

# Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation

(Under same management for over 5779 years)

## SHABBAT SERVICE

March 23rd – 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"  
12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat & Interactive Torah Discussion

"Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless; who live by the Torah of Adonai. Blessed are those who observe His instruction; who seek Him with all their heart." Psalm

119



### Messiah Keeps the Sacrificial Altar Burning

וַיִּדְבֹר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: צוּ אֶת-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הָעֹלָה

Va-y'daber Adonai el-Moshe lemor Tsav et-Aharon v'et-banav lemor zot torat ha-olah

And spoke God to Moses to say, Command Aaron and sons-his to say, this instruction the burnt offering

And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, "Command Aaron and his sons saying, 'this is the law for the burnt offering:

הָיָא הָעֹלָה עַל מִזְבֵּחַ עַל-הַלַּיְלָה עַד-הַבֹּקֶר וְאֵשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תִּקְרָה בּוֹ:

hee ha-olah al mokdah al-ha-miz'be-ach kol-ha--lailah ad-ha-boker v'esh ha-miz'be-ach tookad bo

she/it the burnt offering on the hearth on the altar all the night til the morning and fire of the altar will be kept burning in him

the burnt offering itself shall remain on the hearth on the alter all night until the morning, and the fire on the altar is to be kept burning on it."

## A Manual For Priests

Parsha Tsav begins as over 3300 years ago God instructed Moses to command Aaron and his sons to serve Him by ministering the burnt offerings (vs.8-13), the grain offerings (vs.14-23), the sin offerings (vs.24-30), the trespass (guilt) offerings (Ch7:1-10), and the peace (thanksgiving) offerings (vs.11-38). We are familiar with the introductory protocol found here, "And the Lord spoke to Moses saying,...." God's protocol was to speak His wishes to Moses, and then Moses relayed the information to the people. However, here we find a deviation from the normal protocol. God speaks to Moses saying, "Tsav," "Command Aaron and his sons...." Immediately the command of God brings us to attention. What follows are not suggestions but precise instructions that God expects the priests to follow "to the letter."

Last week we learned from Leviticus 1:1 - 6:7 some preliminary facts about these same offerings from the perspective of the individual person bringing the offerings to worship ("draw near to") God. This week the priests, Aaron and his sons are commanded specifically how they should minister these offerings. God provided a manual for the Priests to serve Him within the Tabernacle framework. Although the same offerings are mentioned, they are elaborated upon from the perspective of the Priest. We should also take notice that God's instructions to the Priests are not mere suggestions but commands. As I mentioned above, we have previously seen God instruct Moses to "speak" His instructions to the sons of Israel (Ch1:2, 4:1). The serious distinction between "speaking" and "commanding" will become apparent next week, as two of Aaron's sons "offer strange fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them" (10:1). God set up a specific protocol for the restoration of sinful people. He expected the complete obedience of the people, who brought their offerings, and He also expected complete obedience from the ministering priests. **Today**, God also expects complete obedience from us, as we come before Him, bringing the offering He provided. God provided atonement for our sins through the blood sacrifice of the Messiah, Yeshua, so that we, too, can approach Him in worship. We must be obedient to God's command to appropriate for ourselves Messiah's finished work, which removed from us the sins that separated us from God. The difference between the offerings of the Priests in Chapters 6 - 8 and the offering of Messiah was that the Priests were required to continually offer sacrifices for themselves and for the people, while the sacrifice of Messiah was "once for all, having obtained (for us) eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:12).

## The Prescribed Offerings

Just as you have a job description for your daily work, our Parsha details the daily job description for the priests. We find that the priests arrive early to begin their day. The fire on the altar containing the burnt (olah) offering must never go out. It must always be available, ready for the people to bring their sacrificial offerings. All during the night, a priest must attend the fire. Early in the morning, when the next "shift" of priests began, their first assignment was to change their clothes and put on garments of lesser quality in order to remove the ashes from the Mizbei'ach, the altar, and take them to a ceremonially clean place set aside for them outside the camp. As we begin this Torah portion, we remember that the atonement of Messiah is always available.....24/7. It's ready when we are!

In **Chapter 6**, verse 16, Aaron and his sons were told to eat what was left of the **grain (mincha) offerings** as unleavened cakes in the tabernacle area. The priests ate almost all of the grain offerings, symbolizing that God uses His people to provide the necessities of life for His ministers. But while ministers have the right to live off their ministry, they can only take the amount allocated to them by God.

Verses 19-23 detail the grain ordination offering brought by Priests when they were to be anointed. This grain offering was prepared on a griddle with oil and baked in pieces, literally "tufiney minchat pitim" the (broken) pieces of a "mincha" (grain) offering. **Understanding this ritual gives specificity to Yeshua's declaration at Passover, when He took the unleavened bread and broke it into pieces saying, "This is my body, which is given (broken) for you; do this in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24; Luke 22:19);**. He is our anointed High Priest and Passover Lamb, given by God for our redemption! **The "tufiney minchat pitim" that He was offering was Himself broken for us.** Those who partake of Him in communion are partaking of His "mincha" offering, as God's anointed High Priest consistent with Leviticus 6:21. We are not eating His flesh literally but symbolically partaking of His offering for us....acknowledging Yeshua as our High Priest, our advocate before God, the Father. How many churches that serve communion really understand the Levitical underpinnings of the ritual of communion begun by Yeshua at Passover?

Verse 23 commands that the grain offering brought by the Priest for his anointing be entirely consumed by fire. The Priest is not to eat (benefit from) his own offering. Food for the Priests was provided by the people in return for the services of the priest. So today we might say that Pastors have the right to have their livelihood provided by their flock, but they are also required to bring their own offering for God's ministry from which they should not benefit.

The **sin offering (chatat)** was sacrificed in the same place as the burnt offering and the thanksgiving offering, the North side of the bronze altar. The practical implication was that no on-looker would know whether the participant was confessing sin, presenting a burnt offering, or giving a thanksgiving offering to God. Confession of sin has always been an integral and necessary, yet intimate part of the relationship between the participant and God. Certain parts of the animal and its blood were burned on the altar. Only consecrated people, including the priest who offered the animal could partake of their prescribed parts of it. Again we see that God's method is to provide sustenance for His priests through their ministry to Him.

Extremely important then and today was/is the kavanot, the thoughts and intentions of the participant and priest. The relationship between priest and participant was both dutifully performed in obedience to God's commands and sanctified by Him as His means to enable sinful man to "draw near" to Him in worship. Therefore the thoughts and intentions of those participating in God's ordinance must involve a repentive, submissive spirit, confessing that God's way is the only correct way of life for God's people. "...for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation" (**Romans 10:10**). To enter into this relationship in an unworthy manner could not be efficacious because it could not fool God. **1 Corinthians 11:27-30** described the person who participated in "an unworthy manner" as eating and drinking "judgment to himself," which could result in weakness, sickness, or death. A person with unforgiven sin in his heart does not have the proper Kavanot to come before God. "If

therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering" (Matthew 5:22-23). Note that the B'rit Hadasha (Newer Testament) **does not instruct to not offer the appropriate sacrifice, nor does it authorize a man-made substitute sacrifice.**

From Chapter 7 verse 13, the **peace sh'lamim (fellowship, thanksgiving - Toda) offering korban** uses leavened bread instead of unleavened bread along with the meat portion used for the communal meal. The reason for this exception had to do with the purpose of the peace offering. The peace offering could be a thanksgiving offering given as a response to answered prayer, deliverance, healing, after an unexpected blessing, or after a vow (Jeremiah 33:11; Psalms 56:12,13; Ps. 107:22; 116:17-19; **Acts 21:23-26**). The leavened bread would be part of a fellowship or communal meal, expressing our thanksgiving to God for His blessings, rather than part of an unleavened (no chametz) sacrifice that would be burned on the altar . The meal might be attended by the worshiper and his family, other Levites, and the poor (Deuteronomy 12: 12, 18-19). Another exception to the unleavened, sacrificial grain offerings were the two loaves offered on Shavuot....again these loaves were not part of a sacrificial offering on the altar.

## **Blood – a Sin Sacrifice Requirement**

Last week we saw that the sin sacrifice required the blood of the sacrificial animal. The blood represents the life-force of the animal and goes on the alter to complete the sin atonement ritual. As we have previously seen, anything that touches the alter is considered "most holy" and is not used for a common purpose such as food. As a prescribed part of the sacrificial ritual, God holds that blood only be used for that purpose. "Wherever you live, you must not eat the blood of any bird or animal. If anyone eats blood, that person must be cut off from his people" (Lev. 7:26-27). "But be sure you do not eat the blood, because the blood is the life, and you must not eat the life with the meat. You must not eat the blood; pour it out on the ground like water. Do not eat it, so that it may go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the Lord" (Deut. 12:23-25). Blood has always been used in idolatrous worship. Idolaters Would drink the blood of both animals and humans as part of their ritual worship and everyday life. God prohibited His people from copying these idolaters. "I will **set My face against** that person who eats blood, and will cut him off from his people" (Lev. 17:10). I will **set My face against** that man who engages in Moloch worship and his family and will cut him off from his people" (Lev. 20:5). Torah commentaries note that this phrase, **set My face against**, is only used in the context of prohibitions against the common use of blood and against idolatry. Just as it was/is mandatory that the participant have the correct thoughts and intentions as he approaches God for worship, it was/is also mandatory that he present the proper offering to God and only partake of those parts of the offering allowable for him. Otherwise the whole procedure becomes a stench (**pigul**) to God, instead of a "soothing aroma" that expressed God's satisfaction with the participant's obedience, thoughts, and intention to please Him. There have never been "many ways" to worship God. **God only allows sinful men to approach Him with the proper repentant attitude and with His prescribed sacrifice, the finished work of Messiah.** All other sacrifices are **pigul**, a stench to Him.

One might ask, how did Torah observant Jews, who lived after the destruction of the Temple, who lived in the galut (the dispersion), and who live today without Temple sacrifices, consider that they can "draw near" to worship God? The answer non-messianic Rabbis give comes from the opening words of this Torah portion: "Zot torat ha'olah," "this Torah (portion) is the burnt offering." From the Gemara - Menachot 110b (part of the Talmud, Rabbinic commentaries on the Torah), it is derived that when someone studies the Torah laws of the burnt offering, it is considered as though he actually offered the sacrifice, and the same goes for all sacrifices. Of course it is easy to see that this Rabbinic commentary is at odds with the intent of God's words, which command that sacrifices actually be offered with proper thoughts and intentions of the heart. **The Rabbinic answer to offering the appropriate God-given sacrifice, the blood atonement of Messiah, Yeshua, is to substitute another "sacrifice," reading Torah and doing good works.** Yet, as non-messianic Jews have found out and as is stated in **Hebrews 10:2,** unatoned sins produce in worshipers a "consciousness of sins." In other words, they know their sins are unforgiven and hope that by doing enough good works to please God, they can have a relationship with Him. Unfortunately for all who do not bring to God the blood of the sacrifice He has provided, the substitute sacrifice is a pigul, a stench to God. **It cannot produce atonement and cannot remove their consciousness of sin.** Yet, just as the sacrificial fires were always to be kept burning; always ready to accomplish the atonement sacrifice, the God-given "once for all" sacrifice of Messiah awaits anyone who is willing to come to Him. "If you confess with your mouth Yeshua as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved,".... and Whoever, believes in Him will not be disappointed" (**Romans 10:9,11**). **Every year at Passover, Messianic Jews and Gentiles celebrate their redemption provided by the God-given sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Yeshua, who takes away the sins of the world....eating lamb roasted with fire (Exodus 12:9) - God's prescribed sin sacrifice - as our remembrance of Him!**

In **Chapter 8** Moses officiated at the ordination of the first Priests. Obeying the command of God, Moses gathered all the people to the tabernacle and told them that the Lord had told him to ordain Aaron and his sons as Priests. Moses officiated in the process of consecration of the Priests, setting them apart for God's service by washing them and dressing them in the Priestly clothes designed according to God's instructions. Then Moses sacrificed a bull for a sin offering, a ram for a burnt offering, and a second ram as an offering for ordination (miliun), "filling" or "investing" Aaron with the office of High Priest. With each offering, Aaron and his sons pressed their hands on the head of the animal. This symbolic identification with the sacrificial animal also involved repentance (t'shuva) and confession (vidui). Again we see that the heart and soul of the person must be involved in the sacrifice for it to become a "soothing aroma" to God. Some of the blood of the sin offering was put on the horns of the altar. Some of the blood of the burnt offering was sprinkled around the altar. Some of the blood of the ordination offering was put on the right thumb, right ear, and right foot of Aaron and his sons, symbolizing that they must always be ready to hear God, serve God, and walk in Godly ways. As believer/priests we, too, have been set apart by God for His service. We, too, should always be ready to listen for His voice, serve Him according to His direction, and always walk in Godly ways! They remained before God inside the tent of meeting for 7 days, as God "ordained them" (filled their hands).

# SHABBAT SHALOM

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your possessions."*

Our love for Hashem must permeate every aspect of our physical, intellectual, and emotional expression

