

Parashat Ki Tisa/ פרשת כי תשא

Shabbat Adar 17, 5768, Feb. 23, 2008
MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d
<http://www.matsati.com> | matsati@matsati.com

Moshe Rabbeinu Most Praiseworthy Act

This Weeks Reading List:

Torah: Exodus 30:11-34:35

Haftarah: 1 Kings 18:1-18:39

B'rit HaChadashah: 2 Corinthians 3:1-18

This week's parsha, Parashat Ki Tisa is packed with stuff to talk about. Taking a look back we find chapters 25-31 covers Parashat Terumah, Tetzaveh, and the first half of Ki Tisa relate to HaShem's Mitzvah (commandment) to build the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). Chapters 32-34 consists of the second half of Parashat Ki Tisa and relates to the events that surround the incident of Chet Ha'Egel (sin of the calf). It is at this point where I would like to say Moshe's life is most praiseworthy. In the rabbinic commentary this episode is overlooked; perhaps it is overlooked for reasons pertaining to the embarrassment of Yisrael's idolatry, or perhaps there is another reason why this section of verses is overlooked?

Exodus 32:30-35

32:30 The next day Moshe said to the people, "You have committed a terrible sin. Now I will go up to ADONAI; maybe I will be able to atone for your sin." 32:31 Moshe went back to ADONAI and said, "Please! These people have committed a terrible sin: they have made themselves a god out of gold. 32:32 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!" 32:33 ADONAI answered Moshe, "Those who have sinned against me are the ones I will blot out of my book. 32:34 Now go and lead the people to the place I told you about; my angel will go ahead of you. Nevertheless, the time for punishment will come; and then I will punish them for their sin." 32:35 ADONAI struck the people with a plague because they had made the calf, the one Aharon made.

Examining these verses I would like to point out a couple of things.

- It is the next day, the people have sinned and Moshe tells them they have committed a terrible sin by making themselves a god out of gold. Moshe explains that he will ascend the mountain to Adonai to atone for their sins. (*Exodus 32:30*)
- Moshe goes up the mountain without a sacrifice, without a bull, or lamb to make atonement. (*Exodus 32:31*)

- Moshe asks Adonai to forgive their sin, and if not that Adonai would blot him out of his book. (*Exodus 32:32*)
- HaShem says the people who have sinned will be the ones who will be blotted out of the book. Essentially rejecting Moshe's offer of himself on behalf of the people. (*Exodus 32:33*)

Reading this section of verses it appears as if Moshe would offer himself to save Yisrael from HaShem's wrath; to take the punishment of the people's sin on himself by being blotted out of the book. As a priest, Moshe could have offered bulls and lambs by the thousands but instead he offered himself. Moshe here demonstrates the leadership qualities of a good shepherd. Moshe had spent 40 years prior as a shepherd in the deserts of Midian. The job description of a good shepherd calls for the shepherd to give his own life for the sheep. Yeshua explains this too in John 10:10-11:

John 10:10-11

10:10 The thief comes only in order to steal, kill and destroy; I have come so that they may have life, life in its fullest measure. 10:11 "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (CJB)

The good shepherd puts the welfare of the flock above his own and Moshe displays this very effectively by offering to have his name to be blotted out.

During Yisrael's journey to the Promised Land Moshe acted as the intercessor on the behalf of Yisrael before HaShem. In the same way Yeshua the Messiah is the one who can lead us out of the desert of our everyday life. He can break the bondage of sin, provide bread from heaven to feed our souls and restore our spirits.

Hebrews 9:11-15

9:11 But when the Messiah appeared as cohen gadol of the good things that are happening already, then, through the greater and more perfect Tent which is not man-made (that is, it is not of this created world), 9:12 he entered the Holiest Place once and for all. And he entered not by means of the blood of goats and calves, but by means of his own blood, thus setting people free forever. 9:13 For if sprinkling ceremonially unclean persons with the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer restores their outward purity; 9:14 then how much more the blood of the Messiah, who, through the eternal Spirit, offered himself to God as a sacrifice without blemish, will purify our conscience from works that lead to death, so that we can serve the living God! 9:15 It is because of this death that he is mediator of a new covenant. Because a death has occurred which sets people free from the transgressions committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promised eternal inheritance. (CJB)

In order that Yisrael might be saved from the wrath of HaShem, Moshe stood ready to offer his own life, to take the punishment of the people's sins on himself if Adonai could find no other way to forgive them. Moshe asked Adonai that his life be an expiation for the sins of the people. In the same way Yeshua the Messiah offered himself to make atonement for our sins. Yeshua made expiation for all of our sins and set us free from our transgressions if we would believe and

trust in Him. G-d demonstrates His own love toward us, which is the key I think here in our trying to understand how G-d is reaching out to us. The best way I believe we can think about this is Spiritual insight into G-d's work is mediated through historical facts. Throughout time HaShem has been reaching out to us to draw us nearer to Himself and He has demonstrated that to us through historical fact we find in the Bible. HaShem sent His Messiah Yeshua for the purpose of bringing us inward purity where our hearts are filled with G-d's Shalom (peace). If you want Hashem's shalom (peace) you can have it, all you have to do is ask.

Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!

הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:

Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever