



Va'yaqel / Pekudei
And He Assembled / Accounts Of
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3/13/10
www.hearoisrael.org

This week, we have a “**Double Parsha**” or “**Torah Double Portion**”. For the purpose of study, the Torah is divided into 54 portions, or *parashot*. Now, there are 52 weeks in a year, according to the Gregorian calendar and between 51 and 55 (if it's a leap year) on the Jewish calendar. When we take into account that some Holy Days may fall on a Shabbat; you can see the need to “*double up*” on some Torah Portions during the year. So, this is one of the weeks that have been doubled up, at least for this year. If you would like more information about the calendar used by Judaism (which is the official calendar used in Israel), just follow this link: http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/m_calint.htm . Of course, in Israel, we are all aware of the Gregorian calendar and follow it as well, since we must function in the world community.

Now, the first half of our double *parsha this week*, “**Va'yaqel ~ And He Assembled**”, begins with **Shemot / Exodus 35:1-2**, where we read; **And Moshe assembled all the congregation of the children of Yisra'el, and said to them, “These are the Words which YHVH has commanded you to do: “Work is done for six days, but on the seventh day it shall be set-apart to you, a Sabbath of rest to YHVH. Anyone doing work on it is put to death.**

Now first of all, in **verse 1**, in the Hebrew we read; “**Va'yaqel Moshe et eydah B'nei Yisra'el...**” Literally, it reads, “**And assembled Moshe the congregation of the Children of Yisra'el...**” It is important to note that the word used here for “**assembled**”, which is pronounced “**yaqel**” (*yud-kuf-hey-lamed*), is a form of the word “**qahal**”, without the “*yud*” (*kuf-hey-lamed*). “**Qahal**” is a word most commonly used for “**community**”. Another variant, “**Qahelath**”, or as some say, “**Kehillah**” or “**Kehilat**” is used also, when referring to a “**religious assembly**” or “**congregation**” of people. Of course, we know another variation, “**Qoheleth**”, having the same meaning; and is the name of a book of the Hebrew Bible, also known in Christianity as Ecclesiastes. What's really interesting here is that the word “**yaqel**” is saying that Moshe assembled all of the Children of Yisra'el and they became “**one Qahal**”, *one community of people*. In Hebrew, when something like this happens; it's not just that a group of people came together for some reason. It points to the fact that people came together, united in a common belief and bonded in such a way as to become “**one people**”. It includes the connotation that the whole (*this united group*) is greater than just the sum of its parts. This collective group, who would bring their offerings for the Tabernacle and then build it together, would truly become “**Am Echad**” (*One People*) through this work. This collective work brings the true spirit of “**oneness**” into the building of YHVH's Dwelling Place. This is so important in that the very “**Shechinah**” (or the **Divine Presence of YHVH**) is revealed in His Sanctuary.

Further, we see the cementing of this people to be so important that even though they would separate into two very different kingdoms centuries later; they cannot achieve the “**Geulah Gadol**” the “**Great Redemption**” without each other. We will only see the complete expression of this “**oneness**” again in the Messianic Era. We must become “**ONE**” again, in order for Mashiach to come and “**restore all things**”. YHVH will not dwell among His people until at least a remnant re-unite. This is why Yehudah (Jews) today, when they pray in community, assemble ten men to form a “**minion**”. They refer to this minion as the “*ten components of their soul*”. We’ll look more into this during a later study on prayer.

As Ruth and I were reading Rabbi Avraham Greenbaum’s teaching on this week’s *parsha*, we were both impressed by what he shared on this subject of community prayer and how he ties this in to the righteous of the generation (*in our parsha, it is Moshe*). He quotes Rabbi Nachman of Breslov; “*Every single prayer that each one prays is a 'limb' of the Shechinah (Divine Presence). All of the 'limbs' and component parts of the Sanctuary are 'limbs' of the Shechinah. And not one Israelite has the power to put all the limbs and parts together, each one in its proper place, except for Moses alone. For this reason, it is necessary to bind all our prayers to the Tzaddik of the generation, as it is written, 'And they brought the Sanctuary to Moses' (Ex. 39:33). And the Tzaddik knows how to put the parts together to make a complete structure, as it says there, 'And Moses erected the Sanctuary' (Ex. 40:18). It seems as if every day we are crying out to G-d yet we are not saved, and some of our people, the Children of Israel, err in their hearts thinking that all the prayers are in vain. But in truth the Tzaddikim (Righteous Ones) in every generation take all the prayers and lift them up, putting each component and each limb into its proper place, building the structure of the Shechinah little by little, until finally the entire structure will one day be complete, and then Mashiach will come and finish everything.*” (*Likutey Moharan Vol. 1, Lesson 2*.)”

Rabbi Greenbaum goes on to remind us; “*The book of Exodus started in a state of exile: ‘These are the names of the Children of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his house.’ (Ex. 1:1). After their grueling servitude followed by the plagues that afflicted the Egyptians, the light of redemption truly began to shine on the 1st of Nissan (Abib): ‘And G-d spoke to Moses and to Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying: This month is for you the first of the months.’ (Exodus 12:1-2). After narrating the drama of leaving Egypt, the Splitting of the Sea, the Giving of the Torah and the loss of innocence with the sin of the calf, Exodus concludes with the structure of the World of Repair as exemplified in the form of the Sanctuary.*”

He concludes; “*It was when the Shechinah came to dwell in the completed Sanctuary on 1st Nissan (Abib) that ‘He called to Moses and G-d spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting.’ These are the opening words of the third book of the Torah, Leviticus, which introduce the commandments relating to the sacrifices that were to be offered in the Sanctuary. These portions were revealed to Moses on 1st Nissan.*”

Next, in this week’s *parsha* text, in **verses 1b-2** Moshe says; “**These are the Words which YHVH has commanded you to do: “Work is done for six days, but on the seventh day it shall be set-apart to you, a Sabbath of rest to YHVH. Anyone doing work on it is put to death.”** Now, this appears to be nothing new. Moshe has spoken these words to B’nei Yisra’el before; even just last week. But, why *here*, before a section of Scripture on the offering for the Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle, and its construction? Perhaps it is because even during the construction of His Dwelling Place, YHVH wants us to keep His commands, especially Shabbat. Here, YHVH first reminds us to do our work in six days. But, the seventh day is to set-art to Him, a Sabbath of rest to Him; on punishment of death. Then, before he goes on with the “**offering**”, He adds in **verse 3**; “**Do not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day.**”

We've looked at this before. But, I need to cover it again here; because, it's so important that we look at Torah (*The Instructions*) from the Hebrew and from the Hebraic understanding. This means that we must look at, and understand the words. From the Hebrew, there are a couple of ways to read this. "*La t'ba'aroo esh b'chal moshav techem be'a yom ha Shabbat*". Most read this as, "*Do not kindle a fire in any of your dwellings on the Sabbath day*". If we look at this command using the definitions translated throughout the Hebrew TaNaK; we see that the word for "*kindle*" is "*ba'ar*". Here, it is preceded by "*lamed-aleph*" or "*La*" which means "*do not*" or "*NO!*" By adding the "*vav*" or "*oo*" on the end, referring to "*you*", we read "*Do not kindle you...*" Now, the root word here "*ba'ar*" also translates as "*to burn*", as in *fire* or *wrath*. But, it also means to "*be stupid*" or "*be barbaric*". "*Aleph-shin*", spelling "*esh*" or "*ish*" also has a number of meanings and connotations, such as; "*fire*", "*anger*", "*wrath*", "*strife*" and "*destruction*" as well as "*man*". The Scriptural phrase "*kindle a fire*" (in English) is used five times in the TaNaK to speak of Yahweh specifically bringing destruction; as in Yirmeyahu / Jeremiah 17:27-28; "*But if you do not obey Me to set apart the Sabbath day, and not to bear a burden when entering the gates of Yerushalayim on the Sabbath day, then I shall kindle a fire in its gates, and it shall consume the palaces of Yerushalayim, and not be quenched.*" Interestingly, He's speaking here of a destruction through fire for not keeping the Shabbat. You can also look at Yirmeyahu 21:14, 49:27, 50:32 and Amos 1:14.

Eighteen times in the TaNaK, YHVH speaks of kindling His wrath against His enemies, as well as the House of Ya'acob. **Mishle / Proverbs 26** speaks to us about who not to be. In **verses 20-21** we read; "*For lack of wood, the fire goes out. And without a slanderer, strife ceases. As charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, So is a contentious man to kindle strife.*" Yahshua said, in **Luke 12:49-53**; "*I came to send fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have an immersion to be immersed with, and how afflicted I am until it is accomplished! Do you think that I came to give peace on earth? I say to you, no, but rather division. For from now on five in one house shall be divided, three against two, and two against three – father shall be divided against son, and son against father, mother against daughter, and daughter against mother, mother in-law against her daughter in-law, and daughter-in-law against her mother in-law.*" Just doing a word search of "*kindled*" in the Strong's concordance; we find it appears in Scripture 65 times. And, only two of these are about "*kindling a real fire*". The rest, save one, are about "*kindled anger*" or "*destruction in wrath*".

And that one other verse is found in **Hoshea 11:8**, YHVH also speaks of "*kindling compassion*" as He speaks to the House of Yisra'el; "*How could I give you up, Ephrayim? How could I hand you over, Yisra'el? How could I make you like Admah? How could I set you like Tseboyim? My heart turns within Me, all My compassion is kindled. I shall not let the heat of My wrath burn, I shall not turn to destroy Ephrayim. For I am El, and not man, the Set-apart One in your midst, and I shall not come in enmity.*" This term, "*kindling*" and the phrase "*kindling a fire*" most often applies to the welling up of emotions and letting those emotions out in a very public way.

Now, before we look at the Dyslexic Hebrew Version and how it might read; I want to look at the term "*in any of your dwellings*", as it's important here also. The Hebrew phrase is "*b'chal moshav techem*" literally translates as "*in your colonies*" or "*in your cities*". This is not about one's tent, house or even their farm. This is about living in community.

OK. Now, let's look at the DHV, or how it reads with these alternate meanings. In **Shemot 35:1-3**, I could read these verses as; "*And Moshe assembled all the congregation of the B'nei Yisra'el, and said to them, "These are the Words which YHVH has commanded you to do: "Work is done for six days, but on the seventh day it shall be set-apart to you, a Sabbath of rest to YHVH. Anyone doing work on it is put to death. Do not kindle strife in any of your colonies on the Sabbath day."*" Instead of "*kindle*", you can also use "*be stupid*" and for "*strife*", you can use

“**anger**”, “**wrath**” or “**destruction**” in that last verse. In other words; “**Don’t be stupid with anger in your colonies on Shabbat.**” Remember, “**Love YHVH**” and “**Love your Neighbor**” as yourself; or at least, love your neighbor enough to let him have Shabbat Shalom and set the day apart to Elohim as He commanded.

Now, this is not meant to be an “**instead of**” translation. We are to consider the Hebrew words in all of their aspects, when studying Torah. So, don’t kindle a real fire on Shabbat either. But, what does that mean? What if I’m cold? Is my family to freeze? Or, be without light? No. If you follow that line of reasoning, how can Shabbat be a delight? All of the words and meanings associated with “**kindle**” or “**ba’ar**” are associated with “**removing**” or “**consuming**” or “**destruction**” by fire. The word means to “**start**” or “**create**” a fire for those purposes. In order to err on the side of conservancy; be prepared to heat your home and give light throughout your dwelling, by having certain things already kindled. We light the Shabbat candles, you can light others from these. If you heat or cook by a literal fire, have it already started and fuel to continue the fire at the ready. What about light switches and thermostats? We need further study together in this area. And soon, I hope to begin some study with you about the relevance of the Mishnah (the *Oral Torah*) to the returning 10 Tribes.

OK, now let’s look at **Shemot 35:4-9**; ***And Moshe spoke to all the congregation of the children of Yisra’el, saying, “This is the word which YHVH commanded, saying, ‘Take from among you a contribution to YHVH. Everyone whose heart so moves him, let him bring it as a contribution to YHVH: gold, and silver, and bronze, and blue, and purple, and scarlet material, and fine linen, and goats’ hair, and ram skins dyed red, and fine leather, and acacia wood, and oil for the light, and spices for the anointing oil and for the sweet incense, and shoham stones, and stones to be set in the shoulder garment and in the breastplate.*** YHVH told Moshe to take up a contribution, “**terumah**” for the Tent of Meeting, the Dwelling Place of Elohim; but, according to the “**heart**” of the people. What I found intriguing about the phrase “**Everyone whose heart so moves him...**” in **verse 5**, was that it appears five times in our *parsha*.

Let’s go on with **verses 10-29**; ***‘And let all the wise-hearted among you come and make all that YHVH has commanded: the Dwelling Place, its tent and its covering, its hooks and its boards, its bars, its columns, and its sockets, the ark and its poles, the lid of atonement and the veil of the covering, the table and its poles, and all its utensils, and the showbread, and the lampstand for the light, and its utensils, and its lamps, and the oil for the light, and the incense altar, and its poles, and the anointing oil, and the sweet incense, and the covering for the door at the entrance of the Dwelling Place, the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating, its poles, and all its utensils, the basin and its stand, the screens of the courtyard, its columns, and their sockets, and the covering for the gate of the courtyard, the pegs of the Dwelling Place, and the pegs of the courtyard, and their cords, the woven garments to do service in the set-apart place, the set-apart garments for Aharon the priest and the garments of his sons to serve as priests.’ ”*** ***And all the congregation of the children of Yisra’el withdrew from the presence of Mosheh. And everyone whose heart lifted him up and everyone whose spirit moved him came, and they brought the contribution to YHVH for the work of the Tent of Meeting, and for all its service, and for the set-apart garments. And they came, both men and women, all whose hearts moved them, and brought earrings and nose rings, and rings and necklaces, all golden goods, even every one who made a wave offering of gold to YHVH. And every man, with whom was found blue and purple and scarlet material, and fine linen, and goats’ hair, and rams’ skins dyed red, and fine leather, brought them. Everyone who would make a contribution to YHVH of silver or bronze, brought it. And everyone with whom was found acacia wood for any work of the service, brought it. And all the wise-hearted women spun yarn with their hands, and brought what they had spun, the blue and the purple, the scarlet material, and the fine linen. And all the women whose hearts lifted them up in wisdom***

spun the goats' hair. And the rulers brought shoham stones, and the stones to be set in the shoulder garment and in the breastplate, and the spices and the oil for the light, and for the anointing oil, and for the sweet incense. The children of Yisra'el brought a voluntary offering to YHVH, all the men and women whose hearts moved them to bring all kinds of work which YHVH, by the hand of Mosheh, had commanded to be done.

I want us to look at these English phrases, “*as their hearts lifted them*” and “*the spirit moved them*”. In the interest of time today, I’m going to focus on **Chapter 35, verse 21**; *And everyone whose heart lifted him up and everyone whose spirit moved him came, and they brought the contribution to YHVH for the work of the Tent of Meeting, and for all its service, and for the set-apart garments.* The beginning of this verse reads in Hebrew, “*V’bo chal’ esh asher na’sah levah v’chal asher nadabah ruacha atah ha’beyah et terumah YHVH...*” Or, in English, “*And came everyone whose heart lifted him up and all who impelled by their spirit, they brought the contribution to YHVH...*”

First here is the word “*levah*” for “*heart*”. “*Lev*” is the root word meaning “*heart*”. It’s where the name “*Levi*” comes from. The heart is the seat of emotions and conscience in Hebrew thought. The word “*levah*” literally means the “*inner man*”. The next word here for “*lifted up*” is “*na’sah*” which has many wonderful variations on this thought of “*lifting up*”, such as; “*to take hold of*”, “*to raise one’s spirit*”, “*to be exalted*” and most notably “*to lift up one’s countenance*” or “*face*”. As we declare the Aharonic blessing on our congregation each week, we pray that “*YHVH lift up His Countenance upon you, and give you Shalom.*” So, this giving of the contribution is to be as the “*inner man lifts up his face to YHVH*”.

This next one is great; “*And whose spirit moved him*” or “*v’chal asher nadabah ruacha atah*”. The key here is “*nadabah*” which is from the root “*nadab*” which means to “*impel oneself to freely give*” or literally “*to spontaneously give oneself freely*”. The idea here is that the spirit within us impels us to give ourselves to YHVH freely, without hesitation and without limits. It’s no coincidence that one of the sons of Aharon who offered “*strange fire*” and was consumed was named Nadab. His spontaneity, probably induced by wine, was actually of himself and against the conditions of worship set forth by Elohim.

Even in the word for “*contribution*”, “*terumah*” we see this theme play out. We studied this in the *parsha* named “*Terumah*”. Remember, in **Shemot 25:2**, YHVH says; “*Speak to the children of Yisra’el, that they take up a contribution for Me. From everyone whose heart moves him you shall take up My contribution.*” There are several Hebrew words that can be used for “*offering*” or “*contribution*”. What’s so different about “*terumah*”? The word “*terumah*” (*tav-reish-yud-mem-hey*) is Strong’s #8641 and means “*offering*” or “*contribution*” as in a “*heave or wave offering*” because it’s from the root word “*ruhm*” which means “*to elevate*” or “*raise or lift up high*”. There’s much more to this. I hope you can take the time to go back to *Parsha Terumah* and take a closer look.

So, as our heart, our inner man is “*lifted up*” and we give freely of ourselves to YHVH, so is the “*contribution*”, the “*terumah*” “*elevated*” or “*lifted up*”. It’s a wave offering to Elohim, as **Chapter 35:22** tells us. And, that giving of ourselves is simply giving the very talents and giftings that YHVH has given us to help build His Dwelling Place. Yah says in **Shemot 25:8**; “*And they shall make Me a Set-apart Place, and I shall dwell in their midst.*” As we’re seeing in this week’s *parashot*, all of the Children of Yisra’el played a part in the building of the Dwelling Place of Elohim and He did dwell in their midst because of it. All who had money and the appropriate materials brought them. Some were given extraordinary talents, not only to design and make the Tent of Meeting and all the components for the service of worship; but, they were given the gift of teaching others how to do their part as well.

Now, let's move on to the second half of our *double header*, "**Pekudei ~ Account Of**". This *parsha* begins with **Shemot / Exodus 38:21**. From the ISR Scriptures we read; *These were the appointments of the Dwelling Place, the Dwelling Place of the Witness, which was appointed by the command of Moshe, for the service of the Levites, by the hand of Ithamar, son of Aharon the priest.* This really isn't the best translation; as the Hebrew word used here for "appointments" is "**pekudei**" (*pey-kuf-vav-dalet-yud*) and literally means "**accountings**" or "**reckonings**". What's interesting is that "**pekudei**" comes from the root "**pakad**"; which is the word we read two weeks ago in *Parsha Ki Tisa*, when we read about the "**census**", which means "**to count**" or "**register**" or "**to lift up**" (*as if for inspection*). If you'll remember, the context there was the "**counting**", or "**registering**" of the Children of Yisra'el (*all the males over 20 years old*).

So, here, Moshe gives a detailed accounting of the "**terumah**", the "**contribution**" or "**elevation offering**" and the $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel of the "**pakad**" or "**counting**" and how they were used in the construction of the **Mishkan** (*Tabernacle* or *Dwelling Place*). In studying these words, I saw something that is kind of interesting. In the Hebrew, the word "**Mishkan**" (*Mem-shin-kaf-nun*), by changing the vowel points, this also spells the word "**mashkon**", which is "**security**". The rabbis teach that "**Mishkan**" is repeated in **verse 21** above to emphasize this double meaning. To paraphrase, we have "**the reckoning of the Mishkan; then the security of the Witness, which was appointed by the command of Moshe, for the service of the Levites, etc.**" The numerical value of the letters in "**Mishkan**" is 410 which equals "**I'meespar**" or "**according to the number of**" or "**according to the accounting**". 410 also equals "**d'ror**" or "**liberty**" and "**Kadosh**" or "**set-apart**".

In **Shemot 38:25-28** we read; *And the silver from the ones counted of the congregation was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, according to the shekel of the set-apart place: a beqa, half a shekel for a head, according to the shekel of the set-apart place, for everyone passing over to those counted, from twenty years old and above, for six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men. And the hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the set-apart place and the bases of the veil: one hundred sockets from the hundred talents, a talent for each socket. And of the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the columns, and overlaid their tops, and made bands for them.*

Now, before we go on, I want to recap what we covered two weeks ago in our look at *Ki Tisa* regarding the $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel. In fact, I would advise you to re-read that teaching. This week's *parsha* completes the understanding of this $\frac{1}{2}$ shekel atonement. In **Shemot 30:11-16**, YHVH tells Moshe how to number the Children of Yisra'el; *And YHVH spoke to Moshe, saying, "When you take the census of the children of Yisra'el, to register them, then each one shall give an atonement for his life to YHVH, when you register them, so that there is no plague among them when you register them. Everyone among those who are registered is to give this: half a shekel according to the shekel of the set-apart place, twenty gerahs being a shekel. The half-shekel is the contribution to YHVH. Everyone passing over to be registered, from twenty years old and above, gives a contribution to YHVH. The rich does not give more and the poor does not give less than half a shekel, when you give a contribution to YHVH, to make atonement for yourselves. And you shall take the silver for the atonement from the children of Yisra'el, and give it for the service of the Tent of Meeting. And it shall be to the children of Yisra'el for a remembrance before YHVH, to make atonement for yourselves."*

In order to properly understand this commandment, we need to understand what was happening with the Children of Yisra'el that brought about this commandment. First, in **Shemot 20** we have the giving of the Ten Commandments at Har Sinai. This is when YHVH personally spoke these words to the

Children of Yisra'el. In **verses 2 and 3** we read; ***“I am YHVH your Elohim, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim, out of the house of slavery. You have no other mighty ones against My face.*** Now, that seems pretty straight up. It's the First Commandment. Now, the Children of Yisra'el have recently witnessed the awesome power YHVH Almighty, as He visited 10 plagues on the people and elohim of Mitsrayim, including the death of the “*first-born*” and the covering of Yisra'el's first-born. They passed through the Yam Suf (*Reed Sea*) and saw the death of Pharaoh and his army, as they pursued Elohim's chosen. The list of miracles and deliverances goes on and on here, up to and including what was happening at and on Mt. Sinai. Then Moshe ascends into the thick cloud atop Har Sinai to speak further with YHVH and to receive the instructions written in stone by the Finger of Yah; and, he also received the instructions for the building of the “*Mishkan*”.

Then, we read in **Shemot 31:1-2**; ***And when the people saw that Moshe was so long in coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aharon, and said to him, “Arise, make us mighty ones who go before us. For this Moshe, the man who brought us up out of the land of Mitsrayim, we do not know what has become of him.” And Aharon said to them, “Take off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.”*** In spite of all that had just happened, when they feared that something had happened to Moshe, they sought their own solution. They turned to Aharon to make them an idol, the image of a mighty one that they could see and carry in front of the people, as they had witnessed in pagan Egypt. They took the credit and honor and esteem for their deliverance away from YHVH and transferred it to Moshe as ***“the man who brought us up from the land of Mitsrayim.”***

So Aharon, Moshe's own brother and the mouthpiece of Elohim throughout this whole deliverance, proceeded to make an idol; despite the words he clearly heard YHVH speak from Sinai in **Shemot 20:4-6**; ***“You do not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of that which is in the heavens above, or which is in the earth beneath, or which is in the waters under the earth, you do not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, YHVH your Elohim am a jealous El, visiting the crookedness of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and guard My commands.”*** So, even Aharon, who had seen and experienced so much first hand, fell into sin that day. Sha'ul warns us that these events are recorded as a warning to us in **1 Corinthians 10:11-12**; ***And all these came upon them as examples, and they were written as a warning to us, on whom the ends of the ages have come, so that he who thinks he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.***

When the idol was finished, Aharon and the people committed the grievous sin of giving esteem, owed to YHVH, to this false mighty one. **Shemot 32:4-6** further tells us; ***And he took this from their hand, and he formed it with an engraving tool, and made a moulded calf. And they said, “This is your mighty one, O Yisra'el, that brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim!” And Aharon saw and built an altar before it. And Aharon called out and said, “Tomorrow is a festival to YHVH.” And they rose early on the next day, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings. And the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*** They committed outright idolatry, then they mixed the worship of Elohim with the traditions and practices of the **pagans**; saying it was a Feast unto YHVH. I don't know about you; but, I'm seeing shades of our past here. They were saying that it was acceptable, even preferable; to worship the creation of man and say it is to Elohim.

YHVH's reaction was swift. **Shemot 32:7-10** tells us; ***And YHVH said to Moshe, “Go, get down! For your people whom you brought out of the land of Mitsrayim have corrupted themselves. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them. They have made themselves a moulded calf, and have bowed themselves to it and slaughtered to it, and said, ‘This is your mighty one, O Yisra'el, who brought you out of the land of Mitsrayim!’ ” And***

YHVH said to Moshe, “I have seen this people, and see, it is a stiff-necked people! And now, let Me alone, that My wrath might burn against them and I consume them and I make of you a great nation.” Scripture goes on to tell us how Moshe intervened with YHVH and He did not wipe them all out. However, 3,000 were killed and the people had to also deal with Moshe’s wrath by drinking their idol after it had been burned and ground into powder.

YHVH called them “**stiffed necked people**”. This term is used to describe someone who is stubborn and rebellious. What does He think about these character traits among His people? The prophet Samuel reminds us in **1 Shemu’el 15:22-23**; **Then Shemu’el said, “Does YHVH delight in burnt offerings and slaughterings, as in obeying the voice of YHVH? Look, to obey is better than an offering, to heed is better than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as wickedness and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of YHVH, He also does reject you as sovereign.”**

When we worship false mighty ones, the works of our hands, our habits, our fleshly pursuits and passions, we divide our loyalty and our dedication to YHVH. We scatter our favors, our devotion, under every “**green tree**” and “**high hill / mountain**”. These are both scriptural references to idolatry, which is adultery, against our Elohim and Maker. In other words, when we commit idolatry, we whore.

Hebrew thought explains that the commanded ½ shekel offering was to serve as atonement for the sin of the golden calf (*idolatry & whoring*). This is logical in that the Children of Yisra’el had just received the Ten Commands (the *backbone or framework of Torah*). Then, exactly forty days later, the first sin they sinned was to break the very first command. Forty, in Hebrew thought, is the number of testing. I’d say they failed the test. Now, there are two Hebrew words used for “**atonement**” in all of these scriptures about the ½ shekel. First, in **Shemot 30:15**; **“The rich does not give more and the poor does not give less than half a shekel, when you give a contribution to YHVH, to make atonement for yourselves.”** The word used here for atonement is “**Kaphar**”, Strong’s #3722 and means “**atonement**”, “**reconciliation**” and “**to cover**”. Then, in **Shemot 30:16**; **And you shall take the silver for the atonement from the children of Yisra’el, and give it for the service of the Tent of Meeting. And it shall be to the children of Yisra’el for a remembrance before YHVH, to make atonement for yourselves.”** Here, the word is “**Kippur**”, Strong’s #3725 meaning “**atonement**” or “**expiation**”. The spelling of each is the same; just a difference in vowel points. They are spelled (*Kaf-pey-reish*) = **His Palm is Here** on your **Head**). The numeric value of “**Kaphar**” and “**Kippur**” is 300 (a perfect or prime number) which equals “**ransom**”, “**forgive**”, “**uncircumcised**”, “**for your sake**” and “**pomegranates**”. What YHVH is saying here is that this ½ shekel is a symbol of our seeking and accepting this “**atoning**” (Yahshua’s eternal act of atonement), even in our *uncircumcision* and that He *ransomed us for our sake, for the sake of our souls*. The *pomegranates* were placed on the garment of the High Priest as a reminder of this.

In the giving of the commandment of the ½ shekel to be given “**for the service of the Tent of Meeting**”, Elohim provided a means for making atonement for the sin of idolatry that our fathers participated in. He established it also as a picture for us; so that we consider it in light of our history. Think about it. What is the Tent of Meeting? **Shemot 25:8** says; **“And they shall make Me a Set-apart Place, and I shall dwell in their midst. Shemot 29:44-45** goes on to say; **“And I shall set apart the Tent of Meeting and the altar. And Aharon and his sons I set apart to serve as priests to Me. And I shall dwell in the midst of the children of Yisra’el and shall be their Elohim.”** Just as a bride and groom come together to dwell in a home, YHVH dwells with His people, Yisra’el in His Set-apart Dwelling Place. First, it was the Tent of Meeting, followed by the two Temples. Since the destruction of the second Temple, we have become the dwelling places of YHVH’s “**Divine Presence**” as told in **2 Corinthians 6:16**, where Sha’ul writes; **And what union has the Dwelling Place of Elohim with idols? For you are a Dwelling Place of the living Elohim, as Elohim has**

said, "I shall dwell in them and walk among them, and I shall be their Elohim, and they shall be My people."

We also know from Scripture that the House of Yisra'el (the *Northern Kingdom – 10 Tribes*) became estranged from Elohim because she broke her marriage contract (*Ketubah*) through her idolatry and whoring. **Yirmeyahu 3:8** explains; **"And I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Yisra'el had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Yehudah did not fear, but went and committed whoring too."** Yehudah would later repent. However, the House of Yisra'el would not. Thereby YHVH divorced her. Under Torah, a man cannot remarry his divorced wife (**Debarim 24:1-3**) during his lifetime; even if she is later divorced from the man she is with or he dies and leaves her a widow. In order to be able to restore the broken marriage and remarry His divorced bride, Elohim, Himself, had to die. But, that's impossible. Well, He accomplished this in and through Yahshua Ha Mashiach. With the death and resurrection of a physical (*flesh & blood*) manifestation of Himself, Elohim could once again betroth Yisra'el as His bride. And He will consummate that marriage covenant during the Messianic Era, at the restoration of all things.

Here on earth, when a broken marriage is restored, the dwelling place of the couple has to be restored also. In other words, they live together again. As in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. In fact, it happens first in the spiritual. This is part of what Yahshua meant when He was teaching us how to pray in **Mattityahu 6:9-10**, when He said; **"This, then, is the way you should pray: 'Our Father who is in the heavens, let Your Name be set-apart, let Your reign come, let Your desire be done on earth as it is in heaven.'"** YHVH is in the process of rebuilding the **"fallen Tabernacle of David"** with the regathering of the Two Houses of Yisra'el. **Amos 9:11** says; **"In that day I shall raise up the booth of Dawid which has fallen down. And I shall repair its breaches and raise up its ruins. And I shall build it as in the days of old,..."** We're seeing this beginning to happen in Israel right now. And, He will rebuild His physical Dwelling Place, His Hekal, Yehezqel (Ezekiel) says, when Mashiach builds His Millennial Temple in Jerusalem.

Shemot 30:16 tells us that the contribution of the ½ shekel is to go towards the service of the Dwelling Place of Elohim. 3,800 years ago, it was the Tent of Meeting. Today, that means the restored Temple to be built in Jerusalem. The Levites who have restored the **"Temple ½ Shekel"** are collecting them throughout the year, from around the world. But, I thought Yahshua atoned for me. He paid the price. Well, yes He did. Moshe intervened with YHVH on behalf of the Children of Yisra'el also. And, Elohim covered the people. But, He still commanded Moshe to take a **census (Ki Tisa)** to **"lift-up and inspect"** B'nei Yisra'el. Remember, **Ki Tisa** also means when you **"lift up"** (as to inspect) the Children of Yisra'el. When Moshe numbered them, he was to collect then count the ½ shekel as an atonement for them. Brethren, are we not being the **"lifted up"** Children of Yisra'el today? YHVH, Himself, is calling us from all walks of life, from all forms of misguided worship, and giving us knowledge and understanding as to who we are..... Yisra'el. Now is the time, when He calls us, and we are seeking to learn and follow His Torah, that we need to give the ½ shekel contribution to the service of His Dwelling Place to make atonement for our idolatry and adultery. Yahshua said in **Yochanan 14:15**; **"If you love Me, you shall guard My commandments."** Now is the time.

Coming up very soon now is Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, followed by the counting of the **Omer**, then Shavu'ot (*the giving of the Torah & Ruach HaKodesh*). For seven weeks, we will be counting the **omer**. We have some really good teachings for you on our website, when the time comes. But, there's a beautiful picture I want to show you now. An **omer** is equal to 7 pints, 1/10 of an **ephah** of 70 pints (or 70 nations). An **omer** is also equal to 1/100 of a homer (a dry measure equal to 10 ephahs, or 70 pints). Also, in **Vayiqra / Leviticus 27:16**, we are told that the value of a homer of

barley seed is set at 50 shekels. In Hebrew thought, barley (grain) represents man. If an **omer** is 1/100 of a homer, then an **omer** is worth ½ shekel, the price of redemption for all Yisra'elites.

Next, **Shemot 38:25-28** says; ***And the silver from the ones counted of the congregation was one hundred talents and one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels, according to the shekel of the set-apart place: a beqa, half a shekel for a head, according to the shekel of the set-apart place, for everyone passing over to those counted, from twenty years old and above, for six hundred and three thousand, five hundred and fifty men. And the hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets of the set-apart place and the bases of the veil: one hundred sockets from the hundred talents, a talent for each socket. And of the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the columns, and overlaid their tops, and made bands for them.***

Someone once said that Elohim is in the details. Well, in this accounting of the ½ shekel offering, He does indeed confirm His Word. Scripture says that the silver of those counted equaled 100 talents and 1,775 shekels, a beqa (½ shekel per head) according to the shekel of the Sanctuary. So, let's look at the accounting. First we have "**100 talents**". 100 is the numeric value of the letter "**Kuf**" which means "**to surround**" or "**strength**". It is also the numeric value of "**v'padah**" (***and let her be redeemed***) from **Shemot 21:8**. Now "**talent**" is the Hebrew word "**kikkar**" which means "**a round weight**" or "**a loaf**". Remember the "**loaves of Shewbread**" relating to the twelve tribes. Bear with me here a minute. "**Kikkar**" is spelled "**kaf-kaf-reish**", which represents both palms on the head. With **100**, this represents both of Elohim's palms surrounding, or upon, our head, as in laying His Hands upon our head to impart His strength, or blessing. Next, we have "**one thousand seven hundred and seventy five**". "**One thousand**", like one, equals "**aleph**" which is "**oxen**" or "**master**". Then we're given **700**, which equals "**t'kaphar**" or "**you shall make atonement**". And finally, we have **75** which equals "**Kohen**" or "**priest**". When I read this all together, the hair on my arms stood up; because, I saw YHVH placing both of His Hands on my head, saying, "**The Master says, 'make atonement for yourself to the priest.'**"

A talent equals 3,000 shekels. So, adding it all up, we have 301,775 shekels. At ½ shekel per head, this gave Moshe the count of all those registered and numbered (**Ki Tisa**, or **lifted up**), 603,550 men twenty years old and above. Six hundred is the number of man; but also equals "**qeresh**", which were the boards of the Mishkan in **Shemot 26:18**; and a "**thousand**", which is "**aleph**" or "**master**". "**Five hundred**" equals "**natan**" which means "**to give**" or "**gave**" and "**fifty**" equals "**damah**" or "**his blood**". In other words, for the **boards** or **foundation** of the Dwelling Place, or Mishkan, the "**Master gave His blood**".

This is how a census of the Children of Yisra'el is to be conducted according to the Torah of our Elohim. David, as we read two weeks ago, forgot this and 70,000 Yisra'elites died by the plague.

The ½ shekel of silver (*remember, silver represents our love for YHVH*) was commanded by Him, as the redemption price for the nefesh, or soul, of each Yisra'elite. And, similarly, one omer equals an Yisra'elite. In other words, one day, each of us must walk out the giving of the ½ shekel and our "**omer journey**" in the exodus from "**Mitzrayim**" and "**Babylon**". As each Yisra'elite scattered among the nations wakes up by the call of the Father, he must turn from his idolatry and return to Elohim and His Torah. In walking this journey out, he needs to give the ½ shekel for an atonement for his idolatry and be counted as B'nei Yisra'el, in order each of us (*an omer*) to be part of the "**ephah**", the "**minion**", along with the rest of the "**components of our soul**".

As we walk our journey out, we have the opportunity to become spiritually mature (to reach our **7 pints, our 1 omer**), to fulfill our role in becoming the completeness of the nations, according to

B'reshith 48:19, as 1/10 of the ephah (***an omer***) of the 70 pints/nations. The counting of the omer ends at Shavu'ot celebrating the giving of the Torah (1,500 BCE) and the giving of Ruach HaKodesh of the Living Torah (28 CE).

As our *parsha* closes for this week, we read in **Shemot 40:33b-38**; ***And Moshe completed the work. And the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the esteem of YHVH filled the Dwelling Place. And Moshe was not able to come into the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud dwelt on it, and the esteem of YHVH filled the Dwelling Place. And when the cloud was taken up from above the Dwelling Place, the children of Yisra'el went onward in all their journeys. But if the cloud was not taken up, then they did not set out till the day that it was taken up. For the cloud of YHVH was on the Dwelling Place by day, and fire was on it by night, before the eyes of all the house of Yisra'el, in all their journeys.***

I love how this ends. ***For the cloud of YHVH was on the Dwelling Place by day, and fire was on it by night, before the eyes of all the house of Yisra'el, in all their journeys.*** We will see the “**cloud of YHVH**” by day. Remember what we’ve studied out before; from the Greek and the Aramaic; it’s the same “**cloud**” where we’ll meet Yahshua, as **1 Thessalonians 4:17** describes. And “**fire**” will be on it by night. YHVH’s consuming fire will cause all darkness to flee from before us. We will not live in darkness, even though darkness covers the earth in that day, “the “**Day of YHVH**”. And, the “**eyes**” of all the house of Yisra’el, “**kol beit Yisra’el**” will see it happen in all our “**journeys**”. The word translated here as “**journeys**” is “**massa'im**”; which literally means “**the breaking of camp to leave**” and the “**stations**” or “**stops along a journey**”. Wherever He calls us, He will dwell among us as the “**Cloud**” and the “**Fire**”. Wherever He calls us, *family*, follow with all your heart. Be that “**heave offering**”, elevated as your heart and spirit lift you, as “*your inner man lifts up his face to YHVH!*”

Baruch HaShem YHVH !