

Snapshot Torah



GUIDE TO THE WEEKLY PARSHA

ISSUE 23

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VAYIKRA

Nissan 1st 5775

Kohen - First Aliya:

Chapter 1, verses 1 - 13

- ✚ Hashem explains to Moshe, what the criteria is when a person offers up a Korban (Sacrifice) to him.
- ✚ The Korban Olah (Burnt Offering) is mentioned first. If they are going to use either a male bull, goat or sheep, the animal must be completely healthy and blemish free.
- ✚ There is seven stages to the Korban. Smiha: (Leaning of the hands and declaring why you are bringing it), Shehita: (The ritual killing of the Korban), Zrika: (the sprinkling of the blood), Hafshata: (Skinning of the animal), Nittoa: (cutting the animal up into portions), Meilha: (salting) and Hakrava: (placing the meat onto the Mizbayah and consume in fire until completely burnt).

Levi - Second Aliya:

Chapter 1, verse 14 – Chapter 2, verse 6

- ✚ If a bird is used for the Korban Olah, then it must undergo five different stages. Melika: (The bird's throat being cut using the Kohanim's thumbnail), Meetzuy Ha'dam: (Squeezing out the birds blood), Meilha – Hakrava: (The head of the bird is salted and then completely burned on the Mizbayah), Hasarat Murah: (The removal of the inner organs and the birds crop) and Shisua (Splitting and salting the rest of the bird and burning it on the Mizbayah).
- ✚ The laws of the Korban Minha (Meal offering) are discussed next. The ingredients required are finely ground flour, pure oil and frankincense. These are bought to the Kohen who takes a Kmitza (handful), from which three fingers full are burnt and the rest the Kohen can keep for himself.

Sh'lishi - Third Aliya:

Chapter 2, verses 7 - 16

- ✚ Depending on the reason why the Minha offering was bought the Korban is either baked, fried or deep fried. The only grain that is toasted is the first Omer crop of barley
- ✚ Regardless of what cooking method was used, all of them must be salted first. None of the Korban's must be given already leavened or sweetened.

R'VI' - Fourth Aliya:

Chapter 3, verses 1 - 16

- ✚ The Korban Shlamim (Peace Offering) has the same criteria as the Olah; except this time only certain parts of the unblemished animal are placed on the Mizbayah. The rest is then divided up and shared between the Kohen and the owner, for consuming.

Chamishi - Fifth Aliya:

Chapter 4, verses 1 - 26 and

Shishi - Sixth Aliya:

Chapter 4, verse 27 – Chapter 5, Verse 26

- ✚ To atone for an unintentional sin which is classed as serious, a Korban Hatat (Sin offering) is offered up.
- ✚ The Korban 'Oleh V'yored' for the sins which includes either: not testifying in court when they should, making something holy, impure, Swearing a false oath or doesn't keep one; are all dependent on the wealth of the individual concerned. I.e. if the person cannot afford a sheep or goat, they may offer up a bird in its stead. If the person is too poor even for that, they must offer up a Korban Minha (Meal offering) but without the oil or frankincense.
- ✚ Finally there is the Korban Asham (Guilt offering) the process used is similar to the Hatat Korban but are for committing the following sins: Using sacred property without permission, swearing falsely to financial matters or if there is uncertainty if the crime committed, warrants a Hatat Korban in the first place.

Sh'vi'i - Seventh Aliya: Rosh Chodesh Reading: Bamidbar, Chapter 28 Verses 9 = 15

- ✚ Laws of what additional Korban's are offered up when you see a new moon 'Rosh Chodesh'

Maftir – PARSHAS HACHODESH, Shemot, Chapter 12 Verses 1 - 20

- ✚ Two weeks prior to the Exodus, Hashem informs Moshe that the month of Nissan will be known from this moment on 'The head of all Months'. Moshe has to instruct Bnai Yisrael on how to set up the 'Jewish Calendar' by looking out for and reporting back the start of every cycle of the new moon which will mark the beginning of each month.
- ✚ Hashem also instructs Bnai Yisrael to abstain from consuming any food which has leavened for seven days and that they must bring a Korban Pesach, (Pascal Lamb) which has be eaten with matzah and bitter herbs.

Haftorah – PARSHAS HACHODESH, Ezekiel Chapter 45 Verses 18-46

OVERVIEW:

- ✚ The Haftorah begins with a description of the various korbonos (sacrifices) that will be brought to the Beis Hamikdash and offered up to Hashem.
- ✚ Every year on the fourteenth of Nissan, every family must bring a Korban Pesach to Jerusalem.
- ✚ The rest of the Haftorah is devoted to of Ezekiel's prophecy regarding the third Beis Hamikdash, its structure, inauguration and some of the practices that will be observed and practised there.

LINK TO SEDRA READING:

- ✚ The Haftorah is a prophecy regarding the Paschal Offering that will be brought during the Messianic Era. This reflects the theme of Maftir HaChodesh, where Moshe is commanding Bnai Yisrael in Mitzraim how to prepare and bring the Korban Pesach.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION:

What do you think of when you think about sacrifices?

Maybe it's the thought of giving something up. "I'll stop eating chocolate and cakes as I need to stay healthy. Or maybe it's the idea of a bargaining tool. "If you do X for me then I'll cease to do Y; but that's not what the Hebrew word Korban connotes.

In Hebrew, Korban translates as 'to draw near'. Enabling someone to draw closer to Hashem. Our ancestors came to realise and accepted that everything in creation belongs to Hashem. Given that, they asked; as everything we own and everything we don't own already belongs to the Holy One, Blessed be He. What can we then offer to Hashem to show our appreciation and draw us closer together?

Parsha Vayikra plunges us headlong into the sacrificial system and the mode of interacting with Hashem. Of course this type of Avodah (Service) is as distant as can be from what we can offer today. Who could read those words, without thinking ahead to Pesach? In temple times no leavened bread could be burned as an offering to Hashem; yet in our modern times our leaven is precisely what we burn when we perform the mitzvot of 'bedikat hametz'

Unleavened bread is still a means by which we approach Hashem, and is why it's customary to salt our matzo during the Seder service; not just because they taste better that way but because of the reminder in parshas Vayikra of true Avodas Hashem (service to Hashem). Today what we burn is precisely what we don't want to bring to our encounters with Hashem. Despite the involvement of fire, the process of searching for the leaven and burning it, isn't a Korban to Hashem in the way described in the torah but the cause and effect of our actions both in a physical sense and spiritual are no different. We are basically ridding ourselves of our ego and anything fermented in ourselves which might have been soured.

May the process of bedikat hametz give us a chance to rid ourselves of our internal Hametz; in order to engage in our Seder Services with pure hearts which I believe is an apt way of giving our personal korbonos (offerings) to Hashem enabling us to draw near to him as our Ancestors intended.

