

RaYBaSH's Torah Thoughts
Parashah #25: Tzav "Command"
Vayikra / Leviticus 6:1-8:36
By: Rabbi Yehudah ben Shomeyr

Summary:

This Torah Portion speaks of various Mishkan procedures, sacrifices and the consecration of the Kohanim (Priests).

Chapter 6 deals with the laws concerning the burnt, meal, kohen inaugural and sin offering. Along with the taking away of the ashes from the altar and the permanent fire what is to be upon the Altar.

Also in this chapter we have the regulations of what the Kohen can and cannot eat from the offerings of what is to be done with the vessels they were prepared in.

Chapter 7 speaks of the laws concerning the Guilt Offering. Whatever Kohen performs whatever sacrifice, to him goes the designated portion, for him and his families use and consumption. Baked Meal Offerings are given to the Kohen that offered it. Dry Meal Offering or dry meal mixed with oil is divided up among all the Kohen serving at the Mishkan at that time.

Then Chapter 7 goes into the laws concerning the Peace and Thanksgiving Offering, Feast Offering for vow or donations like the Shabbat Manna can be eaten for 2 days and like Shabbat Manna and Pesach Lamb which remains after 2 days must be burnt up and not eaten. If eaten on the 3rd day the whole sacrifice becomes, "Piggul" Rejected.

The latter half of chapter 7 concerns the laws about eating in a state of contamination. The Prohibition of consuming fat and blood. The procedures of the Wave Offering which is much like waving the Lulav and the Etrog at Sukkot. The right thigh and breast of the Peace Offering is given to the Kohen.

Chapter 8 Elaborates on the consecration and inauguration of the Kohanim and the rituals and sacrifices involved. The 7 day inauguration represents a new creation. Blood on the right ear, thumb and big toe represents a new creation like Chavah (Eve) being taken from the side of Adam.

Commentary:

R. Pinchas Ha Levi of Barcelona, in his book Sefer Ha Chinuch said:

“(Commandment 132) To light a fire on the altar daily and to keep it burning constantly. In their discussion of this Mitzvah our Sages of blessed memory said: ‘All though fire descended from Heaven, there is a Mitzvah to bring common (earthly) fire in addition in any case.’”

G-d has given us a spark at creation. He ignites the fire of our soul when we choose to Obey Torah. It is our responsibility to maintain that fire daily to be that, “Living Sacrifice” according to Romans 12:1. This is Holy Fire which makes us “Kodosh V’hannukah L’Adonia (Holy and Dedicated to YHWH)!” It makes us echad (one)with G-d as Yeshua prayed in John 17.

But there is an unholy fire that does not come from the soul but from the heart. Yerimiyahu said that the heart is the most deceptive thing about us. And in the Renewed Covenant, Yeshua said, “For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks”. Ya’akov said that the tongue is an unholy fire and creates a forest fire set by hell itself (James 2:6).

This unholy fire makes us echad with the Yetzer Hara (Evil Inclination) and leads us to commit the sin of HaSatan; the sin of selfish pride, which is the “original” original sin.

James 1:13-15 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

We become high with spiritual L.S.D. (Lust.Sin.Death).

So here we see the true meaning of fighting fire with fire.

The Olah

Leviticus 6:1-2 And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, If a soul sin, and commit a trespass against the LORD, and lie unto his neighbour in that which was delivered him to keep, or in fellowship, or in a thing taken away by violence, or hath deceived his neighbour;

What is burned on the Altar of the fire from G-d and men? The Burnt Offering, the Olah, which is entirely consumed by the fire.

R. Shimon Bar Yocha said:

“The Olah is brought for contemplation of the heart.”

Olah means to ascend. It is meant to bring us closer to G-d.

The Jerusalem Talmud Yoma 8:7, 45b says that the Olah brings about Kappara “atonement” for thoughts of the heart.

From a Western Gentile perspective thoughts being private are not sinful but even healthy.

Torah says:

Num. 15:39 “And it shall be unto you for a fringe, that ye may look upon it, and remember all the commandments of the LORD, and do them ; and that ye seek not after your own heart and your own eyes, after which ye use to go a whoring:”

James 1:13-15 Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

Midrash Tanchuma Tzav 13:13 says:

“The Olah is completely holy because it was not brought for sin of theft but rather for thoughts of the heart.”

The Olah was brought to the door of the Mishkan in front of everyone, so everyone knew you had sinned in some way. The type of sacrifice would at times indicate the type of sin but without disclosing any details. Even Kings and Priests were not exempt.

What do we derive from this? TESHUVAH (REPENTANCE) MUST BE SHAMELESSLY PUBLIC!

The Renewed Covenant says to confess your sins one to another and bear one another's burdens. As the old saying goes that confession is good for the soul.

Our Olah must be sincere or it doesn't count, it will actually be an abomination to G-d if we sacrifice out of sheer cold ritual or obligation. That's what this week's Haftarah is all about.

It must be true Teshuvah, with the Goal of purging out sin and getting closer to G-d. This is what it means to be "On Fire" for G-d. Being a "Living Sacrifice" means the fire must be perpetual so we can sacrifice anytime when necessary.

Selfish Pride says, "No one has to know, I'm only hurting myself anyway, If I make Teshuvah publicly I'll ruin my reputation, G-d and I can handle it."

LIES!

1. People can pick up that something is not right.
2. Your sin has a ripple effect because of conviction you lash out and hurt others.
3. True Teshuvah elevates you in everyone's eyes.
4. It's not just "You and G-d," G-d set up an order and procedure for Teshuvah based on the Mishkan. There's got to be outward fruit of Teshuvah before you can really be free.

Thinking, "This isn't about me, it's about someone else." This is a lie that shows we are numb to the burden of guilt and conviction.

So How do we keep our minds, our thoughts pure after we make Teshuvah?

TORAH!

We need to keep our minds on the Word, and:
PRAYER!

Rav Sha'ul tells us to keep our being in a constant state of prayer, to "Pray without ceasing."

The Talmud says that we must occupy ourselves with two things and you won't have time to sin, and that is to throw yourself into your job and the Torah. You need the job so you will know how to live out the Torah.

Do you take your Torah to work; do you read it and pray at work?

Duet. 6:4-9 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

It's time to make Teshuvah and give our Olah Offering.

Yes, Yeshua has made Kippah (Atonement) for our sins. But we must receive it by making Teshuvah. Yeshua can't make Teshuvah for you.

Some wonder where the church got the "altar call" at the end of a service, some say that it is not "Jewish." Well I disagree; Moshe and Ezra both made a public, national "altar call", a call to make Teshuvah after they spoke.

YHWH has spoken through His Torah this week. Will you answer His "Altar Call"?

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!
-- Rabbi Yehudah

RaYBaSH's Haftarah Hashings
Parashah #25: Tzav "Command"
Jer. 7:21-8:3, 9:22-23
By: Rabbi Yehudah ben Shomeyr

Jer. 7:21 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh.

Leviticus continues on dealing with the various sacrifices in the sacrificial system. Jeremiah speaks of putting your heart into motion (Sorry, the reference to the Amy Grant album was totally unintentional) before you put your sacrifice on the altar. First and foremost G-d wants your heart not just the lamb.

Jer. 7:21-23 Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat flesh. For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices: But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

When we just go through the motions of religious activities or rituals we rape them of their meaning that is meant to affect our hearts and we end up listening to the white noise of our brains which gives way to idleness, which in turn gives way to evil counsel.

Jer. 7:24-28 But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward. Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers. Therefore thou shalt speak all these words unto them; but they will not hearken to thee: thou shalt also call unto them; but they will not answer thee. But thou shalt say unto them, This is a nation that obeyeth not the voice of the LORD their God, nor receiveth correction: truth is perished, and is cut off from their mouth.

Before you know it were actually into performing religious activities that G-didn't command in an attempt to find fulfillment and meaning we originally had but took for granted and ignored.

Jer. 7:29-31 Cut off thine hair, O Jerusalem, and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on high places; for the LORD hath rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the LORD: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it. And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

This can only lead to Judgment.

Jer. 7:32-8:3 Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place. And the carcases of this people shall be meat for the fowls of the heaven, and for the beasts of the earth; and none shall fray them away. Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride: for the land shall be desolate. At that time, saith the LORD, they shall bring out the bones of the kings of Judah, and the bones of his princes, and the bones of the priests, and the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, out of their graves: And they shall spread them before the sun, and the moon, and all the host of heaven, whom they have loved, and whom they have served, and after whom they have walked, and whom they have sought, and whom they have worshipped: they shall not be gathered, nor be buried; they shall be for dung upon the face of the earth. And death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the LORD of hosts.

Jer. 9:22-23 (23-24) Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might, let not the rich man glory in his riches: But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.

The Haftarah ends on a positive note and urges us to truly know G-d and we do this by obeying His Torah and in doing so with love and sincerity we by pass the Judgment that comes from apathy and idleness.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavuah Tov!

-- Rabbi Yehudah

RaYBaSH's Brit Chadashah Connections
Parashah #25: Tzav "Command"
Mark 12:28-34

By: Rabbi Yehudah ben Shomeyr

Mark 12:28-34 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.

This is a great passage to put the Torah and Haftarah into perspective.

Sacrifice, rituals, do's and don'ts should not come from a compelling via obligation, but from a loving heart willing to please the Father.

How else can we possibly:

Rom. 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Rav Sha'ul compells us not to depart from the prescribed way of worshiping G-d as presented in His Torah.

I Cor. 10:14-21 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry. I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is

any thing? But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils. Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Shabbat Shalom and Shavauah Tov!
--Rabbi Yehudah