

Parshas Vayikra in a Nutshell (Leviticus 1:1–5:26)

G-d calls to Moses from the Tent of Meeting, and communicates to him the laws of the korbanot, the animal and meal offerings brought in the Sanctuary. These include:

- The “ascending offering” (olah) that is wholly raised to G-d by the fire atop the altar;
- Five varieties of “meal offering” (minchah) prepared with fine flour, olive oil and frankincense;
- The “peace offering” (shelamim), whose meat was eaten by the one bringing the offering, after parts are burned on the altar and parts are given to the kohanim (priests);
- The different types of “sin offering” (chatat) brought to atone for transgressions committed erroneously by the high priest, the entire community, the king or the ordinary Jew;
- The “guilt offering” (asham) brought by one who has misappropriated property of the Sanctuary, who is in doubt as to whether he transgressed a divine prohibition, or who has committed a “betrayal against G-d” by swearing falsely to defraud a fellow man. ❖



The Torah reading itself focuses on the sacrifices offered in the Sanctuary in the desert and later in the Temple in Jerusalem. The Hebrew term for sacrifice is korban which shares the root kerov, meaning, “close.” The sacrifices were a medium through which closeness and intimacy were established between G-d and man, and in a larger sense, between Him and every aspect of the world at large. -- *The Rebbe*

The Hebrew Month of Nisan

Nisan (or Nissan), the first month on Jewish calendar (according to the Torah), coincides with March-April on the civil calendar. The Torah calls it chodesh ha-aviv—the month of spring, as it marks the beginning of the spring months.

On the first day of Nisan in the year 2448 from creation (1313 BCE), two weeks before the Exodus, G-d showed Moses the crescent new moon, instructing him regarding the setting of the Jewish calendar and the mitzvah of sanctifying the new month. “This month shall be for you the head of months, the first of the months of the year” (Exodus 12:2). This ushered in the first Jewish month and commenced the lunar calendar that Jews have been following ever since. It was the first mitzvah (“commandment”) given to the newly born nation of Israel, even before the exodus from Egypt. ❖



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Halachic Zmanim

Shabbos, Mar 25, 2023

Daylight Savings Time

Earliest Tallis 5:55 AM
Latest Morning Shema..... 9:55 AM
Earliest Mincha (Gedola).. 1:35 PM
Plag Hamincha..... 6:00 PM
Earliest Evening Shema.... 7:42 PM

Anshei Lubavitch Congregation

Rabbi Levi and Leah Neubort

Adult education:

Rabbi Avrohom and Rivky Bergstein

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Rabbi Eli and Ruty Steinhauser

Shabbos Schedule

Erev Shabbos – Mar 24 / Nissan 2

Candle Lighting 6:55 pm

Mincha 6:55 pm

Shabbos Day – Mar 25 / Nissan 3

Tehillim Reading 8:00 am

Shacharis 9:30 am*

Torah Reading..... 10:30 am

Kiddush..... 12:00 pm

Mincha 6:55 pm

Rabbi's Drasha 7:20 pm

Shabbos Ends..... 7:55 pm

**Latest morning Shema is now 9:55 AM. Be sure to recite the Shema at or before that time (even if at home).*

Weekday Schedule (not on a holiday):

Minyan

Shacharis (Mon-Fri) 6:15 am

Shacharis (Sunday) 9:00 am

Mincha (Sun-Thurs)..... 1:45 pm

Maariv (Sun-Thurs) 9:15 pm

Bulletin

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Chassidic Masters

The Offered Beast

*Based on the teachings of
the Lubavitcher Rebbe
Courtesy of MeaningfulLife.com*

Why, if a person sinned and wished to make atonement, or he was just in a generous mood and wished to offer something to G-d, does he sacrifice an innocent animal? Why doesn't he sacrifice himself, for example?

Answer the chassidic masters: he does.

The Torah, they explain, makes this very point in the verse that introduces the laws of the korbanot:

A man who shall bring near of you an offering to G-d, from the beast, from the cattle and from the sheep, you shall bring close your offering ..

As Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi points out, the verse does not say, "a man of you who shall bring near an offering," but "a man who shall bring near of you an offering"—the offering brought is "of you." The sacrificed animal is a projection, in the extra-human sphere, of a process transpiring in the intra-human sphere.

Man, says the Talmud, is a world in miniature. Which means that the world is a man in macro. Our world contains oceans and continents, forests and deserts, men and beasts; so, too, does man. The human psyche includes a subconscious "sea" and a "terrestrial" persona; it has lush forests and barren deserts; and it has a "human soul" and an "animal soul."

The human soul — also called the "G-dly soul" — embodies all that is upward-reaching and transcendent in man. It gravitates to its source in G-d, driven by an all-consuming love for G-d and the desire to lose itself within His all-pervading essence. Its modes of expression are the thought, speech and deed of Torah—the means by which man achieves closeness and attachment to his Creator.

The "animal soul" is the self that man shares with all living creatures: a self driven and fulfilled by its physical needs and desires. Its vehicles of expression are the endeavors of material life.

"A man who shall bring near of you an offering to G-d, from the beast, from the cattle and from the sheep, you shall bring close your offering." When a person brings an animal from his paddock as a gift to G-d, the gesture is devoid of meaning unless he also offers the animal within himself.

The Ox and the Plow

What is to be done with this animal?

The beast within man has not been placed there just so that it should be suppressed or uprooted. "Much grain is produced with the might of the ox," remarked the wisest of men (Proverbs 14:4), and the chassidic masters say that this is a reference to the animal inside our hearts. An ox run amok will trample and destroy; but when dominated by a responsible human vision and harnessed to its plow, the beast's vigor translates into "much grain"—a far richer crop than what human energy alone might produce.

The same is true of the beast in man. Nothing—not even the G-dly soul's keenest yearnings—can match the intensity and vigor with which the animal soul pursues its desires. Left to its own devices, the animal soul tends toward corrupt and destructive behavior; but the proper guidance and training can eliminate the negative expressions of these potent drives, and exploit them towards good and G-dly ends.

The first type of korban described in our Parshah is the olah—the "ascending" offering, commonly referred to as the "burnt offering." The olah is unique in that it is an absolute offering: after it is slaughtered in the Temple courtyard and its blood is poured upon the altar, it is raised up upon the altar and is burned, in its entirety, as "a fiery pleasure unto G-d."

The burning of something is the physical counterpart of the sublimation process described above. When a substance is burned, its outer, material form is eliminated, releasing the energy locked within. This is the inner significance of the korban: the animal energy within man is divested of its material forms and offered upon the altar of service to G-d.

The Eaten Offerings

After detailing the various types of korban olah, the Torah goes on to discuss the other two primary categories of offerings—the korban chattat ("sin offering") and the korban shelamim ("peace offering").

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Like that of the olah, the blood of these offerings was poured on the altar. But unlike the wholly burnt offering, only certain parts of the chattat and shelamim “ascended” by fire. The Torah designates certain veins of fat (called the chalavim) which should be removed and burned; but the meat of the korban was eaten under special conditions of holiness. (The meat of the chattat was eaten by the priests, and that of the shelamim by the person who brought the offering, with certain portions given to the priests.)

There are portions of our material lives which, like the burnt offering, are wholly converted to holiness: the money given to charity, the leather made into tefillin, the energy expended in Torah study, prayer and the performance of a mitzvah.

Then there is also the money we spend to feed our families, the leather we make into shoes, the energy we expend on the everyday business of physical life. But these, too, can be serve as a korban to G-d, when they are “eaten in holiness”—when the money is honestly earned, the food is kosher, and our everyday activities are conducted in a way that is considerate of our fellows and faithful to the divine laws of life.

The “blood” of the animal soul—its fervor and passion for material things—must be poured upon the altar; its “fat”—its excessive indulgence and pleasure-seeking—must be burned. But the gist of the animal self—its “meat”—can be sanctified even when it is not wholly converted into a holy act. As long as they are “eaten in holiness,” our material endeavors can be a means of a “bringing close” (the meaning of the word korban) of man to G-d. ❖

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Paterson Shul Holiday Minyanim

The Paterson Shul @Seniors Tower of Paterson will have the following Minyanim:

SATURDAY, APRIL 1: SHABBAT HAGADOL (PRE-PASSOVER) – 9:00 a.m.

& THURSDAY, APRIL 6: FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER MINYAN - 9:30 a.m.

& THURSDAY, APRIL 13: LAST DAY OF PASSOVER MINYAN - 9:00 a.m. -- Yizkor will be approximately 10:30 a.m. led by the great Chazzan Mitch.

The shul is located at 510 E. 27th Street, Paterson NJ.

If you don't like long speeches, long walks, or long Shabbosim, this is the place for you. We have Machzorim and Talaisim.

For more information, please email: JerrySchrantz@Gmail.com or visit Facebook: The Paterson Shul. ❖

From Our Sages – Vayikra

A man (Hebrew = adam) who shall bring near of you an offering to G-d (Leviticus 1:2)

The verse does not say “a man of you who shall bring near an offering,” but “a man who shall bring near of you an offering”—the offering must come from within the person. It is the animal within man that must be “brought near” and elevated by the Divine fire upon the altar.

(The Chassidic Masters)

Why does G-d use the word “adam” for man (instead of the more common synonym “ish”)? To teach us that a person cannot offer to G-d what has not been honestly obtained by him. G-d is saying: When you bring an offering to Me, be like Adam the first man, who could not have stolen from anyone, since he was alone in the world.

(Midrash Tanchuma; Rashi)

When we speak of Adam as one who “was alone in the world,” we are speaking of the very first hours of his life. Thus we are speaking of Adam before he partook of the Tree of Knowledge—of man still unsullied by sin.

This is the deeper significance of the Torah’s reference to the bearer of a korban—which has the power to obtain atonement for a transgression—as an “Adam.” Every man, the Torah is saying, harbors in the pith of his soul a pristine “Adam,” a primordial man untouched by sin. Even at the very moment when his external self was transgressing the Divine will, his inner essence remained loyal to G-d; it was only silenced and suppressed by his baser instincts. It is by accessing this core of purity, by unearthing that part of himself that did not sin in the first place and restoring it to its rightful place as the sovereign of his life, that man attains the state of teshuvah—return to his original state of perfection.

(The Lubavitcher Rebbe)

An ascending offering, a fire offering of a sweet savor to G-d (Leviticus 1:9)

It is pleasurable to Me that I have spoken and My will was done.

(Sifri; Rashi)

[Regarding the offerings,] it is said: “This is an ordinance forever to Israel” (II Chronicles 2:3). Rav Giddel said in the name of Rav: This refers to the altar built in heaven where Michael, the great Prince, stands and offers up an offering.

Rabbi Yochanan said: It refers to the scholars who are occupied with the laws of the Temple service—The Torah regards it as though the Temple were built in their days.

(Talmud, Menachot 110a)

No leaven nor any honey . . . in any offering of G-d (Leviticus 2:11)

Ultra-sweet honey and ultra-sour leaven are opposite extremes; G-d does not like extremes.

(The Rebbe of Kotzk)

That a prince should sin . . . (Leviticus 4:22)

The Torah employs the uncommon usage asher (“that a . . .”), to say: Fortunate (ashrei) is the generation whose leader applies himself to atone for his errors.

(Talmud; Rashi)



Haftorah for Shabbat Parshas Vayikra a nutshell

Isaiah 43:21-44:23

This week's haftorah starts with a rebuke to the Israelites for abandoning the Temple's sacrificial service. Sacrifices are the dominant topic of the week's Torah reading, too.

The prophet Isaiah rebukes the Israelites for turning away from G-d and refraining from offering sacrifices, turning to idolatry instead. G-d exhorts the people to return to Him, promising to forgive their transgressions, as is His wont.

The prophet then mentions the futility of serving empty idols which may be crafted by artisans but "neither see nor hear nor do they know..." The haftorah concludes with G-d's enjoinder to always remember Him and to return to Him. ❖

Bringing a Sacrifice

There is an inward act of sacrifice in the life of the Jew that precisely mirrors the outward act that took place in the Sanctuary. Even that outward act—though it involved the sacrifice of a physical animal—was essentially a spiritual one. This is why it needed the participation of the priests (kohanim) and the accompaniment of the songs of the Levites. The Zohar says that “the Cohanin in their silent service and their desire drew (G-d’s presence) downwards and the Levites in their songs and praises drew (man’s soul and his sacrifice) upwards.” The physical sacrifice was thus a spiritual encounter.

– *From the Teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe*



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Good Shabbos to all!