaven to those who keep asking him!" Luke 11:11-13 CJB. There are fish in the Middle East which look like a snake. Would a good father give his children scorpion eggs? Trust in God and what He wants to give us. Trust in His commandments and trust in the Holy Spirit.

God's word applies to all of life and we can apply appropriate scriptures to the different things we do. There is power in His word. God said "let there be light" and light came into existence. It makes sense that God can put power on His word. Yeshua was our example and He used the scriptures to send the devil away. When tempted Yeshua said, "The Tanakh says, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of ADONAI,'" Matthew 4:4 CJB. The Tanakh is the Old Testament. Yeshua quoted and used the Old Testament portion. Ya'akov (James) said, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded;" James 4:7-8 NKJV.

⁶ Baptism (should properly be called immersion) is a symbolic ceremony just like the ceremony of the bread and wine (communion). Sacraments are pagan concepts and it is against God's commandments to incorporate pagan concepts into our beliefs.

The Bible says there is a devil and not all our thoughts are our thoughts. We need to resist anything that that doesn't line up with the Bible and resist spiritual powers that are against us. There is power in the scriptures. Also, God gives us the power to resist the devil so resist the devil or any wrong thinking. There is also power in being single minded – namely, in deciding we are going to do things God's way and no other way. We need to protect our minds from doing what is wrong.

The Bible tells us not to steal. It hurts others. My dear sweet older cousin had \$20 stolen from her years ago and you'd think she was going to have a heart attack and die. Even committing little wrongs can be very hurtful. I know of someone that stole \$10 at work and they lost their job and perhaps some \$20,000 a year due to their double-mindedness – they gave into temptation and it cost them a lot.

Also, we need to listen to the Holy Spirit. If the Holy Spirit reminds us that something is wrong to do, don't do it; stop doing it. If you happen to think that something is wrong to do, then stop yourself. God wants to help us to live right. Shaul (Paul) even says that God will help us supernaturally. "No temptation has seized you beyond what people normally experience, and God can be trusted not to allow you to be tempted beyond what you can bear. On the contrary, along with the temptation he will also provide the way out, so that you will be able to endure;" 1 Corinthians 10:13 CJB. We have no excuses. Stop doing what is wrong.

Why in the world would we want to do what is wrong anyway? Psalm 1:1-3 CJB says, "How blessed are those who reject the advice of the wicked, don't stand on the way of sinners or sit where scoffers sit! Their delight is in ADONAI 's Torah; on his Torah they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams - they bear their fruit in season, their leaves never wither, everything they do succeeds." I want to be blessed and I will delight in God's instructions. I want to be planted by waters where I will never want and where I will be secure. I want success in life and to be satisfied. How else could you apply this scripture? Here are some thoughts about applying these verses; what are your thoughts?

I don't want to experience emotional pain from sin over and over.

I want the all-powerful God to watch my back.

I want good relationships with good people.

I want joy and peace in my life.

I want eternal life in a new and amazing world.

God is the one true God and we should be careful not to give credit to any other God or power. Let's do things God's way. Israel witnessed God's physical presence at the Mishkan every day in the form of a cloud by day and fire at night for 40 years. He was with them and he wants to be with us if we will let him. He wants to pour out His goodness on us.

Follow the truths of the scripture and understand the Bible in its true Jewish biblical context. Don't apply the scriptures wrong. God gave Israel a covenant and worked powerfully for them. God gave us a messianic covenant through the Messiah Yeshua and He will work powerfully on our behalf.

We learn of a good God in this portion. He is a God of mercy and His people can count on Him. We can count on our Messiah Yeshua; He intercedes for us. God is an amazing and powerful God. Be faithful to Him. The scriptures apply to all of life and the eternal and mighty God wants to be part of our lives; how amazing is that?