

# כִּי תִשָּׂא

## KI TISA/WHEN YOU ELEVATE Shemot/Exodus 30:11-34:3

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This week we read of the **sin of the golden calf** in our Torah reading, while in the Haftara (**1 Kings 18**) we parallel the message with the **confrontation between the prophet Elijah and the prophets of the false god, Ba'al**. Because we are currently in the Land and we recently visited the area near to where the confrontation with Ba'al would have occurred, we shall mainly be referring to the **sin of worshipping Ba'al**.

In the time of **Elijah** and the **wicked king Ahab** of the **northern ten tribes**, the **Israelites** often worshipped **Ba'al**. However, that does **NOT** mean that they had **renounced their ties to the Elohim of Israel**. Instead, they often **alternated between both forms of worship**...sometimes **following the Torah commandments**, and **sometimes sinking into paganism**. In fact, if this is what you grew up with, you **may not have noticed the mixing**. It was the **prophet Elijah**, however, who **confronted the people with truth**:

*1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If יהוה is Elohim, follow Him; but if Ba'al, follow him." But the people answered him not a word.*

Perhaps they **did not answer** because it was a **quandary** for them. **Which way** should they go? **Why** should they **change the ways of worship** that had been **passed down** to them **from their forefathers**? Maybe they were **quite comfortable in their ways**.

So **Elijah proposed a test**:

*1 Kings 18:22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I alone am left a prophet of יהוה; but Ba'al's prophets are four hundred and fifty men."<sup>23</sup> "Therefore let them give us two bulls; and let them choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it; and I will prepare the other bull, and lay it on the wood, but put no fire under it."<sup>24</sup> "Then you call on the name of your elohim, and I will call on the name of יהוה; and Elohim who answers by fire, He is יהוה." So all the people answered and said, "It is well spoken."*

The **people and the prophets agreed to the test**. **Elijah** actually **encourages them to choose which Elohim they will serve**:

*1 Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If יהוה is Elohim, follow Him; but if Ba'al, follow him." But the people answered him not a word.*

Perhaps they **did not answer** because they were **confused**, but **Elijah** was **forcing them to choose "between two opinions."** Those **stratting the fence** had **not completely divorced themselves** of their **Israelite heritage**. For such a **person who is not ready to make a total commitment**, was it good for **Elijah** to ask them to **make a choice between יהוה and Ba'al**? **Yochanan (John)** gives a **similar message** to the **assembly at Laodicea**:

*Revelation 3:14 " And to the angel of the assembly of the Laodiceans write, ' These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of Elohim: <sup>15</sup> "I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. <sup>16</sup> "So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.*

What are the **disadvantages** in being **not totally sold out to יהוה**? A person who is **“lukewarm,”** or **mixed in his worship** will find it **very difficult** to make a **sincere commitment to the Father**. He wants our **whole heart...a heart that desires to follow Him only!**

*Devarim 5:29 'Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever!*

Yeshua spoke on the **importance** of the **“purity”** of the **“heart”**:

*Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, For they shall see Elohim.*

As we **share life** with the **community** here in **Israel**, we see the following verse **lived out** in their **passionate love and service to one another**:

*1 Peter 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,*

The **choice** seems to be **יהוה** or **Ba'al**, with **nothing in between**. Why would the **Father** desire one who was **“cold”** over one who was **“lukewarm?”** Wouldn't a **bit of mixed worship of Him** be **worth more than no worship?** When a **person serves Ba'al wholeheartedly**, although he is **completely in error**, at least he is **serious in his pursuit of a higher power**. There is the **possibility** that he may see that he is **totally misguided**. However, when a person is **“lukewarm,”** he is **not taking either higher power seriously**. He is **likely to be “double-minded”** forever.

*James 4:8 Draw near to Yah and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.*

*Psalms 119:113 I hate the double-minded, But I love Your Torah.*

Let's take another look at **what Elijah encouraged the people to do**, as he told them to **choose between Ba'al and יהוה**. When a person becomes a **sincere believer in Ba'al**, it is **uncertain** whether he will **convince anyone else to follow him**. But when he mixes the **purity of the Word with anything else**, this is often **socially and politically correct** and **many are misled**. This is why the **Father** uses the **strong term** of **“vomit you out.”** He **desires purity and holiness**. His **desire** is for us to **return** to the **“old paths”** of complete oneness with Him.

*Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says יהוה: "Stand in the ways and see, And ask for the old paths, where the good way is, And walk in it; Then you will find rest for your souls. But they said, 'We will not walk in it.'*

His **desire** is for us to **choose Him** and to **“obey” Him** with **“sincerity of heart”**:

*Colossians 3:22 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing Yah.<sup>23</sup> And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to Adonai and not to men,*

**Shabbat Shalom!**

**Ardelle**