

**Esnoga Bet Emunah**

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**Triennial Cycle (Triennial Torah Cycle) / Septennial Cycle (Septennial Torah Cycle)**

<b>Three and 1/2 year Lectionary Readings</b>	<b>Second Year of the Triennial Reading Cycle</b>
<b>Kislev 06, 5774 – November 08/09, 2013</b>	<b>Fifth Year of the Shmita Cycle</b>

**Candle Lighting and Habdalah Times:**

**Conroe & Austin, TX, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:21 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:15 PM

**Brisbane, Australia**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:53 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:49 PM

**Chattanooga, & Cleveland, TN, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:23 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:20 PM

**Jakarta, Indonesia**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:29 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:20 PM

**Manila & Cebu, Philippines**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:08 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 5:59 PM

**Miami, FL, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:17 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:10 PM

**Olympia, WA, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 4:28 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 5:33 PM

**Murray, KY, & Paris, TN, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 4:33 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 5:30 PM

**San Antonio, TX, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:25 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 6:19 PM

**Sheboygan & Manitowoc, WI, US**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 5:16 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 5:17 PM

**Singapore, Singapore**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 6:32 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 7:22 PM

**St. Louis, MO, U.S.**

Fri. Nov 08 2013 – Candles at 4:36 PM  
Sat. Nov 09 2013 – Habdalah 5:34 PM

For other places see: <http://chabad.org/calendar/candlelighting.asp>

**Roll of Honor:**

**This Torah Commentary Comes to You Courtesy of:**

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David and beloved wife HH Giberet Batsheva bat Sarah

His Honor Paqid Adon David ben Abraham

Her Excellency Giberet Sarai bat Sarah & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Barth Lindemann & beloved family

His Excellency Adon John Batchelor & beloved wife

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Her Excellency Giberet Laurie Taylor

His Eminence Rabbi Dr. Adon Eliyahu ben Abraham and beloved wife HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah

Her Excellency Prof. Dr. Conny Williams & beloved family

His Excellency Adon Yoel ben Abraham and beloved family

His Excellency Adon Tsurriel ben Abraham and beloved wife HE Giberet Gibora bat Sarah

For their regular and sacrificial giving, providing the best oil for the lamps, we pray that G-d's richest blessings be

upon their lives and those of their loved ones, together with all Yisrael and her Torah Scholars, amen ve amen!

Also a great thank you and great blessings be upon all who send comments to the list about the contents and commentary of the weekly Torah Seder and allied topics.

If you want to subscribe to our list and ensure that you never lose any of our commentaries, or would like your friends also to receive this commentary, please do send me an E-Mail to [benhaggai@GMail.com](mailto:benhaggai@GMail.com) with your E-Mail or the E-Mail addresses of your friends. Toda Rabba!

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### Shabbat “Vayiqrá” – “And called”

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
שַׁבָּת		<b>Saturday Afternoon</b>
“Vayiqrá”	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 1:1-9	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 4:1-3
“And called”	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 1:10-13	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 4:4-6
“Y llamó”	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 1:14-17	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 4:7-10
Vayiqra (Lev.) 1:1 – 3:17	Reader 4 – Vayiqra 2:1-16	
Ashlamatah: Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8	Reader 5 – Vayiqra 3:1-5	<b>Monday &amp; Thursday Mornings</b>
	Reader 6 – Vayiqra 3:6-11	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 4:1-3
Psalms 73:1-28	Reader 7 – Vayiqra 3:12-17	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 4:4-6
	Maftir – Vayiqra 3:15-17	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 4:7-10
N.C.: 1 Pet 1:1-12; Luke 9:51-62; Acts 19:1-20	Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8	

### Blessings Before Torah Study

Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, King of the universe, Who has sanctified us through Your commandments, and commanded us to actively study Torah. Amen!

Please Ha-Shem, our G-d, sweeten the words of Your Torah in our mouths and in the mouths of all Your people Israel. May we and our offspring, and our offspring's offspring, and all the offspring of Your people, the House of Israel, may we all, together, know Your Name and study Your Torah for the sake of fulfilling Your desire. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who teaches Torah to His people Israel. Amen!

Blessed are You, Ha-Shem our G-d, King of the universe, Who chose us from all the nations, and gave us the Torah. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!

Ha-Shem spoke to Moses, explaining a Commandment. "Speak to Aaron and his sons, and teach them the following Commandment: This is how you should bless the Children of Israel. Say to the Children of Israel:

May Ha-Shem bless you and keep watch over you; - Amen!

May Ha-Shem make His Presence enlighten you, and may He be kind to you; - Amen!

May Ha-Shem bestow favor on you, and grant you peace. – Amen!

This way, the priests will link My Name with the Israelites, and I will bless them."

These are the Laws for which the Torah did not mandate specific amounts: How much growing produce must be left in the corner

of the field for the poor; how much of the first fruits must be offered at the Holy Temple; how much one must bring as an offering when one visits the Holy Temple three times a year; how much one must do when doing acts of kindness; and there is no maximum amount of Torah that a person must study.

These are the Laws whose benefits a person can often enjoy even in this world, even though the primary reward is in the Next World: They are: Honouring one's father and mother; doing acts of kindness; early attendance at the place of Torah study -- morning and night; showing hospitality to guests; visiting the sick; providing for the financial needs of a bride; escorting the dead; being very engrossed in prayer; bringing peace between two people, and between husband and wife; but the study of Torah is as great as all of them together. Amen!

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## Contents of the Torah Seder

- Summary The Burnt Offering – Leviticus 1:1-2
- From the Herd – Leviticus 1:3-9
- From the Flock – Leviticus 1:10-13
- Meal Offering of Fine Flour – Leviticus 2:1-3
- Meal Offering of Cooked Flour – Leviticus 2:4-10
- Leaven, Honey and Salt – Leviticus 2:11-13
- Of First Fruits – Leviticus 2:14-16
- The Peace Offering from the Herd – Leviticus 3:1-5
- The Peace Offering from the Flock – Leviticus 3:6-17

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### Reading Assignment:

**The Torah Anthology: Yalkut Me'Am Lo'Ez - Vol. XI: The Divine Service**

By: Rabbi Yaaqov Culi & Rabbi Yitschaq Magriso, Translated by: Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan

Published by: Moznaim Publishing Corp. (New York, 1989)

Vol. 11 – “The Divine Service,” pp. 1-82

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## Rashi & Targum Pseudo Jonathan for: Vayiqra (Leviticus) 1:1 – 3:17

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
1. He called to Moses, and the Lord spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting, saying,	1. And it was when Mosheh had completed to erect the tabernacle that Mosheh reasoned and judged in his heart, and said: To Mount Sinai, whose excellency is the excellence only of an hour and its holiness the holiness but of three days, I could not ascend till the time that the word was spoken to me; but the excellence of this the tabernacle of ordinance is an eternal excellency, and its holiness an everlasting holiness; <b>therefore is it right that I should not enter within it until the time that I am spoken with from before the LORD.</b> Then did the word of the LORD call unto Mosheh and the Word of the LORD spoke with him from the tabernacle of ordinance saying:

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
	<p>JERUSALEM: And it was when Mosheh had completed to erect the tabernacle to anoint it, and sanctify it, and all its vessels, that Mosheh reasoned in his heart, and said: Within Mount Sinai, whose majesty was the majesty of an hour, and its holiness the holiness of an hour, I might not ascend till the time which was bidden me from before the LORD; nor into the tabernacle of ordinance, whose majesty is an eternal majesty, and its holiness an everlasting holiness, <b>is it right for me to enter till the time that I am bidden from before the LORD.</b> And the Word of the LORD called to Mosheh; for the Word of the LORD was altogether with him, from the tabernacle of ordinance, saying:</p>
<p><b>2. Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: When a man from [among] you brings a sacrifice to the Lord; from animals, from cattle or from the flock you shall bring your sacrifice.</b></p>	<p><b>2. Speak with the sons of Israel, and say to them: If a man of you, - but not of the rebellious worshippers of idols, - bring an oblation before the LORD, (it must be) from the clean cattle, from the oxen or from the sheep; but not from the wild beasts may you offer your oblations.</b></p>
<p>3. If his sacrifice is a burnt offering from cattle, an unblemished male he shall bring it. He shall bring it willingly to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, before the Lord.</p>	<p>3. If his oblation be a burnt offering of oxen, he will bring a male unblemished to the door of the tabernacle of ordinance, and offer him to be accepted for himself before the LORD.</p>
<p>4. And he shall lean his hand [forcefully] upon the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted for him to atone for him.</p>	<p>4. And he will lay his right hand with firmness upon the head of the sacrifice, that it may be acceptable from him to propitiate on his behalf.</p>
<p>5. And he shall slaughter the young bull before the Lord. And Aaron's descendants, the kohanim, shall bring the blood, and dash the blood upon the altar, around [the altar] which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.</p>	<p>5. And the slayer will kill the ox at the place of slaughter before the LORD, and the sons of Aharon the priest will bring the blood in vessels, and sprinkle the blood which is in the basins round about the altar that is at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance.</p>
<p>6. And he shall skin the burnt offering, and cut it into its [prescribed] sections.</p>	<p>6. And he will take away the skin from the sacrifice, and divide him according to his members. JERUSALEM: And he will skin the holocaust, and divide him by his members.</p>
<p>7. And the descendants of Aaron the kohen shall place fire on the altar, and arrange wood on the fire.</p>	<p>7. And the sons of Aharon the priest will put fire upon the altar, and lay wood in order upon the fire;</p>
<p>8. And Aaron's descendants, the kohanim, shall then arrange the pieces, the head and the fat, on top of the wood which is on the fire that is on the altar.</p>	<p>8. and the priests the sons of Aharon will lay the members in order and the heart and the covering of the fat upon the wood that is on the fire upon the altar.</p>
<p>9. And its innards and its legs, he shall wash with water. Then, the kohen shall cause to [go up in] smoke all [of the animal] on the altar, as a burnt offering, a fire offering, [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.</p>	<p>9. And he will wash the innards and his legs with water; and the priest will offer the whole upon the altar of burnt offering an oblation to be accepted with grace before the LORD.</p>
<p>10. And if his offering is [brought] from the flock from sheep or from goats as a burnt offering he shall sacrifice it an unblemished male.</p>	<p>10. And if his oblation be of the flock, whether of the lambs or of the young goats, he will bring a male unblemished.</p>
<p>11. And he shall slaughter it <b>on the northern side of the altar,</b> before the Lord. And Aaron's descendants,</p>	<p>11. And the slayer shall kill it <b>at the foot of the altar on the north side,</b> before the LORD, and the priests</p>

<b>RASHI</b>	<b>TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN</b>
the kohanim, shall dash its blood upon the altar, around.	the sons of Aharon will sprinkle the blood that is in the basins upon the altar round about.
12. And he shall cut it into its [prescribed] sections, with its head and its fat, and the kohen shall arrange them on top of the wood which is on the fire that is on the altar.	12. And he will divide it by its members, its head and its body, and the priest will set them in order on the wood which is upon the fire on the altar.
13. And the innards and the legs, he shall wash with water. Then, the kohen shall offer up all [of the animal], and cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar. It is a burnt offering, a fire offering [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	13. And the inwards and his legs he will wash with water, and the priest will offer the whole and burn it at the altar of burnt sacrifice; it is an offering to be received with grace before the LORD.
14. And if his sacrifice to the Lord, is a burnt offering from birds, he shall bring [it] from turtle doves or from young doves.	14. And if his oblation before the LORD be of birds he will bring his oblation from the turtle doves or the young Of pigeons; but of the turtle doves he will bring the largest, and of the pigeons the young ones.
15. And the kohen shall bring it near to the altar, and nip off its head, and cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar, and its [the bird's] blood shall be pressed out upon the wall of the altar.	15. And the priest will offer it upon the altar, and will wring off its head, and burn upon the altar, and press out its blood at the side of the altar.
16. And he shall remove its crop along with its entrails, and cast it next to the altar on the east side, to the place of the ashes.	16. And he will remove its gullet and the contents thereof, and throw it by the eastern side of the altar in the place where they burn the cinders. JERUSALEM: And the priest will bring it to the side of the altar, and twist off its head, and lay it in order upon the altar, and press out its blood at the bottom of the altar. And he will remove its ventricle with the dung, and throw it by, on the east of the altar at the place where the cinders are emptied.
17. And he shall split it open with its wing feathers [intact], but he shall not tear it completely apart. The kohen shall then cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar, on top of the wood which is on the fire. It is a burnt offering, a fire offering [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	17. And he will cut it between its wings, but not to sever the wings from it; and the priest shall burn it at the altar upon the wood which is on the fire: it is a sacrifice, an oblation to be received with favor before the LORD. JERUSALEM: And he will cut it through its wings, but not to dissever; and the priest will lay it in order upon the, altar, on the wood that is upon the fire.
1. <b>And if a person brings a meal offering to the Lord, his offering shall be of fine flour. He shall pour oil over it and place frankincense upon it.</b>	1. <b>But when a man will offer the oblation of mincha before the LORD, his oblation will be of flour, and he will pour oil upon it, and put incense thereon,</b>
2. And he shall bring it to Aaron's descendants, the kohanim, and from there, he [the kohen] shall scoop out his fistful of its fine flour and its oil, in addition to all its frankincense. Then, the kohen shall cause its reminder to [go up in] smoke on the altar; [it is] a fire offering [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	2. and bring it to the priests the sons of Aharon; and he will take from thence his hand full of the meal and of the best of the oil, with all the frankincense; and the priest will burn the goodly memorial at the altar, an oblation to be accepted with grace before the LORD.
3. And what remains of the meal offering shall belong to Aaron and to his descendants; <b>[it is] holy of holies from the fire offerings of the Lord.</b>	3. And what remains of the mincha will be Aharon's and his sons, <b>most holy among the oblations of the LORD.</b>
4. And if one brings a meal offering baked in an oven,	4. And when you will offer the oblation of a mincha of

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
it shall consist of [either] unleavened loaves [made] of fine flour mixed with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.	that which is baked in the oven, it will be cakes of flour, unleavened and mixed with oil, and wafers unleavened, which are anointed with oil. JERUSALEM: And wafers unleavened.
5. And if a meal offering on a pan is your sacrifice, it shall be [made] of fine flour, mixed with oil; it shall be unleavened.	5. And if your oblation of a mincha be from the pan, it will be of flour mingled with oil, unleavened will it be.
6. Break it into pieces, and you shall [then] pour oil over it. It is a meal offering.	6. He will break it in pieces, and pour oil thereupon. It is a mincha. JERUSALEM: And he will break it in pieces, and pour oil thereon.
7. And if your sacrifice is a meal offering [made] in a deep pot, it shall be made of fine flour with oil.	7. And if your oblation be a mincha from the gridiron, it will be made of flour broiled with oil.
8. Thus you shall bring the meal offering which shall be made from these [types], to the Lord. And he shall bring it to the kohen, and he shall bring it close to the altar.	8. And the mincha which has been made with the flour and the oil you will bring in before the LORD, and the man who brings it will present it to the priest, and the priest will take it to the altar.
9. And the kohen shall lift out, from the meal offering, its reminder and cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar; [it is] a fire offering [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	9. And the priest will separate from the mincha a memorial of praise, and burn it at the altar, an oblation to be accepted with grace before the LORD.
10. And what remains of the meal offering shall belong to Aaron and his descendants; [it is] holy of holies from the fire offerings of the Lord.	10. And what remains of the mincha will be for Aharon and his sons, it is most holy among the oblations of the LORD.
11. No meal offering that you sacrifice to the Lord shall be made [out of anything] leavened. <b>For you shall not cause to [go up in] smoke any leavening or any honey, [as] a fire offering to the Lord;</b>	11. But no mincha which you offer to the LORD will you make with leaven; <b>for neither leaven nor honey may you offer as an oblation before the LORD.</b>
12. [However,] you shall bring them as a first [fruit] offering to the Lord; nevertheless, they shall not go up on the altar as a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	12. When you offer an oblation of first fruits before the LORD, the bread of the first fruits you may bring leavened, and the dates in the season of first fruits, and the fruit with its honey you may bring, and the priest may eat them; but they will not burn them at the altar as an oblation to be received with favour.
13. <b>And you shall salt every one of your meal offering sacrifices with salt,</b> and you shall not omit the salt of your God's covenant from [being placed] upon your meal offerings. You shall offer salt on all your sacrifices.	13. <b>And every oblation of your mincha you will salt with salt;</b> you will not withhold the salt of the covenant of your God from your mincha, <b>because the twenty and four gifts of the priests are appointed with a covenant of salt;</b> therefore salt will you offer with all your oblations.
14. When you bring a meal offering of the first grains to the Lord, you shall bring your first grain meal offering [from barley], as soon as it ripens, parched over the fire, kernels full in their husks, [ground into] coarse meal.	14. And if you will present a mincha of first fruits before the LORD, (ears of wheat) roasted by fire, roasted flour and meal of barley will you offer as a mincha of your first fruits.
15. And you shall put oil on it, and place frankincense upon it. It is a meal offering.	15. And you will put olive oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon; it is a mincha.
16. Then, the kohen shall cause its reminder to [go up in] smoke, [taken] from its coarse meal and from its oil, with all its frankincense; [it is] a fire offering to the	16. And the priest will burn its memorial of praise from the meal and from the best of the oil, with all the frankincense, an oblation before the LORD.

<b>RASHI</b>	<b>TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN</b>
Lord.	
1. If his sacrifice is a peace offering, if he brings it from cattle, whether male or female, unblemished he shall bring it before the Lord.	1. And if his oblation be of the sanctified victims, if from your cattle he offer, whether male or female, he will offer it perfect.
2. And from the peace offering, he shall bring a fire offering to the Lord [comprised of]: the fat covering the innards and all the fat that is on the innards,	2. And he will lay his right hand firmly on the head of his oblation, and the slayer will kill it at the door of the tabernacle of ordinance, and the priests the sons of Aharon will sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.
3. And from the peace offering, he shall bring a fire offering to the Lord [comprised of]: the fat covering the innards and all the fat that is on the innards,	3. And of the sanctified victim, his oblation before the LORD, he will offer the covering of fat which covers the inwards, even all the fat which is upon the inwards. JERUSALEM: And the fat and the entire breast to the chine he will remove, and the fat which covers the inwards.
4. and the two kidneys [along] with the fat that is upon them which is over the flanks. And he shall remove the diaphragm with the liver, along with the kidneys.	4. And the two kidneys, and the fat which is upon them, that is, upon the folding and the caul that is upon the liver with the kidneys, he will remove.
5. And Aaron's descendants shall cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar, apart from the burnt offering, which is on top of the wood that is on the fire; [it is] a fire offering [with] a pleasing fragrance to the Lord.	5. And the sons of Aharon will offer it on the altar with the sacrifice that is on the wood which is upon the fire, an oblation to be received with favor before the LORD.
6. And if his sacrifice for a peace offering to the Lord is from the flock, whether male or female, unblemished he shall bring it.	6. And if his oblation of a consecrated offering before the LORD be from the flock, whether male or female, his oblation will be perfect.
7. If he brings a sheep as his sacrifice, then he shall bring it before the Lord.	7. If he present a lamb for his oblation, he will bring it before the LORD;
8. And he shall lean his hand [forcefully] upon the head of his sacrifice, and slaughter it before the Tent of Meeting. And Aaron's descendants shall dash its blood upon the altar, around.	8. and lay his right hand firmly on the head of his oblation, and the slayer will kill it before the tabernacle of ordinance, and the sons of Aharon will sprinkle its blood upon the altar round about.
9. And from the peace offering, he shall bring a fire offering to the Lord [comprised of] its choicest part the complete tail, which he shall remove opposite the kidneys, and the fat covering the innards and all the fat which is on the innards,	9. And of the offering of his consecrated oblation he will offer the best of its fat, and remove the whole of the tail, close to the spine, the covering of fat which covers the inwards, even all the fat that is upon the inwards.
10. and the two kidneys [along] with the fat that is upon them, which is over the flanks. And he shall remove the diaphragm with the liver, along with the kidneys.	10. And the two kidneys and the fat which is upon them, upon the foldings, and the caul that is over the liver, together with the kidneys, he will take away.
11. And the kohen shall cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar, as food for the fire, to the Lord.	11. And the priest will sacrifice it at the altar, the meat of an oblation before the LORD.
12. And if his sacrifice is a goat, he shall bring it before the Lord,	12. And if his oblation be from the young goats, he will bring it before the LORD,
13. and he shall lean his hand [forcefully] upon its head and slaughter it before the Tent of Meeting, and Aaron's descendants shall dash its blood upon the altar, around.	13. and lay his right hand upon its head, and the slayer will kill it before the tabernacle of ordinance, and the sons of Aharon will sprinkle its, blood upon the altar round about.
14. And from it, he shall bring his offering a fire offering to the Lord [comprised of] the fat covering the	14. And of his oblation before the LORD he will offer the covering of fat which covers the inwards, even all

RASHI	TARGUM PSEUDO JONATHAN
innards, and all the fat which is on the innards,	the fat that is upon the inwards.
15. and the two kidneys with the fat that is upon them, which is over the flanks. And he shall remove the diaphragm with the liver; along with the kidneys he shall remove it	15. And the two kidneys and the fat which is upon them (and) on the foldings, and the caul which is over the liver, along with the kidneys, he will take away.
16. And the kohen shall cause it to [go up in] smoke on the altar, consumed as a fire offering, [with] a pleasing fragrance. All [sacrificial] fat belongs to the Lord.	16. And the priest will sacrifice them at the altar, the meat of an oblation to be received with favor. All the fat (will be offered) before the LORD.
17. [This is] an eternal statute for all your generations, in all your dwelling places: You shall not eat any fat or any blood.	17. It is an everlasting statute unto all your generations, that neither the fat nor the blood will be eaten in any of your dwellings, but upon the back of the altar it will be sacrificed unto the Name of the LORD.

## Welcome to the World of P'shat Exegesis

In order to understand the finished work of the P'shat mode of interpretation of the Torah, one needs to take into account that the P'shat is intended to produce a catechetical output, whereby a question/s is/are raised and an answer/a is/are given using the seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel and as well as the laws of Hebrew Grammar and Hebrew expression.

The Seven Hermeneutic Laws of R. Hillel are as follows

[cf. <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=472&letter=R>]:

- 1. Kal va-homer:** "Argumentum a minori ad majus" or "a majori ad minus"; corresponding to the scholastic proof a fortiori.
- 2. Gezerah shavah:** Argument from analogy. Biblical passages containing synonyms or homonyms are subject, however much they differ in other respects, to identical definitions and applications.
- 3. Binyan ab mi-katub ehad:** Application of a provision found in one passage only to passages which are related to the first in content but do not contain the provision in question.
- 4. Binyan ab mi-shene ketubim:** The same as the preceding, except that the provision is generalized from two Biblical passages.
- 5. Kelal u-Peraṭ and Peraṭ u-kelal:** Definition of the general by the particular, and of the particular by the general.
- 6. Ka-yoṣe bo mi-maḳom aher:** Similarity in content to another Scriptural passage.
- 7. Dabar ha-lamed me-'inyano:** Interpretation deduced from the context.

## Rashi's Commentary for: Vayiqra (Leviticus) 1:1 – 3:17

### Chapter 1

**1 And He called to Moses** Every [time God communicated with Moses, whether it was represented by the expression] וַיְדַבֵּר, "And He spoke," or וַיֹּאמֶר; "and He said," or וַיִּצַו, "and He commanded," it was always preceded by [God] calling [to Moses by name] (Torath Kohanim 1:2-3). [קריאה] is an expression of affection, the [same] expression employed by the ministering angels [when addressing each other], as it says, "And one called (וַיִּקְרָא) to the other..." (Isa. 6: 3). To the prophets of the nations of the world, however, He revealed Himself



through expressions denoting coincidence and impurity, as the verse says, “and God happened to [meet] (וַיִּקְרַ) Balaam” (Num. 23:4). -[Bemidbar Rabbah 52:5] [The expression וַיִּקְרַ has the meaning of a coincidental happening, and also alludes to impurity. [See Deut. 23:11, regarding the expression מִקְרָה לִיקָה.]

**And He called to Moses** The [Divine] voice emanated and reached Moses’ ears, while all [the rest] of Israel did not hear it. One might think that for each new section [representing a new topic], there was also [such] a call. Scripture, therefore, states, “and [the Lord] spoke (וַיְדַבֵּר) [to him],” [denoting that] only for speech, [i.e., when God “spoke” to Moses, or “said” to him, or “commanded” him,] was there a call, but not at the subsections. [For when these expressions are employed, they demarcate the beginning of major sections, i.e., when God first called to Moses and then proceeded with the prophecy at hand, unlike the beginning of each separate subsection, when God simply continued His communication to Moses without “calling” him anew. Now, if each subsection in the Torah does not represent a new beckoning from God to Moses, ushering in a new prophecy, then] what is the purpose of these subsections? To give Moses a pause, to contemplate between one passage and the next, and between one subject and another. [And if this pause for contemplation was given to the great Moses when being taught by God, then] how much more [necessary is it] for an ordinary man learning [Torah] from another ordinary man [to be allowed pauses between sections and subjects, to carefully contemplate and understand the material being learned].-[Torath Kohanim 1:3]

**to him** Heb. אֵלָיו [That is, God spoke only to Moses. This phrase comes] to exclude Aaron. Rabbi Judah [Ben Betheira] says: “Thirteen times in the Torah, God spoke (וַיְדַבֵּר) to both Moses and Aaron together, and, corresponding to them were thirteen [other] occasions [when God spoke only to Moses] precluding [Aaron], to teach you that they were not said [directly] to Aaron, but to Moses, that he should say them to Aaron. These are the thirteen cases where [Aaron was] precluded: (1) “To speak with him...,” (2) “...speaking to him...,” (3) “...and He spoke to him” (Num. 7:89); (4) “I will meet with you [there at set times], etc. ...” (Exod. 25:22) All of them can be found [in the above dictum of Rabbi Judah] in Torath Kohanim (1:4). Now, [even though it was Moses who exclusively heard the prophecies,] one might think that they [i.e., the rest of Israel, nevertheless] heard the sound [of God] “calling” [to Moses preceding the prophecy]. Scripture therefore, says: [not “He heard the voice [speaking] to him (לו),” [but] “[he heard] the voice [speaking right up] to him (אֵלָיו)” (Num. 7:89). [This verse could have used the word לו, “to him,” rather than such an exclusive expression as אֵלָיו, “right up to him.” However, it uses this expression in order to teach us that only] Moses heard [the Divine voice calling him], while all [the rest] of Israel did not hear [it].-[Torath Kohanim 1:4]

**from the Tent of Meeting** This teaches us that the [Divine] voice stopped and did not project itself beyond the Tent [of Meeting]. One might think that this was because the voice was low. Scripture therefore says, “[And when Moses came into the Tent of Meeting, he heard] the voice” (Num. 7:89). What is the meaning of “the voice” [with the definite article]? It is the voice referred to in Psalms (29:4-5): “The voice of the Lord is in strength; the voice of the Lord is in beauty. The voice of the Lord breaks cedars.” If so, why does it say, “[and the Lord spoke to him] from the Tent of Meeting”? [To inform us] that the [Divine] voice stopped. A case similar to this [where a powerful sound uttered within the Holy Temple was not heard outside,] is: “And the sound of the cherubim’s wings was heard up to the outer courtyard...” (Ezek. 10:5). One might think that the sound was low. Scripture therefore states [further in that verse]: “...as the voice of the Almighty God when He speaks!” Why then does the verse say, “[the sound...was heard] up to the outer courtyard” [and not further, if this sound was indeed so mighty]? Because when it reached there, it stopped.-[Torath Kohanim 1:5]

**[And the Lord spoke to him] from the Tent of Meeting, saying** One might think [that God spoke to Moses] from the entire house [that is, that the Divine voice emanated from the entire Tent of Meeting]. Scripture therefore states, “[and he heard the voice speaking to him] from above the ark cover” (Num. 7:89). [If so,] one might think [the voice emanated] from the entire ark cover. Scripture therefore states [further in that verse], “from between the two cherubim.”-[Torath Kohanim 1:5]

**saying** [God told Moses:] Go forth and say to them [the children of Israel] captivating words, [namely:] “For your sake God communicates with me.” Indeed, we find this is so for all the thirty-eight years that the Israelites were

in the desert, placed under a ban, [i.e.,] from the incident involving the spies and onwards, the [Divine] speech was not addressed especially to Moses, for it says, “So it was, when all the men of war had finished dying from among the people, that the Lord spoke to me saying ...” (Deut. 2:16-17). [Only then was] the Divine speech [again] addressed specifically to me. Another explanation [of לֵאמֹר is that God says to Moses]: “Go forth and tell them My commandments, and bring Me back word whether they will accept them,” as the verse says, “and Moses reported the words of the people back to the Lord” (Exod. 19:8). -[Torath Kohanim 1:6]

**2. When a man from [among] you brings a sacrifice** Heb. כִּי יָקָרִיב, when he brings. [That is, Scripture is not dealing here with an obligatory sacrifice, in which case it would have said, “a man shall bring ....” Rather,] Scripture is speaking here of voluntary sacrifices [and thus says, “When a man ...brings a sacrifice”].-[Torath Kohanim 1:12]

**a man** Heb. אָדָם. Why is this term used here [as opposed to “אָדָם ”]? [It alludes to Adam, the first man on earth, and teaches us:] Just as Adam, the first man, never offered sacrifices from stolen property, since everything was his, so too, you must not offer sacrifices from stolen property.-[Vayikra Rabbah 2:7]

**animals** Heb. מִן הַבְּהֵמָה. One might think that wild beasts are also included [since sometimes wild beasts are included in this term, and therefore may be offered up as sacrifices]. Scripture therefore states [here], “from cattle or from the flock.”-[Torath Kohanim 1:16]

**from animals**—but not all of them. [The phrase therefore comes] to exclude the case of animals that have cohabited with a human, as an active or a passive party. -[Torath Kohanim 1:17]

**from cattle** Heb. מִן הַבָּקָר [The phrase “from cattle” comes] to exclude an animal that has been worshipped [as a deity].

**or from the flock** Heb. וּמִן הַצֹּאן [This phrase comes] to exclude an animal set aside [i.e., designated for sacrifice to pagan deities].-[Torath Kohanim 1:18]

**or from the flock** [The extra “vav” at the beginning of this phrase comes] to exclude the case of a goring animal that has killed [a man]. Now, when [Scripture] states below (verse 3): מִן הַבָּקָר, “of cattle,” [the word מִן] need not have been used, since Scripture has already [taught us the exclusions here. Therefore, this extra word comes] to exclude a טֶרֶפָה [an animal with a terminal disease or injury]. -[Torath Kohanim 1:17]

**you shall bring** Heb. תִּקְרִיבוּ [The plural form of the verb] teaches [us] that two people may donate a voluntary burnt offering in partnership.-[Torath Kohanim 1:19]

**your sacrifice** Heb. קָרְבָּנֵיכֶם [The plural form] teaches us that [a burnt offering] may also be offered as a voluntary gift from the community (Torath Kohanim 1:20). This sacrifice was called עֹלֶת קֹרְבַן הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, “the burnt-offering which was provision for the altar.” [Every year, each twenty-year old male was taxed to give a silver half-shekel for communal sacrifices. See Exod. 30:11-16. This voluntary sacrifice] was purchased with any money remaining [from the previous year’s collection of half-shekels, and was offered as a communal burnt offering when there were no individual offerings brought, in order to prevent the altar from being bereft of sacrifices. Thus, the name “provision for the altar”].-[Shev. 12a].

**3. male**—but not a female. When Scripture repeats later (verse 10) [that the burnt-offering must be] “a male [animal],” it appears unnecessary to state that [since Scripture has already taught us that it must be a male animal and not a female. Therefore, this repetition of the word “male,” comes to teach us that a sacrifice must consist of a completely] male [animal], not an animal of indeterminate gender or a hermaphrodite.-[Bech. 41b]

**unblemished** Heb. תָּמִים, perfect, without a blemish.

**[He shall bring it ...] to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting** He [himself] must attend to bringing it up to the courtyard [of the Temple] (Torath Kohanim 1:24). Why does the verse repeat the word “bring” here [when it says, “he shall bring...He shall bring it”? This repetition teaches us that] even in the case of Reuben’s burnt offering [animal] being mixed up with Simeon’s burnt offering [animal, and the animals cannot be identified], nevertheless, each one of them must be offered up in the name of [its rightful owner] whoever that may be. Similarly, if [an animal designated for] a burnt offering has been mixed up with non-consecrated animals, the non- consecrated animals must be sold to those who need burnt offerings, and thus all of these animals are now [designated to become] burnt offerings. [Accordingly] each animal is now brought in the name of [its rightful owner] whoever that may be. Now, one might think that this must be done even if [an animal designated to become] a burnt offering became mixed up with animals unfit for sacrifice or with [animals designated to become] different kinds of sacrifices [e.g., a sin offering, a guilt offering, etc.]. Scripture therefore says here: וְקָרִיבָנִי, [meaning, “he must bring it.” This teaches us that only an animal fit for and specifically designated as a burnt offering must be brought here].- [Torath Kohanim 1:25]

**He shall bring it** [This clause] teaches us that the person is coerced [to bring the offering if he is remiss in bringing the sacrifice he had promised]. One might think that this means that they should force him against his will [to bring the offering]! Scripture therefore says: “[He shall bring it] willingly (וְקָרִיבָנִי).” How is this possible [that on one hand he should be forced, yet on the other, he must bring the offering willingly? The explanation is that] they must coerce him until he says “I am willing.”-[R.H. 6a, Torath Kohanim 3: 15] 3-4.

**Before the Lord...And he shall lean** [The procedure of] leaning [the hands upon sacrifices] does not apply to a high place [a private altar. These high places were permitted to be used before the permanent Temple was built when the Mishkan was in Gilgal, Nob, and Gibeon. Certain sacrifices could be offered up on them. We learn this from the continuity of these two verses that only “before the Lord”—that is, in the sanctuary precincts—one “should lean his hand upon” the head of sacrifices, but not on a high place outside the sanctuary precincts].-[Torath Kohanim 1:27].

**4. upon the head of the burnt offering** [The text could have simply said “upon its head.” However, it adds “burnt offering”] to include [any sacrifice that is called a “burnt offering,” namely,] (1) an obligatory burnt offering, that it too requires וְקָרִיבָנִי [leaning the hands on its head. Since this section deals with voluntary burnt offerings, this case requires an extra word to include it. See commentary on verse 2]; also included is (2) a burnt offering from the flock [that it too must have וְקָרִיבָנִי, for this is not specified in the verses dealing with the burnt offering from the flock. See verses 10-13].-[Torath Kohanim 1:30]

**the burnt offering** [The use of the definite article here teaches us that the verse is referring to “the” burnt offering, i.e., the one mentioned earlier, where it says, “from cattle or from the flock” (verse 2). Thus] excluding the burnt offering from birds.-[Torath Kohanim 1:30]

**and it will be accepted for him** For which [sins] will [the sacrifice] be accepted for him [thereby atoning for them]? If you say that [the offering is accepted and thereby the person is atoned for] sins which incur the penalty of excision, the death penalty through the court, the death penalty through the heaven[ly court], or lashes, their punishments are [expressly] stated, [and thus, the person must undergo the respective punishment to receive atonement for those sins]. Thereby, we determine that it is accepted only for [failure to perform] a positive commandment [for which the punishment is not expressly stated in the Torah, or [violation of] a negative commandment that is attached to a positive commandment. [I.e., some negative commandments are attached to a positive commandment that relates to the same matter. An example of this is the law of the Passover lamb. The Torah states: “And you shall not leave over any of it until morning, and whatever is left over of it until morning, you shall burn in fire” (Exod. 12:10). Here, the negative commandment is “attached” to the positive commandment. How so? If someone has transgressed the negative commandment and left over some of the Passover lamb until the following morning, he may exonerate himself from the punishment he has just incurred by fulfilling the positive commandment attached, namely by burning the remainder in fire. That is an example of “a negative commandment that is attached to a positive commandment.” See Mak. 4b].-[Torath Kohanim 1:31].

**5. And he shall slaughter...And...the kohanim** shall bring [the blood] [Since the word kohanim is mentioned only in reference to receiving the blood, and not before, we learn that all procedures in a sacrifice] from receiving [the blood in a vessel] and onwards are the duty of the kehunah [as opposed to non- kohanim]. This teaches regarding the slaughtering [which precedes receiving the blood], that it is valid [even if performed] by a stranger [i.e., a non- kohen].-[Zev . 32a]

**before the Lord** in the courtyard [of the Holy Temple].

**and [...the kohanim] shall bring [the blood]** [Although וְהִקְרִיבוּ literally means “bringing,” here,] it means “receiving” [the blood in a vessel], which is the first [procedure immediately following the slaughtering]. However, it literally means “bringing” [the blood to the altar]. [Consequently,] we learn that both these procedures are the duties of Aaron’s descendants [i.e., the kohanim].-[Chag. 11a]

**Aaron’s descendants** One might think [that these duties may be performed as well by Aaron’s descendants who are] וְהַלְלִים, kohanim whose lineage invalidates them for kehunah [e.g., if the mother was divorced before marrying the kohen]. Scripture therefore adds: “the kohanim ” [indicating that these duties may be performed only by kohanim].-[Torath Kohanim 1:38]

**[The kohamin, shall bring] the blood, and dash the blood** Why does Scripture say, “blood, blood” here twice? To include [the cases of blood from a burnt offering,] that was mixed up with the same type [of blood, i.e., the blood of burnt offerings from two different people being mixed up, and [blood from a burnt offering] that was mixed up with a different type [of blood, i.e., from another type of sacrifice]. One might think that this would also include [the case that the blood was mixed up with blood of] an unfit sacrifice, or [blood from] inner sin offerings [the blood of which is to be sprinkled on the inner altar] or [blood from] outer sin offerings [the blood of which is to be sprinkled on the outer altar] even though [the latter, have their blood dashed] above [the chut hasikra, the red line, of the altar], while this [the burnt offering has its blood dashed] below [the chut hasikra of the altar]. Scripture [therefore] states [regarding a burnt offering] in another place: “its blood” (verses 11 and 15). [This expression teaches us that only cases in which the blood of a burnt offering is mixed up with the blood of another sacrifice which is also to be dashed below the chut hasikra on the altar, no problems arise, and these bloods can both be dashed at that level of the altar. This excludes the case of inner sin offerings whose blood is sprinkled inside and outer sin offerings whose blood must be dashed above the chut hasikra].-[Torath Kohanim 1:39]

**And [...the kohanim,shall...] dash [the blood...around]**-[The kohen] must stand below [i. e., on the ground], and dash [the blood] from the vessel [in which it was received] onto the wall of the altar below the chut hasikra, towards the corners [of the altar. Meaning, from the ground he approaches the northeastern corner of the altar and dashes some of the blood from its receptacle onto the corner ridge where the northern wall and the eastern wall of the altar meet, below the red line. In this way, the blood dashes onto both the northern and eastern sides of the altar with one motion by the kohen. That motion is thus referred to as “one application (of blood) which is two,” i.e., one dashing motion, which applies the blood to two faces of the altar. The kohen then proceeds to the southwestern corner of the altar and again performs this procedure, thereby applying the blood to both the southern and western walls of the altar in one motion. Thus, in a total of two dashing motions, the blood has been applied to the four faces of the altar. These dashes are referred to as “two applications (of blood) which are four.”] Therefore, it says “around,” namely that [with these prescribed dashing motions] the blood is to be applied to the four sides of the altar. Now, one might think that [when the verse says that the kohen must dash the blood around the altar, this means that] he must encircle it [the altar with blood] like a thread. Scripture therefore says: “[the kohanim] shall...dash [the blood],” and it is impossible to apply it [as a continuous line] around the altar through a “dashing” motion. Alternatively, one might think that “shall...dash” refers to one dashing motion. Scripture therefore says: “around” [and it is impossible to apply the blood all around the altar with one dashing motion]. How then [should the blood be applied to the altar]? The kohen must make “two applications, which are four.”-[Torath Kohanim 1:40]

**[the altar] which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting** But not when [the Tent of Meeting] is disassembled [even though the altar itself may be standing, since at such a time the altar is not “at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting”].-[Torath Kohanim

**6. And he shall skin [the burnt offering]** Why does the verse say “the burnt offering” ? To include every [kind of] burnt offering [not just this one in the procedure of] skinning and cutting up [in the prescribed manner].-[Torath Kohanim 1:45]

**its [prescribed] sections** [The verse does not state that the animal is cut into pieces, but rather “into its pieces,” implying that it must be cut into specific prescribed pieces] and not [to cut] its [prescribed] pieces into [smaller] pieces.-[Torath Kohanim 1:47; Chul. 11a].

**7. shall place fire [on the altar]** Even though the fire descended [miraculously] from heaven [onto the altar, to consume the sacrifices], it was [nevertheless] a mitzvah for a mortal to bring [his fire to the altar].-[Torath Kohanim 1:49; Zev. 18a]

**the descendants of Aaron the Kohen** [But we know that Aaron was a Kohen Gadol ! So what does “the Kohen ” come to teach us? It teaches us that the Kohen Gadol may perform the sacrificial service only] when he is [invested] in his kehunah [i.e., wearing the proper eight garments of the Kohen Gadol]. If, however, he officiated wearing the raiment of an ordinary

**8 Aaron’s descendants, the kohanim** [But we know that Aaron’s descendants are kohanim ! So what does “the kohanim ” come to teach us?] The [ordinary] kohanim must be functioning in their kehunah [i.e., the proper four garments of the ordinary kohanim]. If an ordinary kohen officiated wearing the “eight garments” [of a Kohen Gadol], however, his service is rendered invalid.

**the pieces, the head** Since the head is not included in the skinning and cutting up [procedures], since it was detached by the slaughtering, the Torah had to count it individually [to inform us that it was to be placed on the altar as it is, even though it is not skinned.] -[Chul. 27a]

**and the fat** Why is [the fat] mentioned [separately]? To teach you that the kohen must bring it up [onto the altar together] with the head, and that with it he covers the area where [the animal] was slaughtered. This was done in deference to the honor of God on high [because the cut throat is soiled with the blood of the head] (Rashi, Yoma 26a). -[Chul. 27a]

**[the wood] which is on the altar** The logs of wood must not project beyond the [area of the arranged] woodpile [constituting one square cubit. This is so that the kohanim would not be disturbed by protruding pieces of wood when they go around the altar].-[Torath Kohanim 1:54]

**9 as a burnt offering** [I.e., the kohen] must burn the animal with the [specific] intention that it is a burnt offering.-[Torath Kohanim 1:58]

**a fire offering** Heb. אֶשֶׁל. When he slaughters [the animal], he must slaughter it with the [specific] intention [to burn it completely in] fire. Every [instance of the word] אֶשֶׁל in Scripture, is an expression related to [the word] אֶשׁ, “fire,” foyere in Old French.

**pleasing** Heb. נִחוּם [This word stems from the same root as the expression נָחַת נְחִי, “contentment.” God says: “This sacrifice] gives Me contentment, for I said [My commandment], and My will was fulfilled!”

**10 And if...from the flock** The “vav” [meaning “and” here demonstrates that this section concerning voluntary burnt offerings from the flock] is a continuation from the previous subject [those from cattle, and is thereby

connected in that the laws of each are common to both]. But why was it separated [by a paragraph]? In order to give Moses a pause, so that he could contemplate between one passage and the next.-[Torath Kohanim 1:59]

**from the flock...from sheep...from goats** [The word “from” tells us that one cannot take all the animals of these classes, rather only “from” them, thereby disqualifying certain animals from being brought for a sacrifice.] These [three mentions of the word “from”] are three exclusions [from being offered as a sacrifice], excluding an aged [animal], a sick [animal] and a foul smelling [animal].-[Torath Kohanim 1: 60]

**11 on the...side of the altar** Heb. **עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ**, “on the...side of the altar.”

**[And he shall slaughter it] on the northern [side of the altar], before the Lord** [The law of] slaughtering on the northern side does not apply [when sacrificing an animal] on a high place [See above on verse 4].-[Torath Kohanim 1:27] [We learn this from this verse that a burnt offering must be slaughtered “on the northern side of the altar” only if it is “before the Lord,” i.e., in the sanctuary precincts, but not outside them.]

**14 from birds** But not all birds. Since it is stated: “an unblemished male, from cattle, from sheep, or from goats” (Lev. 22:19), [denoting that the requirement of] perfection and maleness apply [only] to animals, but [the requirement of] perfection and maleness does not apply to birds. One might think that even a bird that lacks a limb [may be brought for this offering]. Scripture, therefore, says [here]: “from birds” [but not all birds, excluding a bird lacking a limb].-[Torath Kohanim 1:71]

**turtle-doves** [Because the verse specifies “young” doves, whereas it simply says “turtle-doves” without stating “young,” it must refer to] adult ones [only that may be offered], and not young ones.

**young doves** young ones [only may be offered], and not adult ones. -[Torath Kohanim 1:74]

**from turtle- doves or from young doves** [The word “from” occurring twice in this verse comes] to exclude [birds] whose feathers have just begun to become reddish in both species, that they are unfit [for sacrifice], for they are too old to be qualified as “young doves,” and they are too young to be qualified as [adult] “turtle-doves.”-[Torath Kohanim 1:75].

**15 shall bring it** One may bring even a single bird. -[Torath Kohanim 1:77] **the** kohen shall ...

**nip off** The nipping [of the bird’s head] must not be done with anything but with the body of kohen. He would cut with his [thumb]nail adjacent to the back of the head, cutting right through its spine, until he reached the simanim [literally, “the signs”; in the context of slaughtering, this refers to the esophagus (gullet) and the trachea (wind-pipe)], and cuts through them [see Rashi on Lev. 5:8].

**and its [the bird’s] blood shall be pressed out** [The word **מִצָּחָה**] an expression similar to “the pressing out (מִצָּחָה) of wrath” (Prov. 30:33); and, “for the milking (מִצָּחָה) has come to an end” (Isa. 16:4). He presses the slaughtering area [of the bird’s neck] against the wall of the altar, and thereby, the blood is pressed out and runs down [the wall].

**and cut...and cause it to go up in smoke...shall be pressed out** [According to the sequence of these terms, one would think that Scripture is commanding the kohen to first cut the bird’s neck, send the bird up in smoke, and only then to press out its blood. But] is it possible to suggest this? Since [the kohen] has already caused the bird to go up in smoke, he presses its blood out? Rather, [the meaning is clearly not so, and the procedure of causing the bird to go up in smoke appears in the verse after that of nipping off the head, to teach us that] just as with the procedure of causing it to go up in smoke, the bird’s head [is smoked] separately and its body separately, so is it with the procedure of nipping [the bird’s head, i.e., the head is cut at the neck, to become virtually separate from its body-even though it is still attached to the body by the skin] (Torath Kohanim 1:81). According to the simple meaning of the verse, it is transposed [and is to be understood as]: and nip off its head, and cause it to [go up in]

smoke on the altar, and its [the bird's] blood shall already have been pressed out.

**16 its crop** Heb. מְרֵאָתוֹ, the place of the רָעִי, the digested food or waste, i.e., the crop, [known in the Talmud as קֶפֶץ The word מְרֵאָתוֹ stems from רָעִי, which is equivalent to רָעִי, since an “aleph” is sometimes interchangeable with an “ayin.”]-[Torath Kohanim 1:84]

**with its entrails** Heb. בְּנִצָּתָהּ, with its entrails (Zev. 64b). The word נִצָּה denotes something disgusting, as [in the verse], “for they are foul (נִצָּה), even slipping” (Lam. 4:15). And this is what Onkelos means [when he translates this word as]: בְּאֹכְלֶיהָ, “with its digested food” [i.e., the excrement found in its entrails]. This is the explanation given by Abba Yose ben Hanan, who states: The kohen removes the gizzard with it. But our Rabbis, of blessed memory, [understanding נִצָּה to mean “feathers,”] explain [the verse as follows]: With a knife, he cuts an opening around the crop, like a window, and takes it [together] with the feathers (נִצָּה) that are on the skin (Zev. 65a). In the case of the burnt offering of an animal, which eats exclusively from the feeding trough of its owner, it says, “And the innards and the legs, he shall wash with water. . . . and cause it to [go up in] smoke [on the altar]” (verse 13). However, regarding birds, which feed themselves on things stolen [from other people's property], the verse says here, “And he shall [remove its crop]...and cast” the entrails, which ate from stolen property.-[Vayikra Rabbah 3:4]

**next to the altar on the east side** At the eastern side of the שַׁבָּת [the ramp leading up to the altar].-[Torath Kohanim 1:86]

**to the place of the ashes** I.e., the place where each morning they deposit the ashes removed [from the outer altar], and the ashes removed from the inner altar and the menorah. All these were [miraculously] absorbed there in their place.-[Yoma 21a].

**17 And he shall split it open** Heb. וַיִּפְּשֵׁהוּ. The term וַיִּפְּשֵׁהוּ refers only to [splitting open] with the hand. Similarly, [Scripture] says regarding Samson: “and he split it open (וַיִּפְּשֵׁהוּ) as he would have split open (וַיִּפְּשֵׁהוּ) a kid” (Jud. 14:6). -[Zev. 65b]

**with its wing feathers** [I.e.,] with its wings; he need not pluck out its wing feathers.

**with its wing feathers** [Lit., “its wings.” Here, it refers to] the actual feathers [of its wings]. But surely you will not find even the simplest of people [i.e., even a person who is not particular,] who, when smelling the odor of burnt feathers, does not find it repulsive. Why then does Scripture command us to send [the feathers] up in smoke? [The feathers are left intact] so that the altar should appear sated and adorned with the sacrifice of the poor man [who could afford only a bird].-[Vayikra Rabbah 3:5]

**but he shall not tear it completely apart** [Although the kohen splits open the bird,] he must not tear it apart completely into two [separate] pieces. Rather, he must tear it along its back. Now, regarding a bird [offering], it says here: “a pleasing fragrance [to the Lord],” and regarding animals, it says, “a pleasing fragrance [to the Lord]” (verse 9) [as well. From here we see that both in the case of a large animal or a small bird, the fragrance is pleasing to God]. This teaches us: Whether one offers much or little, [it is equally pleasing to God,] provided that he directs his heart to Heaven.-[Torath Kohanim 1:91]

## Chapter 2

**1 And if a person brings** [literally, “And if a soul brings.”] Regarding all the sacrifices which were donated voluntarily, the only instance where Scripture states the word נֶפֶשׁ “soul” is in the case of the meal-offering. Now, who usually donates a meal-offering? A poor man [because flour is less expensive than birds or animals]. [Hence,] the Holy One Blessed is He, says: “I account if for him as if he has sacrificed his very soul!”-[Men. 104b]

**his offering shall be from fine flour** If a person says, "I hereby take upon myself to bring a meal-offering," without specifying which type of meal-offering, then he shall bring מִנְחַת סֶלֶת, a meal-offering of fine flour, which is the first of the meal-offerings [mentioned in this chapter] (Men. 104b), and קִמְצָה [fistful of the offering] is scooped out while it is [still in the form of] flour, as is explained in this passage. Since five kinds of meal-offerings are enumerated here, all of which had to be brought ready-baked before the קְמִיצָה [scooping took place], with the exception of this one, it is, therefore, called מִנְחַת סֶלֶת, "a meal-offering of fine flour."

**fine flour - סֶלֶת.** [The term] סֶלֶת always denotes [fine flour of] wheat, as the verse says, "fine flour (סֶלֶת) of wheat" (Exod. 29:2). -[Torath Kohanim 2:96] No meal-offering consists of less than one עֲשָׂרוֹן ["one tenth" of an ephah of flour], as it is said, "one tenth measure for a meal-offering (עֲשָׂרוֹן)" (Lev.14:21), [implying that] one tenth measure [shall be used] for each meal-offering.-[see Men. 89a]

**He shall pour oil over it** Over all of it. [However,]

**and place frankincense upon it** Upon part of it; the kohen places a fistful of frankincense upon it at one side [of the offering]. Now what makes you say this? Because an inclusion after an inclusion in the Torah means only to exclude. [Now, here, the expression עָלֶיהָ, upon it or over it, is inclusive in nature, for its assumed meaning is "upon all of it," i.e., the kohen shall pour the oil over all of the offering. In the continuation of the verse, "and place frankincense upon it (עָלֶיהָ)," however, the second mention of the word עָלֶיהָ represents a רְבֹוּי after a רְבֹוּי, and so, the second עָלֶיהָ becomes preclusive, meaning that the frankincense is to be placed only upon part of the offering.] Another explanation: Oil [is poured] over all of it, because it [the oil] has to be mixed with it and scooped with it, as it is said, "[scoop out a fistful] from its fine flour and its oil." However, the frankincense because it is neither mixed nor scooped with it, as it is said, "in addition to] all its frankincense" (verse 2), for, after he has completed the קְמִיצָה procedure, he collects all the frankincense from the meal-offering and makes it go up in smoke.-[Torath Kohanim 2:98] **He shall pour [oil]...and place [frankincense] ...and he shall bring [it to...the kohanim]** -[Because Scripture mentions the "pouring" of the oil before the individual "brings" it to the kohanim,] this teaches [us] that pouring and mixing may be performed [even] by a non- kohen. [And how do we know this concerning the mixing? Because in verses 5-6 below, Scripture states of a meal-offering, "mixed with oil," before the pouring procedure is to take place, thus, if pouring may be performed by a non- kohen, then mixing, which precedes pouring, may surely be performed by a non- kohen]

**2 [And he shall bring it to...] the kohanim, and he [the kohen] shall scoop out** From the קְמִיצָה scooping procedure and onwards, it is exclusively the priesthood who is commanded [to perform these remaining procedures].- [Torath Kohanim 2:100]

**And from there, he [the kohen] shall scoop out** [From where?] From the place where the feet of the non- kohen were standing.- [Torath Kohanim 2:104] This teaches us that scooping may be performed any place within the courtyard of the Holy Temple, even within the eleven cubits [span of courtyard grounds] in which ordinary Israelites [i.e., non- kohanim were permitted] to walk.-[Yoma 16b]

**his fistful** One might think [that the fistful may be] full to overflowing, bursting through his fist and coming out on every side! Scripture, therefore, states in another passage, "And from it, he shall lift up in his fist" (Lev. 6:8), [i.e., only what is contained within his fist is valid to be burnt]. But since [we now know that the amount shall be only] what is contained within his fist, one might suggest that it means less than a fistful. Scripture, therefore, states here, מְלֵא, "full" [i.e., it shall be a full fist]. How then [does the kohen scoop out exactly a fistful, not more and not less]? He covers the palm of his hand with his three fingers, [and then, with the remaining thumb from above and little finger from below, he levels off any overflowing mixture, so that exactly a full measure of "three fingers" is attained].-[Torath Kohanim 2:105; Men. 11a] This is the definition of קִמְצָה, a "fistful" in the Hebrew language [while in other languages, a "fistful" of something might mean four fingers full of something].

**in addition to all its frankincense** In addition to all the frankincense, the fist shall be full.



**its frankincense. Then, [the kohen] shall cause...to [go up in] smoke-** The frankincense is also to be burnt.- [Torath Kohanim 2:107]

**his fistful of its fine flour and its oil** but if he scooped, and a grain of salt or a particle of frankincense went up into his hand, it is unfit. -[Torath Kohanim 2:107]

**its reminder** The fistful offered up to the Most High [God], is the “reminder” of the meal-offering, because through it, its owner [who brought that sacrifice] is remembered for the good, [causing G-d] contentment.

**3 to Aaron and his descendants** The Kohen Gadol [signified by “Aaron” here,] takes a portion [of what remains of the meal-offering] first, without having to take part in the equal division of the meal offering, while [after this,] the ordinary kohen [signified by “and his descendants” here,] takes his share in the equal division of the meal-offering.-[Torath Kohanim 2:112]

**[it is] holy of holies** for the Kohanim.

**from the fire-offerings of the Lord** They may take their share in it only after the offerings to the fire [i.e., only after the fistful has been scooped out and burnt, thereby becoming a fire-offering to God. Before this, however, they may not partake of the meal-offering].-[Torath Kohanim 2: 113]

**4 And if you bring [a meal-offering which was baked in an oven]** [Namely: If a person] said, “I hereby take upon myself to bring a meal-offering baked in an oven.” Scripture teaches [us] that he may bring either loaves or wafers.- [Torath Kohanim 2:115] The loaves are to be mixed up (בְּלוּלָה) [with olive oil], while the wafers are to be anointed (מְשֻׁחִים) [with olive oil].-[Torath Kohanim 2: 117; Men. 74b] Now, our Rabbis (Men. 75a) differ regarding the anointing procedure (מְשִׁיחָה) [for the wafers]: Some say that one must anoint them and again anoint them until all the oil in the log [a volume of liquid] has been used up, for all meal-offerings require one log of oil [each]. Others say that [some of] the oil was smeared [on the wafer] in the form of a Greek “chi” [shaped like the Hebrew כּ, see Rashi Exod. 29:2], while the remaining oil was eaten separately by the kohanim. [Now, the verse here says, “mixed with oil...anointed with oil.”] What does the repetition of the word “oil” come to teach us? [It teaches us that for meal-offerings, oil used need not be only from the initial extract from the olives, but] may also be from the second and third extract out of the olives. The only case where the initial extract of oil is required, is the menorah, because regarding it, Scripture says (Exod. 27:20), שֶׁמֶן זַיִת זָךְ, “clear olive oil.”-[Torath Kohanim 2:118] And we learned in Men. (76a): All meal-offerings baked before the קְמִיצָה [scooping out] procedure, and consequently whose קְמִיצָה is performed by breaking the offering into pieces (see verse 6), all shall be offered in [parcels of] ten loaves [regarding those about which Scripture says חֲלוֹת, “loaves,” and parcels of] ten wafers, for those offerings about which Scripture says רִקְקִי, “wafers.”

**5 And if a meal-offering on a pan [is your sacrifice] - מְנַחֵה עַל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ** Namely: If one said, “I hereby take upon myself to bring מְנַחֵת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ, a pan- fried meal offering.” [מְנַחֵחַ] was a vessel in the Holy Temple, in which [certain] meal-offerings were baked in oil upon the fire. This vessel is not deep, but shallow. And therefore, meal-offerings made in it were hard, for since the pan was shallow, [the oil spread thin and consequently,] the fire consumed the oil [causing the product to become hard].-[Men. 63a] And all [meal-offerings] require three applications of oil: יִצְיָקָה [pouring], בְּלִילָה [mixing] and placing oil in the vessel before their preparation.-[Torath Kohanim 2:121, Men. 75a]

**fine flour, mixed with oil** [This] teaches [us] that he must mix them while they are [still] fine flour [and not mixing the oil with the already-fried cakes].-[Torath Kohanim 2: 122]

**6 Break it into pieces, [...It is a meal-offering]** [The clause at the end of this verse, “It is a meal-offering,” appears superfluous. However, it] comes to include all meal-offerings baked before the קְמִיצָה procedure, to [have their קְמִיצָה performed by] בְּתִיתָה, breaking them into pieces.-[Men. 75a]

**and you shall [then] pour oil over it. It is a meal-offering** This includes all meal-offerings for **וַיִּצִיקָהּ**, “pouring of the oil.” One might think that this applies also to a meal-offering baked in an oven. Scripture, therefore, says, “[You shall then pour oil] **עָלֶיהָ**, over it,” [but not over that baked in an oven.] Perhaps we should exclude **תְּלוֹת**, loaves [of oven-baked meal-offerings only], while not excluding the **וַרְקִיקִין** wafers [of oven baked meal-offerings]? Scripture, therefore, says, **הִיא** [i. e., “It,” to have both cases of loaves and wafers of an oven-baked meal-offering excluded from **וַיִּצִיקָהּ**].-[Men. 75a].

**7 [made] in a deep pot - מְרֻקֶשֶׁת**. This was a deep vessel in the Temple. And since it was deep, its oil gathered together, and the fire did not burn it. Consequently, meal-offerings made in it, vibrate (**רוֹחֲשִׁין**) (Torath Kohanim 2:127), [as] anything which has become softened through a liquid, [like in the case of deep-frying **מְנַחֵת מְרֻקֶשֶׁת** appears to vibrate (**רוֹחֲשִׁשׁ**) and wiggle.

**8 which shall be made from these [types]** [literally, “which shall be made from these,” meaning a meal-offering] which shall be made from one of these types [of meal-offerings mentioned, namely, fine flour baked in an oven, pan-fried or that made in a deep pot].

**And he shall bring it** i.e., its owner [shall bring it] to the kohen.

**and he shall bring it close** [I.e.,] the kohen [shall bring it close].

**to the altar** He shall bring it close to the south-western corner of the altar.-[

**9 its reminder** This is **קִמְצֵי**, [the fistful scooped out of the meal-offering].

**11 or any honey** Any sweet fruit extract is called honey.

**12 [However,] you shall bring them as a first [fruit] offering** What can you bring from leaven and honey? A first [fruit] offering, namely, a) the **שְׁתֵּי הַלֶּקֶחַ**, the two loaves [of bread] brought on Shavuoth, which come from leaven, as it is said: “they shall be baked leavened” (Lev. 23:17), and b) The **בְּכוֹרִים**, “first fruits” which [contain] **דְּבַשׁ**, honey, e.g., the first fruits of figs and dates.-[Men. 58a]

**13 the salt of [your God’s] covenant** for there was a covenant made with salt since the six days of Creation, in that the lower waters were promised that they would be offered on the altar. [And how were they offered? In the form of] salt [which comes from water,] and in the water libations on the Festival [of Succoth].

**[You shall offer salt] on all your sacrifices** [including] burnt-offerings from animals and birds, and the **אֵימורים**, the portions of the sacrifices offered up on the altar, from all holy sacrifices.-[Men. 20a]

**14 When you bring** Heb. **וְאָם תִּקְרִיב** Now, the word **אָם** [here] has the meaning of **כִּי**, “when,” because this is not optional, for Scripture is referring to the **הַעֹמֶר מְנַחֵת** [the omer meal-offering, a community sacrifice brought on the sixteenth of Nissan,] which is obligatory. [Thus, the verse reads: “When you bring...”]- [Torath Kohanim 2:148] Likewise, “And when (**וְאָם**) the Jubilee...will be” (Num. 36:4), [and not “if the Jubilee...will be”].

**a meal offering of the first grains** Scripture is referring here to the **מְנַחֵת הַעֹמֶר**, the “omer meal-offering,” which is to be offered **אֲבִיב**, meaning, as soon as the grain has ripened, and it comes from barley. [And how do we know that it comes from barley?] For here in our verse, it says, **אֲבִיב**, and in an earlier verse, it says (Exod. 9:31), **כִּי הִשְׁעֵרָה אֲבִיב**, “for the barley was ripened (**אֲבִיב**)”.-[Torath Kohanim 2:149; Men. 68b]

**parched over the fire** For they dry the grain over a fire, in a roasting pipe [Rashi explains in Tractate Men., **אֲבִיב** refers to a vessel used by those selling roasted seeds].-[Torath Kohanim 2:150] [And they had to do this to the grain,] for otherwise, it could not be ground up, because it is moist.

**kernels full in their husks, [ground into] coarse meal** Heb. גָּרַשׁ כְּרָמֶל “Broken up while still moist (כְּרָמֶל).”

**coarse meal** Heb. גָּרַשׁ, an expression denoting breaking up or grinding with grit millstones, and likewise, “Indeed, He has made [my teeth] grind (וַיִּגְרֹס) on gravel” (Lam. 3: 16), and similarly in the verse, “My soul is crushed (גָּרְסָה)” (Ps. 119:20).

**full in their husks** Heb. כְּרָמֶל, [an acronym of כָּר, husk, and מְלֵא, full. Thus, it means: The grain is ground up] while the husk (כָּר) is still full (מְלֵא) (Men. 66b), i.e., when the produce is still fresh and full in its stalks; hence, fresh ears of grain are called כְּרָמֶל, and similarly, “and sheaves of fresh grain (כְּרָמֶל) in their shells” (II Kings 4: 42).

### Chapter 3

**1 peace-offering** Heb. שְׁלָמִים. [So named] because they instill peace (שְׁלוֹם) in the world. Another explanation: [They are called שְׁלָמִים because they bring about harmony (שְׁלוֹם), [since some portions of the sacrifice go] to the altar, to the Kohanim and to the owner [of the sacrifice].-[Torath Kohanim 3:156].

**3 and all the fat** [This expression] comes to include the fat that is on the maw [the lowest stomach and all the more so, the fat upon the intestines]: These are the words of Rabbi Ishmael. Rabbi Akiva, however, says: [It comes to include only] the fat upon the intestines.-[Torath Kohanim 3:168, Chul. 49].

**4 the flanks** Heb. הַקְּסָלִים, flancs in Old French. For, in the case of a live animal, the fat that is on the kidneys, is situated at the height of the flanks, and they [the flanks] are situated below. This is the fat beneath the loins, which is called lonbels in Old French, the white fat visible above, upon the height of the flanks, while on the lower part of the flanks, [this fat is not visible, because] the flesh covers it.- [Chul. 93a, and Rashi there]

**the diaphragm** This is the dividing wall [separating the thoracic cavity (breathing organs) from the abdominal cavity (organs of digestion)], which is called ebes in Old French. In the Aramaic language it is called חֲצָרָא דְּכַבְדָּא, the yard of the liver.

**with the liver** Along with the diaphragm [which covers the liver], he must take a small amount of the liver. [The fact that some of the liver must be taken is illustrated] in another verse, where [regarding the same matter], Scripture says (Lev. 9:10), וְאֵת הַיִּתְּרֵת מִן הַכֶּבֶד, “and the diaphragm from the liver”.-[Torath Kohanim 3:172]

**the liver along with the kidneys** - על הכֶּבֶד על הקְלִיֹּת. In addition to the liver and in addition to the kidneys, he shall remove this.

**5 In addition to the burnt offering** Heb. על העֶלָּה, in addition to the burnt-offering. [From here,] we learn that the daily burnt-offering precedes any other sacrifice upon the woodpile [of the altar].

**7 If [he brings] a sheep** Since among the sacrificial portions of the sheep there is something that is not among the sacrificial portions of the goat, namely that the tail of a sheep is offered up [on the altar], these two [namely sheep and goats] were divided into two sections.-[Torath Kohanim 3:185].

**8 And [Aaron’s descendants] shall dash [its blood]** Two applications [of blood were required], which were [counted as] four (see Rashi above, Lev. 1:5). The Kohen must dash [the blood] by means of a vessel. He does not apply [the blood] with his finger except [in the case of] a sin-offering.-[Zev. 53b].

**9 the choicest part** Heb. חֵלְבֹו. [Usually, its fat. Here it means] its choicest part. And what is this? The complete tail.

**opposite the kidneys** Heb. הַקְּעָצָה, above the kidneys, which give counsel (הַיּוֹעֲצוֹת).

**11 as food for the fire, to the Lord** Food for the fire, in the Name of the most High [God].

**food** Heb. **סֶלֶף**, an expression meaning food [in general, not only bread]. Similarly, we find in the verse, “Let us destroy his food (סֶלֶף) with wood” (Jer. 11:19); and, “made a great feast (סֶלֶף)” (Dan. 5:1), and, “On joyous occasions, a feast (סֶלֶף) is made” (Eccl. 10:19).

**17 [This is] an eternal statute** This entire verse is explained very clearly in Torath Kohanim (3:189).

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## Welcome to the World of Remes Exegesis

Thirteen rules compiled by Rabbi [Ishmael b. Elisha](#) for the elucidation of the Torah and for making halakhic deductions from it. They are, strictly speaking, mere amplifications of the seven [Rules of Hillel](#), and are collected in the [Baraita of R. Ishmael](#), forming the introduction to the Sifra and reading as follows:

**Kal wa-homer:** Identical with the first rule of Hillel.

**Gezerah shawah:** Identical with the second rule of Hillel.

**Binyan ab:** Rules deduced from a single passage of Scripture and rules deduced from two passages. This rule is a combination of the third and fourth rules of Hillel.

**Kelal u-Perat:** The general and the particular.

**u-Perat u-kelal:** The particular and the general.

**Kelal u-Perat u-kelal:** The general, the particular, and the general.

**The general** which requires elucidation by the particular, and the particular which requires elucidation by the general.

**The particular** implied in the general and excepted from it for pedagogic purposes elucidates the general as well as the particular.

**The particular implied in the general** and excepted from it on account of the special regulation which corresponds in concept to the general, is thus isolated to decrease rather than to increase the rigidity of its application.

**The particular implied in the general** and excepted from it on account of some other special regulation which does not correspond in concept to the general, is thus isolated either to decrease or to increase the rigidity of its application.

**The particular implied in the general** and excepted from it on account of a new and reversed decision can be referred to the general only in case the passage under consideration makes an explicit reference to it.

**Deduction from the context.**

**When two Biblical passages contradict each other** the contradiction in question must be solved by reference to a third passage.

Rules seven to eleven are formed by a subdivision of the fifth rule of Hillel; rule twelve corresponds to the seventh rule of Hillel, but is amplified in certain particulars; rule thirteen does not occur in Hillel, while, on the other hand, the sixth rule of R. Hillel is omitted by R. Ishmael. These rules are found also on the morning prayers of any Jewish Orthodox Siddur together with a brief explanation for each one of them.

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## Ramban's Commentary for: Vayiqra (Leviticus) 1:1 – 3:17

**1:1. AND HE CALLED UNTO MOSES; AND THE ETERNAL SPOKE UNTO HIM.** Scripture states [the fact that G-d called to Moses] here and not in other places, because *Moses was not able to enter into the Tent of Meeting*,<sup>1</sup> and to draw near the place *where G-d was*,<sup>2</sup> except through G-d calling him [to come into the Tent of Meeting]. For Moses had already been told, *and I will speak with you from above the ark-cover*,<sup>3</sup> *where I will meet with you*.<sup>4</sup> Since he knew that *the Eternal that sits upon the cherubim*<sup>5</sup> was there, Moses was afraid to come into the Tent at all until He called him, just as it was at Mount Sinai where it is said, *and on the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud*.<sup>6</sup> Or it may be that Moses did not know that the Glory of G-d was in the Tent and that the communication to him would be from there,<sup>7</sup> since the cloud did not cover the Tent of Meeting until the eighth day of the installation according to the opinion of our Rabbis;<sup>8</sup> and after this call Moses came into the innermost part of the Tent [i.e., the Holy of Holies], just as the Rabbis have interpreted:<sup>9</sup> "Aaron was not to enter [the Sanctuary except at the prescribed time], but Moses was not included in this command." This is the plain meaning of this verse. I have explained it already above.<sup>10</sup>

But our Rabbis have said<sup>11</sup> that "all communications [that came to Moses], whether they are introduced by the word *daber* (speak), or by *emor* (say), or *tzav* (command), were preceded by a call," that is to say, G-d said to him, '*Moses, Moses*' and he answered, '*Here am I*.'<sup>12</sup> This was a way of expressing affection and encouragement to Moses.<sup>13</sup> Now according to this opinion, Scripture mentioned the expression [*And He called unto him . . .*] here, because it was the first communication

communication that came to Moses from the Tent of Meeting, thus teaching us concerning all the other communications that such was His procedure with him all the time and with the whole Torah. The expression *out of the Tent of Meeting* refers according to the Rabbis to the preceding words, [the interpretation of the verse thus being]: "and He called unto him out of the Tent of Meeting; and the Eternal spoke to him in the Tent," for Moses was already there [in the Tent].<sup>14</sup> The explanation of the verse according to its plain meaning and sense is: "and the Eternal called unto Moses and spoke unto him, out of the Tent of Meeting."

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<sup>1</sup> Exodus 40:35.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 20:18.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 25:22.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 30:36.

<sup>5</sup> I Chronicles 13:6.

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 24:16.

<sup>7</sup> For Moses thought that he would hear the Divine Voice speaking to him from above the ark-cover, but actually the Holy One, blessed be He, would be speaking from heaven (Abohab). See also Ramban on Exodus 40:2, Vol. II, p. 619.

<sup>8</sup> "*And it came to pass, on the eighth day . . .* (Further 9:1). This was the first of Nisan, and the day was distinguished in ten different ways . . . It was the day on which the Divine Glory dwelt for the first time among the Israelites . . ." (Torath Kohanim, *ibid.*).

<sup>9</sup> Torath Kohanim at the beginning of Parshath Acharei, (further, 16:2): "*Your brother [Aaron] is under the command not to enter the holy place [except when it was his duty to officiate there]*, (further 16:2), but Moses is not included in this command."

<sup>10</sup> Exodus 40:34.

<sup>11</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 1:7.

<sup>12</sup> Exodus 3:4.

<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, the call to Moses that is mentioned at the beginning of this book was not for the purpose of giving him permission to come into the Tent of Meeting, but rather to express G-d's affection for Moses and His inspiring him for the communication. If so, it stands to reason, Ramban continues, that this kind of call ["Moses, Moses"] came to him on all occasions when he received a Divine communication. The reason why it is mentioned specifically here, etc. (see text).

By way of the Truth, [the mystic teachings of the Cabala], this verse is like, *And unto Moses He said: 'Come up unto the Eternal.'*<sup>14</sup> Its secret is known from the Revelation on Mount Sinai<sup>15</sup> and the Ten Commandments. I have alluded to it already.<sup>16</sup>

**2. WHEN ANY MAN BRINGS OF YOU AN OFFERING UNTO THE ETERNAL OF THE CATTLE.** The meaning of this verse is as follows: "when any man of you brings from the cattle an offering to the Eternal, of the herd or of the flock you will bring it." The reason for this command is that since He commanded afterwards concerning fowl-offerings<sup>17</sup> and meal-offerings,<sup>18</sup> He said here that when a man brings an offering of cattle, he must bring it of one of these two kinds [herd and flock], but not a wild beast nor any other cattle. Thus he who offers a beast [as an offering to G-d], violates a prohibition which is derived from a positive commandment [and carries the force of a positive commandment], just as the Rabbis have said in the third chapter of Tractate Zebachim:<sup>19</sup> "Rabbi Yochanan said: one who offers the limbs of a [kosher] beast [upon the altar of G-d] transgresses a positive commandment."

**"TAKRIVU' (YOU WILL BRING).** This teaches that two [or more] persons may bring a freewill burnt-offering in partnership. **YOUR OFFERING.** This teaches that a burnt-offering may be brought as a freewill offering of the [entire] public [not only of groups of individuals]. This refers to the burnt-offering of the altar's summertime<sup>20</sup> which was supplied from the surplus [of the half-shekels of the past year]." This is Rashi's language.

The meaning of the Rabbi's interpretation is thus to state that if many persons voluntarily offer to bring a burnt-offering, it thereby becomes a burnt-offering of partners, for what difference is there between two persons who combine to bring an offering, and ten or a thousand who associate to do so? But the burnt-offering for the altar's summer-time which is supplied from the surplus [of the previous year's half-shekels], is deemed a "burnt-offering of the public" because the authorities [of the Sanctuary who receive the donations for the offerings] do so with the implied condition [that they may spend them at their discretion, and the burnt-offering of the public is distinguished in certain respects from a burnt-offering of partners]. Thus according to Rashi all burnt-offerings that are brought by many persons — except those which come from the surplus of the half-shekels — have the law of burnt-offerings of partners, and they all require the laying of [their owners'] hands upon the offering,<sup>21</sup> and the libations connected with them<sup>22</sup> are taken from the owners [while "burnt-offerings of the public" need no laying of hands, and the libations are supplied by the Temple treasury]. Perhaps according to the opinion of Rashi it is permitted for the general public to offer [money] beforehand in order to bring a burnt-offering of fowls, which may be brought as a freewill offering by two [or more] persons but may [never] come as a freewill offering of the public, and similarly they [may combine to bring] a peace-offering, concerning which the Sages have said<sup>23</sup> that it may be brought by partners as a freewill offering but may not be brought by the public<sup>24</sup> — and in that case it is called "a burnt-offering of partners," or "a peace-offering of partners." They [i.e., the burnt-offering of fowls and the peace-offering], were only excluded in that they cannot be brought from the [money of the] baskets [containing the surplus of half-shekels which were already donated by the public for the general upkeep of the offerings, and not specifically donated for a burnt-offering or peace-offering].

We may possibly say that if the public wanted originally to set aside a fund for freewill offerings, and they

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<sup>14</sup> For since the purpose of the call was not to give permission to Moses to enter, but rather to show him affection, the sense of the verse may then be explained as follows: "and G-d called him out of the Tent and He spoke to him in the Tent" where he already was.

<sup>15</sup> See Note 17 in Seder Yithro (Vol. II. p. 251).

<sup>16</sup> Exodus 24:1.

<sup>17</sup> Further, Verses 14-17.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., Chapter 2.

<sup>19</sup> Zebachim 34a.

<sup>20</sup> When there was a lack of private offerings [due to the long summer days], freewill burnt-offerings were supplied from the surplus of the half shekels of the previous year.

<sup>21</sup> See Verse 4.

<sup>22</sup> See Numbers 15:3-12.

<sup>23</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 6:6.

<sup>24</sup> Peace-offerings of the public were only brought on the Festival of Shabuoth (see further, 23:19).

collected it [for that purpose] as they collected the *shekalim* for the Daily [public] Offerings and the Additional Offerings [of Sabbaths and festivals], that there may then be a freewill public-offering of the cattle,<sup>25</sup> and it will not require the laying of hands on it, being that it is included in this verse [as a public offering]. As long as it is the majority of Israel who donated money to that end, the offering is called "a freewill offering of the public." [This rule applies only to the freewill burnt-offering of the cattle] but does not apply to the burnt-offering of fowls, nor to the peace-offering. But if a minority of the people donated towards the freewill burnt-offering, [even if they are a large group], they are deemed as individuals [who bring such an offering in partnership, which would thus require the laying on it of the owners' hands, and the libations would have to be supplied by the owners]. This is the correct explanation.

**4. AND HE SHALL LAY HIS HAND.** This means his two hands, for we find it stated: *and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands upon the head of the bullock;*<sup>26</sup> *and Aaron and his sons shall lay their hands upon the head of the ram,*<sup>27</sup> and the Rabbis interpreted it to mean: "the hands of each and every individual."<sup>28</sup> Thus [it is clear that] both hands were required for it. In the case of the goat designed to be sent [to Azazel] it is expressly stated, *And Aaron will lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat.*<sup>29</sup> If so, I do not know why Scripture wrote "**his hand**" [in the singular] in all other cases of the laying of hands. Perhaps it is for the purpose of deriving therefrom what the Rabbis have interpreted:<sup>30</sup> "**His hand** — and not the hand of his proxy." For had it been written "**his hands**" [in the plural we would have interpreted it] to require the laying of both hands, and we would not have been able to exclude the proxy. But now that [we derive from other verses that] both hands must be laid upon the offering, [we must conclude that] He only wrote the singular [indicating the hands of only one person], to exclude a proxy, for although a man's proxy is like the man himself<sup>31</sup> in all other places, we should not consider him so in the case of the laying of hands. In Torath Kohanim we find:<sup>32</sup> "*And Aaron shall lay both his hands.*"<sup>33</sup> **This teaches that the laying of hands upon the offering must be done with both hands, and forms the general rule for all cases of laying of hands, that they be done with both hands."**

**AND IT WILL BE FAVORABLY ACCEPTED FOR HIM TO MAKE ATONEMENT FOR HIM.** "For what kind of sins does [the freewill burnt-offering] effect atonement for the person that brings it?

Should you say, for sins [where punishment if willfully committed] is excision, or any of the [four] deaths imposed by the court, or death by the hands of Heaven, or stripes, the punishment for all these sins is already stated, [and atonement is affected by those punishments, and therefore not by this offering!] You must conclude that [the freewill burnt-offering] effects atonement only for transgression of a positive commandment,<sup>34</sup> and for the violation of a negative commandment that is juxtaposed to a positive commandment."<sup>35</sup> This is Rashi's

<sup>25</sup> In other words, the freewill public burnt-offering for the altar's summertime need not be limited exclusively to that brought out of the surplus in the baskets containing the previous year's shekels. Money may be collected originally from the public for the purpose of bringing a freewill offering, and the offering will have the status of a public-offering in the sense that [like a public burnt-offering] it will not need the laying of hands on it, which is required in the case of an individual offering. Thus Ramban differs from Rashi's opinion above that even the combination of a large group of individuals does not alter the status of the offering, which remains an offering of individual partners. Or it may be that Ramban means that even according to Rashi, if the community agreed beforehand, and the money was not left to be donated individually, but collected in the same way that the shekalim were collected, it thereby gains the status of a public-offering. Hence Ramban's expression: "We may possibly say", i.e., in explanation of Rashi.

<sup>26</sup> Exodus 29:10.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., Verse 15.

<sup>28</sup> I.e., the word "**hands**" does not refer to "Aaron and his sons," thus implying that each lay one hand, but to each individual laying his two hands on the offering. The source of this interpretation is unknown to me.

<sup>29</sup> Further, 16:21.

<sup>30</sup> Menachoth 93b.

<sup>31</sup> Kiddushin 41b.

<sup>32</sup> Torath Kohanim, Acharei 4:4.

<sup>33</sup> Further, 16:21.

<sup>34</sup> The Torah cites no punishment for failure to fulfill a positive commandment [with the two exceptions of not slaughtering the Passover-offering, and not being circumcised]. If a person thus failed to fulfill a positive commandment — such as dwelling in a booth on the Festival of Succoth — his bringing a freewill burnt-offering effects atonement for this sin.

<sup>35</sup> A case in point is the prohibition against taking an entire bird's nest, with the mother-bird and its young (Deuteronomy 22:6). If, however, he did infringe upon the law, he is obliged to observe a positive commandment that the Torah stated next to the prohibition —

language, and it is a Baraitha<sup>36</sup> in Torath Kohanim.<sup>37</sup>

But I wonder! Where is "the punishment" for these sins already stated, since offerings only effect atonement for unwillful violations?<sup>38</sup> Now we could say that [the freewill burnt-offerings] atone for those unwillful sins which the penalty [if committed willfully] is death by the hands of Heaven, or stripes, or any of the [four] deaths imposed by the court, in such cases that do not obligate one to bring a sin-offering,<sup>39</sup> such as smiting one's father or mother, or cursing them,<sup>40</sup> just as the sin-offering atones for the unwillful sins for which the penalty [if committed willfully] is excision. But perhaps it appeared to the Sages that since Scripture expressly states the punishment for both the willful and unwillful commission of sins punishable by death imposed by the hands of the court or by excision, [stating that if committed willfully, the sinner is liable to one of the above punishments, and if committed unwillfully, he must bring a sin-offering], and it further set forth the punishment of those liable to death by the hands of Heaven or stripes for certain sins, if committed willfully, but did not mention in these [last two categories] any punishment if the sins are committed unwillfully — therefore it appeared [to the Sages] that Scripture had completely set forth their case.<sup>41</sup> For why should Scripture have explained the punishment of some sins if committed either willfully or unwillfully, and explained the punishment for other sins [only] if committed willfully, but not if committed unwillfully, and did not say that he is obligated to bring a burnt-offering? Therefore the Sages concluded that in the case of those sins for which one is liable to death by the hands of Heaven or stripes, they are only punishable if committed willfully, as explained in Scripture, but if committed unwillfully there is no burden of sin at all and they do not need any atonement. This is the meaning of the saying of the Rabbis [in the Torath Kohanim<sup>42</sup> mentioned by Rashi]: "their punishment has already been stated," meaning that Scripture had already stated the whole punishment that G-d desired to impose on them. But for the willful transgression of a positive commandment<sup>43</sup> and for the violation of a negative commandment that is juxtaposed to a positive commandment,<sup>44</sup> where Scripture mentioned no punishment whatever, and it is impossible that no penalty should be inflicted for them at all, in these cases the sinner is atoned for by this burnt-offering, if he brought it of his own freewill.

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*You will in any wise let the dam go* (ibid., Verse 7). Hence the usual punishment of stripes is not incurred for infringing the negative commandment, since the positive commandment "remedies" the prohibition. Yet it needs atonement, and the bringing of the burnt-offering expiates for it. — It is important to note that during the laying of hands on the offering the owner, in case of sin-offerings, confessed the sin for which he brought the offering, and so also in the case of guilt-offerings. Similarly, on bringing a burnt-offering he confessed the transgression for a positive commandment etc. [as explained here in the text]. In the case of the peace-offering, he uttered words of praise to G-d (Mishneh Torah, Hilchoth Ma'asei Korbanoth 3:14-15).

<sup>36</sup> Baraitha (literally: "outside") is a teaching or tradition of the Tannaim that had been excluded from the Mishnah and incorporated in other collections. The Tosephta, Mechilta, Sifra (Torath Kohanim), and Sifre contain these Baraithoth.

<sup>37</sup> Torath Kohanim Vayikra 4:5.

<sup>38</sup> "Punishments" [such as "excision etc."] are incurred only for willful violation of the negative commandments, while offerings for atonement are brought only for unwillful violations. So how could Rashi state, "Should you say [that the freewill burnt-offering is brought] for such sins that make one liable to excision etc., the punishment for those sins has already been stated"? Where are those "punishments" for unwillful violations mentioned? For unwillful violations no punishments are ever incurred!

<sup>39</sup> The general rule is that a sin-offering is brought only for such a sin unwillfully committed for which the penalty if committed willfully would be excision. Ramban is thus suggesting: we could say that the freewill burnt-offering atones for those unwillful sins for which the penalty is death by the hands of Heaven etc., and for all those sins for which the penalty is death by the court and yet do *not* require the bringing of a sin-offering for unwillful violation. Examples follow in the text.

<sup>40</sup> The reason why the sin-offering is not brought for the unwillful violation of these negative commandments is that the punishment of excision is not incurred in case of the willful violation thereof. See Note 38 above.

<sup>41</sup> Thus Scripture made it clear that in the case of those sins for which the penalty is death by the hands of Heaven or stripes if committed willfully — no offering for expiation is needed when committed unintentionally. Rashi and the Torath Kohanim were thus correct in stating that the burnt-offering could not effect atonement for these unwillful sins, since "the punishments" have already been stated in Scripture both for willful and unwillful sins, and therefore we could not say that the burnt-offering effects atonement for the above-mentioned sins if committed unwillfully.

<sup>42</sup> Torath Kohanim Vayikra 4:5.

<sup>43</sup> The Torah cites no punishment for failure to fulfill a positive commandment [with the two exceptions of not slaughtering the Passover-offering, and not being circumcised]. If a person thus failed to fulfill a positive commandment — such as dwelling in a booth on the Festival of Succoth — his bringing a freewill burnt-offering effects atonement for this sin.

<sup>44</sup> See note 35 above.



It is possible to say that because He did not use in the case of the freewill offerings<sup>45</sup> the expression: "to make atonement for him concerning the error which he committed," as He said with reference to the offerings brought for sins committed unwillfully,<sup>46</sup> and instead He said, **and it will be favorably accepted**, it appeared to our Rabbis that the meaning thereof is that [the burnt-offering] effects atonement for those who willfully commit certain sins, seeing that these persons are not [hitherto] favorably accepted by Him. For he who commits a sin unwillfully is yet, in spite of his sin, considered favorably accepted by G-d. If so, it is impossible that the burnt-offering effect atonement for willful sinners except for those who transgress a positive commandment or a negative commandment that is juxtaposed to a positive commandment, in which cases no punishment has been mentioned in Scripture, but they are not pleasing to G-d because they violated His commandment. With what can these men become favorably accepted by their Master?<sup>47</sup> With this gift!

I have seen in the Agadah,<sup>48</sup> in Vayikra Rabbah:<sup>49</sup> "Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai taught: The burnt-offering only comes to effect atonement for sinful thoughts of the heart. Said Rabbi Levi: It is a clear Biblical text: **'V'ha'olah al ruchachem**<sup>50</sup> (And that which cometh into your mind) will not be at all<sup>51</sup> — the **olah** (burnt-offering) effects atonement for those things which come into your mind. Similarly it says of Job: **and he offered burnt-offerings according to the number of them all; for Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned, and blasphemed G-d in their hearts,'**<sup>52</sup> This proves that the burnt-offering only comes to effect atonement for sinful thoughts of the heart." The reason why [the burnt-offering was singled out for this purpose] is because it is a sin that no one recognizes except G-d [Who knows our secret thoughts]; therefore it is wholly burnt to G-d.

The expression **u'nirtzah lo**<sup>53</sup> refers back to **the Glorious Name** mentioned [in the preceding verse: **to the door of the Tent of Meeting he will bring it for his acceptance before the Eternal**], meaning that he should be favorably accepted by Him through this offering which effects atonement for him. This is similar in expression to these verses: **for wherewith should this fellow 'yithratzeh' (reconcile himself) unto his lord?;**<sup>54</sup> **and the light of Your countenance because 'r'tzitham' (You were favorable to them),**<sup>55</sup> and many others. It is possible that **v'nirtzah** is a by-word for the sin, meaning that the sin is finished for him, so that he may now be forgiven, similar to these expressions: **'ki nirtzah avonah' (that her guilt is paid off),**<sup>56</sup> **until the land 'rotz'thah' (had been paid) her Sabbaths;**<sup>57</sup> **and they 'yirtzu' (will be paid) the punishment of their iniquity**<sup>58</sup> - all these being expressions of completion. It is further possible to say in line with the first interpretation, that the sin will be as if it were "agreeable" [not objectionable before G -d], meaning that His anger will no longer be kindled against him.

## 5. AND HE WILL SLAUGHTER THE BULL BEFORE THE ETERNAL. AND THE PRIESTS,

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<sup>45</sup> Freewill offerings are those which can be brought at anytime by any individual. These include, the burnt-offering (chapter 1), the meal-offering (Chapter 2), and the peace-offering (Chapter 3). On the other hand, the sin-offering (Chapter 4), and the guilt-offering (Chapter 5:14-26) can be brought only to expiate certain sins if committed unintentionally, and therefore are not freewill-offerings.

<sup>46</sup> Further, 5:18.

<sup>47</sup> See I Samuel 29:4.

<sup>48</sup> The Agadah (homily) comprises all subjects in Rabbinical literature which do not aim directly at the exposition of the laws of the Torah, but which teach and edify on all subjects concerning the Torah. The Agadic literature is contained primarily in the Midrashim, as well as in the Talmud. It would appear that Ramban uses the term Agadah here in contradistinction to the Torath Kohanim previously mentioned, which is primarily a book of Halachah (law). There in the Torath Kohanim the purpose of the burnt-offering is as explained above; in the Agadah — in Vayikra Rabbah — it is assigned another purpose, as explained further on.

<sup>49</sup> Vayikra Rabbah 7:3.

<sup>50</sup> The Hebrew term for the burnt-offering is olah literally, "comes up". There is thus here a suggestion that the olah is for those sinful thoughts "which come into one's mind."

<sup>51</sup> Ezekiel 20:32.

<sup>52</sup> Job 1:5.

<sup>53</sup> Up to here we have followed Silberman's translation of the phrase: **"and it will be favorably accepted for him."** Ramban now suggests three new interpretations: 1) "and he will be favorably accepted by Him." 2) "and the sin will be completed to him" - never to be mentioned again. 3) "and it will be 'agreeable' to Him."

<sup>54</sup> I Samuel 29:4.

<sup>55</sup> Psalms 44:4.

<sup>56</sup> Isaiah 40:2.

<sup>57</sup> II Chronicles 36:21.

<sup>58</sup> Further, 26:43.

**AARON'S SONS, WILL OFFER THE BLOOD.** "All acts from receiving [the blood in a vessel] onwards are the duty of the priests. This teaches that the slaughtering [of the offering] is valid if performed by a *zar* (non-priest). '*V'hikriou*' (*and they will offer ...*) - this refers to 'receiving' [the blood], and the sense thereof is the bringing [of the blood to the altar]. Thus we learn that both of them [receiving the blood and bringing it to the altar], are to be done by Aaron's sons." This is Rashi's language.

But it is not correct.<sup>59</sup> Instead, the Midrash of our Rabbis states:<sup>60</sup> "*V'hikrivu* - this is the receiving of the blood." For the term *v'hikrivu* does not mean the bringing of the blood near to the altar, namely the *holachah* (carrying of it). Instead, *v'hikrivu* is an expression similar to the word *korban* (offering) and it signifies receiving [of the blood in a vessel] and sprinkling it upon the altar. Thus He mentioned bringing it [to the door of the Tent of Meeting], laying hands on it, and slaughtering it with reference to the owner of the offering, and after the slaughtering He immediately mentioned the sons of Aaron. It accordingly follows that receiving the blood is in itself a duty to be performed by the priests, and may only be done by a qualified priest and with vessels dedicated to the Temple Service; and [it follows] all the more that bringing it to the altar and sprinkling it [can be done only by a qualified priest]. Moreover, even carrying of the limbs to the ramp [leading to the altar] is invalid if done by a non-priest, for so the Rabbis interpreted:<sup>61</sup> "*And the priest will offer it all, and cause it to ascend in fumes upon the altar*"<sup>62</sup> - this refers to carrying of the limbs to the ramp." If so, carrying the blood to the altar also maybe done only by a priest with all the conditions of priesthood.

**6. AND HE WILL FLAY THE BURNT-OFFERING.** He is commanded to flay it while it is whole and afterwards he sever it. The expression *and he will flay ... and he will sever* refers to the owner of the offering [even if he is a non-priest], just as He said, *and he will lay his hand ...*<sup>63</sup> *and he will slaughter*<sup>64</sup> [which may also be done by a *zar* - a non-priest], for flaying and severing are not functions relating to the actual offering and are therefore valid if done by a *zar*. This is why [in the following verse] He says again, *And the sons of Aaron [the priest will put fire upon the altar]*.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, it is valid that the washing of the inwards be done by a *zar*. Hence He says, *But its inwards and its legs he will wash in water*,<sup>66</sup> that is, the owner of the offering, and afterwards, *and the priest will cause all to ascend in fumes*.<sup>67</sup> He states it in the plural, *and they will put . . .*<sup>68</sup> *and they will set the pieces*,<sup>69</sup> because all duties performed by the priests are commanded in this form, since there are many priests gathered in the House of G-d to attend to the burnt-offerings, and *in the multitude of the people is the King's glory*,<sup>70</sup> but it is not indispensable, since further on He taught, *and the priest will set them in order*<sup>71</sup> [thus showing that even a single priest may perform all the acts].<sup>72</sup>

## AND HE WILL FLAY . . . AND HE WILL SEVER . . . AND THE SONS OF AARON THE PRIEST

<sup>59</sup> Ramban understood Rashi as saying that the word *u'hikrivu* has a primary meaning of "receiving" the blood in a vessel, which is the first process after the 'slaughtering' mentioned immediately before in the verse, and a subsidiary meaning [from the root '*harau*', to bring near] of "bringing" it to the altar. To this Ramban objects that '*u'hikrivu*' is not derived from the root '*karau*', implying bringing near, and hence cannot sustain the interpretation of "bringing it near" the altar even as a subsidiary meaning. Rather, it is associated with the word '*korban*' (offering), and has only one meaning, that of "receiving" the blood, which is the first stage in offering. If so, whence do we know that bringing it near the altar may also be done only by priests [and is invalid if done by anon-priest]? To this Ramban replies that it is a logical deduction ["if receiving the blood may only be done by priests, it follows 'all the more' that bringing it to the altar, which is a later stage in its offering, has this requirement"] A careful reading of Rashi and Ramban clearly indicates this interpretation.

<sup>60</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 4:4.

<sup>61</sup> Zebachim 4a.

<sup>62</sup> Further, Verse 13.

<sup>63</sup> Above, Verse 4.

<sup>64</sup> Verse 5,

<sup>65</sup> Verse 7.

<sup>66</sup> Verse 9.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Verse 7

<sup>69</sup> Verse 8.

<sup>70</sup> Proverbs 14:28.

<sup>71</sup> Verse 12.

<sup>72</sup> Ibn Ezra, however, states that they must be performed by a minimum of two priests. This he bases upon the plural expression in Verse 7: *and they will put fire*. It is thus clear that Ramban's intention here is to exclude Ibn Ezra's opinion, since it is not the accepted law.

**WILL PUT FIRE UPON THE ALTAR.**<sup>73</sup> This is not the correct order of these actions, for the right way is that the priests should first put fire upon the altar, and only then should they sever the limbs. Such indeed was the order of the arrangement of the Daily Offering.<sup>74</sup> Similarly, the verse stating, *And the priests, Aaron's sons, will set the pieces, the head and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire,*<sup>75</sup> and afterwards, *But its inwards and its legs he will wash in water*<sup>76</sup> — does not mean to command that it be done in that order, for "the setting" [mentioned in Verse 8] refers to "the burning" of the pieces which He commanded further on [in Verse 9]: *and the priest will cause all to ascend in fumes.* If so, the correct order of performance cannot be that he should bring up the pieces, and the head and the fat, and set them upon the fire that is upon the altar, and only afterwards should he wash the inwards and the legs and burn them! Rather, he first severed it and washed it, and then he brought everything up and set them on the fire to be burnt. The reason [for the order] of the verses is thus as follows: First He mentioned the sprinkling of the blood<sup>77</sup> in order to teach that this comes before everything else. Then He gave the commandment concerning the burning of the limbs, stating [in Verse 6 before us] that he should flay [the animal] and sever it in order to set the pieces upon the fire after washing the inwards and the legs, and then he should burn them all at one time, this being the sense of the expression *and the priest will cause 'all' to ascend in fumes.*<sup>78</sup> The reason why Scripture repeated [the commandment] concerning the limbs, stating, *and they will set them. ..upon the fire,*<sup>79</sup> *and the priest will cause all to ascend in fumes,*<sup>80</sup> is in order to teach us that after he arranges them upon the fire, he should not depart until the fire has taken hold of them and consumed them so that the fumes thereof ascend. Similarly, the reason why He preceded to mention the flaying and severing to that of making the fire, is in order to teach us that in a freewill burnt-offering [discussed in this section], there is no obligation to set the fire upon the altar before [these activities] as is the case with the Daily Offering, concerning which we were commanded, *and the priest will kindle wood on it every morning,*<sup>81</sup> this being the first thing of all that was done *in everything that pertains to the altar*<sup>82</sup> as is explained in Tractate Yoma.<sup>83</sup>

**8. 'V'ETH HAPADER.'** Onkelos translated it: *tarba* (fat), and this is also the consensus of opinion of all commentators, the word (*pader*) having no companion in the Hebrew language. In my opinion the word is not a generic term for all kinds of fat, but signifies specifically the thin layer of fat which spreads over and divides between the inwards, and the word *pader* is one of those terms whose letters are interchangeable, thus: *pader* — *pared* (division), [and is so called] since it divides between the upper and the lower inwards. That is why our Rabbis have said<sup>84</sup> that [when the limbs are taken up to the altar] the *pader* is spread over the throat of the animal at the place where the act of slaughter was performed, for this is considered regard for Him Who is on high, since that fat is fit to be spread and serve as a cover. It is also customary among the nobility of nations to spread it over a roast. If, however, the word *pader* is indeed a generic term for all kinds of fat, [it is my opinion that] fat is so called because it is the greasy substance which is "separated" from the flesh, and such in fact is the term used as an equivalent for fat by students of nature, as I will mention.<sup>85</sup>

**9. A BURNT-OFFERING.** "[He will burn it] with the intention that it should be a burnt-offering [and not an offering of another category], **ISHEIH' (A FIRE-OFFERING).** When he slaughters it he should slaughter it

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<sup>73</sup> Verse 7.

<sup>74</sup> Yoma 33.

<sup>75</sup> Verse 8.

<sup>76</sup> Verse 9.

<sup>77</sup> Verse 5.

<sup>78</sup> Verse 9.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. - That is to say, in view of the fact that the expression *and they will set the pieces in order . . .* [Verse 8] means the burning thereof, as explained above, the question appears why in Verse 9 it repeats the command concerning the limbs, *and they will set them upon the fire?*

<sup>81</sup> Further, 6:5..

<sup>82</sup> Numbers 18:7. Actually the removal of the ashes from the altar (see further, 6.3) preceded the kindling of the wood. But Ramban's intent here is obviously to *everything that pertains to the altar* as far as the burning of the offering is concerned.

<sup>83</sup> Yoma 33.

<sup>84</sup> Yoma 26a.

<sup>85</sup> Further, 3:9.

with the intention of [burning it by] fire, [as will be explained further on]. Wherever the word *isheih* occurs, it is an expression of fire. **PLEASING** - it is pleasing to Me that I have commanded and My will was done." This is the language of Rashi.

Now the Rabbi did not explain what is meant by "the intention of [burning it by] fire." In the Gemara<sup>86</sup> the Rabbis have said: "this is to exclude *kabobo*, which may not be done." Now the commentators<sup>87</sup> explained this to mean that he should slaughter it with the intention of placing it on flames burning the pile of wood upon the altar, and not of placing it upon dying coals which are in the process of being extinguished. To me it appears that the intention he needs to have is that the fire should burn it completely, and not that it should just be roasted there a little, the word *kabobo* being similar to the expression of the Rabbis in the chapter entitled "A stubborn and rebellious son:"<sup>88</sup> "*k'basar kiba* (like partly-roasted meat) which thieves eat." In Tractate Erubin we also find:<sup>89</sup> "*v'nichbeiv* (let him roast it) and eat it." Now some books have a reading in Tractate Zebachim:<sup>90</sup> "this is to exclude *gabobo* (straw), which may not be done." Accordingly the meaning thereof is that he should have the intention to put it on a fire of wood, as it is written, *on the wood that is on the fire*,<sup>91</sup> and he should not intend to put it upon a fire made of stubble and straw, similar to that which we have been taught [in a Mishnah]:<sup>92</sup> "If a double-stove had been heated with stubble and *gabobo*."

Now this verse mentions a reason for the offerings, namely, that they are *a fire-offering, of a pleasing odor unto the Eternal*. The Rabbi [Moshe ben Maimon] wrote in the Moreh Nebuchim<sup>93</sup> that the reason for the offerings is because the Egyptians and the Chaldeans in whose lands the children of Israel were strangers and sojourners, used always to worship the herd and the flock, the Egyptians worshipping the sheep and the Chaldeans worshipping the demons whom they imagined as assuming the form of goats. To this day men of India never slaughter the herd. It was for this reason that He commanded [Israel] to slaughter these three species [of cattle: the herd, the flock, and the goats], to the Revered Name, so that it be known that the very act which the idol-worshippers considered to be the utmost sin [i.e., slaughtering the above species], that same act should be done as an offering before the Creator, and through it Israel's sins would be forgiven. For such is the way to cure people of false beliefs, which are the diseases of the human soul, for all diseases and sicknesses are healed by medicines which are antithetical to them. These are the words [the Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon], and he expounded them at great length.

But these words are mere expressions, healing casually a severe wound<sup>94</sup> and a great difficulty, and making *the table of the Eternal polluted*,<sup>95</sup> [as if the offerings were intended only] to remove false beliefs from the hearts of the wicked and fools of the world, when Scripture says that they are *the food of the offering made by fire, for a pleasing odor*.<sup>96</sup> Moreover, [if the offerings were meant to eliminate] the foolish [ideas] of the Egyptians, their disease would not thereby be cured. On the contrary, it would increase the cause of sorrow, for since the intention of the above-mentioned wicked ones was to worship the constellations of the sheep and the ox, which according to their opinion possess certain powers [over human affairs], and which is why they abstain from eating them in deference to their power and strength, then if these species are slaughtered to the Revered Name, it is a mark of respect and honor to [these constellations]. These worshippers themselves were in the habit of so doing, as He has said, *And they will no more sacrifice their sacrifices unto the satyrs*,<sup>97</sup> and those who made the [golden] calf

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<sup>86</sup> Zebachim 46b.

<sup>87</sup> Rashi ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Sanhedrin 70a.

<sup>89</sup> Erubin 29b.

<sup>90</sup> Zebachim 46b.

<sup>91</sup> Verse 12.

<sup>92</sup> Shabbath 36b.

<sup>93</sup> Guide of the Perplexed III, 46.

<sup>94</sup> See Jeremiah 6:14.

<sup>95</sup> Malachi 1:12.

<sup>96</sup> Further, 3:16.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 17:7.

sacrificed to it.<sup>98</sup> Now the Rabbi [Moshe ben Maimon] mentions<sup>108</sup> that the idol-worshippers used to sacrifice to the moon on the days of new-moon, and to the sun when it rose in a particular constellation known to them from their books. The disease of idolatry would surely have been far better cured if we were to eat [these animal-deities] to our full, which would be considered by them forbidden and repugnant, and something they would never do!

Furthermore, when Noah came out of the ark with his three sons, there were as yet no Chaldeans or Egyptians in the world, yet he brought an offering, which was pleasing to G-d, as concerning it Scripture says, *And the Eternal smelled the pleasing odor*,<sup>99</sup> and on account of it *He said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake.*<sup>100</sup> *Abel likewise brought of the firstborn of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Eternal had regard unto Abel and to his offering.*<sup>101</sup> Yet there was as yet not the slightest trace at all of idol-worship in the world! Balaam said, *I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered up a bullock and a ram on every altar.*<sup>102</sup> His intent<sup>103</sup> then was not to eradicate from [Balak's mind] evil beliefs, nor was he commanded to bring the offerings. Instead, Balaam did so in order to approach G-d so that he would be reached by His communication. The Scriptural expression concerning the offerings is, *My food which is presented unto Me for offerings made by fire, for a pleasing odor unto Me.*<sup>104</sup> Far be it that they should have no other purpose and intention except the elimination of idolatrous opinions from the minds of fools!<sup>105</sup>

It is far more fitting to accept the reason for the offerings which scholars<sup>106</sup> say, namely that since man's deeds are accomplished through thought, speech and action, therefore G-d commanded that when man sins and brings an offering, he should lay his hands upon it in contrast to the [evil] deed [committed]. He should confess his sin verbally in contrast to his [evil] speech, and he should burn the inwards and the kidneys [of the offering] in fire because they are the instruments of thought and desire in the human being. He should burn the legs [of the offering] since they correspond to the hands and feet of a person, which do all his work. He should sprinkle the blood upon the altar, which is analogous to the blood in his body. All these acts are performed in order that when they are done, a person should realize that he has sinned against his G-d with his body and his soul, and that "his" blood should really be spilled and "his" body burned, were it not for the loving-kindness of the Creator, Who took from him a substitute and a ransom, namely this offering, so that its blood should be in place of his blood, its life in place of his life, and that the chief limbs of the offering should be in place of the chief parts of his body. The portions [given from the sin-offering to the priests], are in order to support the teachers of the Torah, so that they pray on his behalf. The reason for the Daily public Offering is that it is impossible for the public [as a whole] to continually avoid sin. Now these are words which are worthy to be accepted, appealing to the heart as do words of

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<sup>98</sup> Exodus 32:8. — In other words, despite the Torah commanding that these three animal species, [the herd, the flock, and the goats] should be offered up to G-d, idol-worshippers, who had other forms of deities, could still consider these offerings to be marks of honor to their own particular foolishness, as is evidenced by the fact that they used to sacrifice herd and flock to the goats, or to the calf! Thus how could the offerings specified in the Torah be a cure against all idols? This is the gist of Ramban's argument. It is more readily understood in the light of Ramban's explanation on the development of idolatry in Exodus Chapter 20, Verse 3, which indicates that the early idolators believed in a Supreme G-d.

<sup>99</sup> Genesis 8:21.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid., 4:4.

<sup>102</sup> Numbers 23:4.

<sup>103</sup> I.e., G-d's intent. In other words, the fact that Balaam who was not commanded by the laws of the Torah, brought offerings of the herd and the flock, shows that G-d's intent in commanding Israel that the offerings be brought from the three animal species was not to cure people of these evil idolatrous beliefs, as Balaam was not commanded therein.

<sup>104</sup> Numbers 28:2.

<sup>105</sup> This concludes Ramban's array of arguments against Rambam's rationale of the offerings. **It is important to point out that many great authors came to Rambam's defense, as there are many Scriptural and Rabbinical sources which seem to confirm his opinion, and the questions Ramban raised have been answered by them.** A summary of them will be found in my Hebrew commentary, pp. 11-12. See there also for the unique approach of Rabbi Meir Simcha in harmonizing the theories of both Rambam and Ramban.

<sup>106</sup> The reference is to Ibn Ezra. This is clearly apparent in Ramban's language in his sermon called *Torath Hashem Temimah*, where he writes: "Now the opinion of Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra on the matter of the offerings is that they are an atonement for the soul. The explanation of the matter on the basis of his opinion is that the offerings . . ." (*Kithvei Haramban*, Vol. I, p. 164). It is thus clear that what follows is Ramban's interpretation of the way he understood Ibn Ezra's thought. This explains why the following exposition is not found verbatim in Ibn Ezra's writings. See my Hebrew commentary (beginning with the third edition, p. 532).

Agadah.

By way of the Truth, [the mystic teachings of the Cabala], there is a hidden secret contained in the offerings. You may be introduced to it by that which our Rabbis have said in the Sifre<sup>107</sup> and at the end of Tractate Menachoth:<sup>108</sup> "Shimon ben Azai said: Come and see what is written in the section of the offerings! It does not say with reference to them *El* (G-d), nor *Elokecha* (your G-d), nor *Elohim* (G-d), nor *Shadai* (Almighty), nor *Tzebaoth* (G-d of 'Hosts'), but only, *Yod Hei* -the Proper name of G-d [the Tetragrammaton - 'Eternal'] - in order not to give an opponent [i.e., a believer in plurality] an occasion for a point of attack.<sup>109</sup> Perhaps you might say that He is in need of food, Scripture therefore says, *If I were hungry, I would not tell thee; for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof.*<sup>110</sup> I have only commanded you to bring the offerings in order that My Will should be said and fulfilled." In the beginning of Torath Kohanim we also find:<sup>111</sup> "Rabbi Yosei says: Wherever an offering is mentioned by Scripture, the Tetragrammaton is used, in order not to give an opportunity for heretics to rebel" [by finding pluralistic allusions against the principle of Unity]. These are the words of the Rabbis of blessed memory.

Now it is true that in the section of the Torah where the offerings are commanded it does not say *El* or *Elohim* (G-d). But we do find [elsewhere in Scripture] verses as follows: *and you will offer burnt-offerings thereon unto the Eternal Elohecha' (your G-d);<sup>112</sup> the bread of 'Elohehem' (their G-d), they do offer;<sup>113</sup> you will sanctify him [the priest], for he offers the bread of 'Elohecha' (your G-d).*<sup>114</sup> In the psalm mentioned above it is written, *Offer unto 'Elohim' (G-d) the offering of thanksgiving.*<sup>115</sup> It is further written: *For our fathers have acted treacherously, and done that which was evil in the sight of the Eternal our G-d, and have forsaken Him . . . Also they have closed the doors of the porch, and put out the lamps, and have not burned incense nor offered burnt-offerings in the holy place unto 'Elohei' (the G-d of) Israel.*<sup>116</sup>

But the whole subject is explained in the Torah [itself], as it is said, *My offering, My bread Tishai' (for My fire-offerings)*<sup>117</sup> and it is said, *the food of 'isheh' (the fire offering),*<sup>118</sup> meaning that the offerings are the food of *isheh*, and from it they are for the *ishim* — the word *isheh* being an expression for "fire." Now Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra wrote that *isheh* is an adjectival noun, meaning "a fire-offering," qualifying the word "all" [*and the priest will cause 'all' to ascend in fumes*];<sup>119</sup> and in the case of the meal-offering where it says, *and the priest shall cause to ascend in fumes the memorial-portion of it upon the altar, 'isheih'(a fire offering), of a pleasing*

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<sup>107</sup> Sifre, Pinchas 143. - The **Sifre** is the Tannaitic Midrash on the Books of Numbers and Deuteronomy. It is equivalent to the **Torath Kohanim [or Sifra]** on the Book of Leviticus, and the **Mechilta** on the Book of Exodus.

<sup>108</sup> Menachoth 110a.

<sup>109</sup> "They will bring proof from the fact that a deity with such-and-such a name commanded that the meal-offering be brought to him, and a deity of another name commanded that the bullocks [be offered to him], and a deity of a third name commanded that the ram [be offered to him]" (Rashi *ibid.*), — In his work on the Torah "Meshech Chochmah" (at the beginning of Seder Shoftim) Rabbi Meir Simchah explains the intent of Shimon ben Azai's words in the following pertinent way: "It is known that the name **Elohim** means Master of all (natural) forces, or the Force of forces (see Ramban, Vol. I, p. 25). Hence if the name **Elohim** or **El** had been used in the section of the offerings it would have given an opportunity to the opponents [of the belief in the true Unity of G-d] that He is in need of food [i.e., in need of replenishing His powers]. Therefore only the Tetragrammaton is used in this whole section in order to indicate that His Existence is the only true Existence, and that everything exists only through His true Existence, for they are all in need of Him, but He is not in need of them nor of any of them."

<sup>110</sup> Psalms 50:12.

<sup>111</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 2:5.

<sup>112</sup> Deuteronomy 27:6.

<sup>113</sup> Further, 21:6.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, Verse 8.

<sup>115</sup> Psalms 50:14.

<sup>116</sup> II Chronicles 29:6-7. Here too the Name *Elokei Yisrael* (the G-d of Israel) is used in connection with the burnt-offering, instead of the Proper Divine Name.

<sup>117</sup> Numbers 28:2. - The word *Tishai* [vowelled with a *patach*] means, "for My *ishim* - fires," as alluded to further on. See also my Hebrew commentary, p. 13.

<sup>118</sup> Further, 3:11.

<sup>119</sup> The verse reads: *and the priest will cause 'hakol'(all) to ascend in fumes on the altar 'olah', (a burnt-offering) 'isheh' . . .* Now the word *isheh* which is in the masculine, is the adjective to the word *hakol* which is also in the masculine, and not to the word *olah* which is in the feminine.

*odor unto the Eternal*,<sup>120</sup> [the word *isheh*] is adjectival to the word *kometz* ["handful" - mentioned in the first part of the verse]. But this is not so. Rather, the word *isheh* is a noun like *eish* (fire), and *olah isheh* [mentioned in Verse 9 before us] is like *olath eish* (a burnt-offering of fire), *of a pleasing odor unto the Eternal*, and so are all similar expressions, their meaning being like *lechem isheh* (the food of the fire-offering).<sup>121</sup> The reason, however, why He did not say *eish* but said *isheh* [comprised of the letters: *alef shin, hei*] is [to allude to] the plain meaning thereof, *as it has been shown to you in the mount*<sup>122</sup> at the Giving of the Torah, **which refers to the offering in the attribute of justice.** The slaughtering [of the offering] must be to the Name of the Eternal alone, meaning that [he who slaughters it] must have no intention to do so to anything else in the world, save unto the Name of the Eternal only, this being the meaning of the expression '*olah hu . . . isheh hu*' (it is a burnt-offering ... a fire-offering). . .<sup>123</sup> That is why the verse says, *For the 'ishe' (fire-offerings) of the Eternal, the bread of their G-d, they offer, and they will be holy*,<sup>124</sup> for the offering of their G-d is unto the '*ishe*' of the Eternal; and therefore the Rabbis have said<sup>125</sup> that in [the sections of the Torah giving] the commands for the offerings, it does not mention *El* or *Elohim* (G-d),<sup>126</sup> but *a fire-offering unto the Eternal*,<sup>127</sup> *a pleasing odor unto the Eternal*,<sup>128</sup> **for the intention must be unto the Eternal alone, and he who performs the acts of offering it up should have no other intent or thought save only to the Proper Name [i.e., the Tetragrammaton].** This is the sense of the saying of the Sages:<sup>129</sup> "Scripture has ordered all these Services to be devoted to the Proper Name."

And in the Torath Kohanim<sup>130</sup> it is said: "*Unto the Eternal* — unto Him Who created the world." It is this which the psalm states: *Offer unto G-d the offering of thanksgiving, and pay your vows unto the Most High;*<sup>131</sup> *For the Eternal is the Most High, Fearful, a Great King over all the earth.*<sup>132</sup> The vow [to bring the offering] may also only be taken unto the Proper Name. It is this which the psalm states, *G-d, your G-d, am I. I will not reprove you for your offerings*,<sup>133</sup> just as He said, *I am the Eternal your G-d.*<sup>134</sup> This is the sense of the whole psalm wherein it says, *El Elohim Hashem' (G-d, G-d, the Eternal) has spoken, and called the earth* etc.,<sup>135</sup> using the full Divine Name<sup>136</sup> in reference to the world,<sup>137</sup> and mentioning therein the offerings. It is with reference to this too that it is said [speaking of the offerings], *They will come up with acceptance on Mine altar, and I will glorify My glorious house*,<sup>138</sup> meaning to say that the offerings will be brought for acceptance, which is upon His altar, and He will then glorify His glorious house when they go up for a pleasing odor, the word *nicho'ach* (pleasing) being derived from the expressions: '*nachah*' (*there rests*) *the spirit of Elijah on Elisha*,<sup>139</sup> '*vatanach*' (*and there rested*) *the spirit upon them.*<sup>140</sup> Likewise all terms of *korban* (offering) [from the root '*karav*, near] are expressions of approaching, and unity. Therefore, it says, *Nor did they offer burnt-offerings in the holy place*

<sup>120</sup> Further, 2:2.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 3:11. In other words, although here in Verse 9 is stated *isheh*, and so also in many other places, the word is yet to be understood as *isheh*, which is surely a noun and not an adjectival noun (as Ibn Ezra explained it).

<sup>122</sup> Exodus 27:8. - See here my Hebrew commentary, p. 13.

<sup>123</sup> Further, 8:21. The word *olah* (burnt-offering) also means "ascending" thus alluding to its ascension to the highest emanation. Hence the expression, *it is an 'olah' unto the Eternal . . .*

<sup>124</sup> Further, 21:6.

<sup>125</sup> Menachoth 110a.

<sup>126</sup> **These Names represent the attribute of justice. The Tetragrammaton ['the Eternal'] represents the attribute of mercy.**

<sup>127</sup> Further, 2:16, etc.

<sup>128</sup> Here in Verse 9, etc.

<sup>129</sup> Sanhedrin 60b.

<sup>130</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 4:6 (end of chapter).

<sup>131</sup> Psalms 50:14.

<sup>132</sup> Psalms 47:3.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 50:7-8. Ramban is here suggesting that the first Name *Elohim* is here like the Proper Name — "the Eternal" (Ma'or V'shamesh). This is obvious from the following words of Ramban.

<sup>134</sup> Exodus 20:2.

<sup>135</sup> Psalms 50:1.

<sup>136</sup> *G-d, the Eternal spoke*. (On "the full Divine Name" see in Vol. I, p. 66).

<sup>137</sup> The verse there continues: *and He called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof*.

<sup>138</sup> Isaiah 60:7.

<sup>139</sup> II Kings 2:15.

<sup>140</sup> Numbers 11:26.

*unto the G-d of Israel,*<sup>141</sup> for the burnt-offering in the holy place is to the G-d of Israel. The angel taught Manoah the concept of the offerings when he said, *Though you detain me, I will not eat of your bread,*<sup>142</sup> meaning that if Manoah were to make him food he would not accept it from him, as it would be unfit and an offering which is an abomination to G-d. *But if you will make ready a burnt-offering, unto G-d alone you must offer it.*<sup>143</sup> Then will it be for acceptance as the fire-offerings of the Eternal, as indeed *the angel of the Eternal ascended in the flame of the altar.*<sup>144</sup> Thus is the subject [of the offerings] explained and clarified. *May the good LORD pardon!*<sup>145</sup>

**10. AND IF HIS OFFERING BE OF THE FLOCK.** This section deals with the burnt-offering of the flock, and the law thereof is in every detail like that of the burnt-offering of the herd. That is why He shortened here the command, and did not mention "and he will lay his hands" [upon the offering], nor "and it will be acceptable" [as mentioned above]. He said here in addition, however, that it be slaughtered *on the side of the altar, northward before the Eternal,*<sup>146</sup> in order to explain that the expression *before the Eternal*<sup>147</sup> mentioned in connection with the bullock means the side of the altar northward. The meaning of *yerech [of the altar]* is "the side" of the altar, and in the northerly direction. The verse thus teaches that the ramp of the altar was on the south side, where the front of the altar was, concerning which it is said, *before the Eternal, in front of the altar.*<sup>148</sup> I have already explained the reason why the slaughtering was to be done on the north side.<sup>149</sup> Scripture states without specification, *round about the altar,*<sup>150</sup> for the reference is to the altar mentioned above, *that is at the door of the Tent of Meeting.*<sup>151</sup> It does not state [in this section] *and he will flay it*, since it has already been mentioned [in the preceding section].<sup>152</sup> It states *and the priest will set them in order,*<sup>153</sup> to teach us that it is sufficient if one priest attends [to all the acts of the offering of the burnt-offering brought by an individual] as I have explained,<sup>154</sup> for the sections on the offerings complement each other, the points not mentioned in one being explained in the other.

**14. OF TURTLEDOVES OR OF YOUNG PIGEONS.** Scripture chose these two species [of birds] because they are accessible and can be more easily caught than other [birds], just as our Rabbis have mentioned<sup>155</sup> with reference to *any of the sheep, and any of the goats,*<sup>156</sup> that [Scripture chose these species so that] a person should be able to bring an offering from those animals that feed at his crib, and should not have to take his weapons, quiver and bow, *to go out on the hunt to bring it.*<sup>157</sup> He chose grown-up turtledoves<sup>158</sup> because they abstain [from pairing with strangers] and attach themselves only to their mates, and once they lose their companions they never associate with others. So Israel cleave to the Eternal their G-d,<sup>159</sup> and never attach themselves to another deity, Pigeons, on the other hand, are very jealous and as a result of their jealousy they part [from their previous mates]

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<sup>141</sup> II Chronicles 29:7.

<sup>142</sup> Judges 13:16.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>145</sup> II Chronicles 30:18. See also Vol. I, p. 437, Note 275. — The idea suggested here by Ramban is that in order to disprove certain erroneous explanations about the offerings, he had to resort to discuss openly some of the mystic teachings of the Cabala. Hence his prayer for forgiveness.

<sup>146</sup> Verse 11.

<sup>147</sup> Above, Verse 5, when speaking of the burnt offering of the herd.

<sup>148</sup> Further, 6:7.

<sup>149</sup> See Exodus 32:1. — Destruction and everlasting desolation comes from the north (cf. Jeremiah 1:14).

<sup>150</sup> Verse 11. For in view of the fact that there were two altars one in the outside Court at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and one within the Sanctuary it therefore should have specified which one is intended here. But, Ramban answers, the reference is to the altar mentioned in the preceding section.

<sup>151</sup> Verse 5.

<sup>152</sup> Verse 6.

<sup>153</sup> Verse 12.

<sup>154</sup> Verse 6.

<sup>155</sup> Vayikra Rabbah 27:6.

<sup>156</sup> Deuteronomy 14:4.

<sup>157</sup> Genesis 27:5. See also *ibid.* Verse 3.

<sup>158</sup> Turtledoves may be offered only after their neck-feathers have turned bright yellow. Pigeons may be brought only when they are still so young that when their feathers are plucked blood is drawn (Mishneh Torah, Hilchoth hurei Mizbeiach 3:2).

<sup>159</sup> See Deuteronomy 4:4.



and take on other mates. Therefore He chose them [as offerings] only when they are young, before their mating begins, for as long as the pigeon is young it is attached with greater love to the nest where it is reared than are all other fowls. Our Rabbis have mentioned<sup>160</sup> that if a person touches the nest of all other fowls to take therefrom the young ones or the eggs, they leave it and never nest therein again, but the pigeon never abandons it under any condition. And so is [the people of] Israel. They will never exchange their Creator and His Torah, but "either Jews or nailed to the stake." He did not choose cocks [as offerings although they are readily accessible] because of their inclination to lewdness.

Now the Rabbi [Moshe ben Maimon] wrote in the Moreh Nebuchim<sup>161</sup> that the reason for choosing grown-up turtledoves and young pigeons as offerings is that these are the best of their species, since old pigeons are less tasty. But this is not true, for young pigeons are almost inedible as a result of their excessive moistness. If, however, we are to take into consideration their natural tendencies as far as eating them is concerned, it is possible that they were chosen for their special qualities; for turtledoves have a propensity to sharpening of the mind, and young pigeons have a propensity to benefit greatly those who are not fully-matured physically, such as youths in the intermediate stage between boyhood and maturity, and the like.

**15. AND THE PRIEST WILL BRING IT UNTO THE ALTAR.** This "**bringing**" means bringing it up onto the altar, signifying that the priest is to bring up the bird onto the altar and nip off its head there, as the nipping off may only be done on top of the altar.<sup>162</sup> It is for this reason that the Rabbis interpreted:<sup>163</sup> "**And the priest will bring it . . .** Could you possibly think that a non-priest could come near the altar? If so, why does it say *the priest . . . will nip off?* It is to teach us that the nipping off be done [not with an instrument but] only by the priest himself." "**And he will nip off. . . and cause it to ascend in fumes . and the blood thereof will be wrung out.** Is it possible to say that after he has burnt it, he should squeeze the blood out? But [the order of the wording] is to teach us that just as the burning of the head is to be done separately [as is indicated here in the verse, *and he will nip off its head, and cause it to ascend in fumes*], and that of the body is to be done separately [as is stated further on in Verse 17: *and he will cleave it . . . and cause it to ascend in fumes*], so also the nipping off has to be done in this way, the head separately and the body separately. The plain meaning of the verse, however, is that the wording is to be inverted: and he will nip off and cause it to ascend in fumes, and before the burning its blood will have been wrung out." This is Rashi's language.

Now it is impossible to say [that the order of the verse can be explained to mean] that he should nip off its head and burn it, and afterwards wring the blood of the body on the wall of the altar and then burn the body, since no limbs of any offering may ever be burnt [on the altar] before the sprinkling of the blood, the principle *for it is the blood that makes atonement by reason of the life*<sup>164</sup> applying to all offerings. Therefore the Rabbis interpreted the verse [to mean] that Scripture intended only to liken the nipping off to the burning, so that in both cases the head should be treated by itself and the body by itself. The plain sense of the verse, however, is that "he should nip off its head in order to burn it on the altar," thus teaching that the nipping off should be done in order to burn the head [separately, and not dispose of it otherwise], just as he will burn the body, concerning which He said, *and the priest will cause it to ascend in fumes*,<sup>165</sup> for such is Scriptures' way of speaking about all offerings, as I have explained in connection with the severance into pieces of the burnt-offering.<sup>166</sup> However, Scripture states here, *and the priest will cause it to ascend in fumes*,<sup>167</sup> and did not say "and he will cause *all* to ascend" [as it said above in Verse 9, in the case of the burnt-offering of the herd], because [here in the case of the burnt-offering

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<sup>160</sup> Shir Hashirim Rabbah 1 :5.

<sup>161</sup> Guide of the Perplexed III. 46.

<sup>162</sup> Zebachim 65a.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Further. 17 :11. Ramban's intention is to defend Rashi's explanation. At first sight, one could suggest an alternative explanation, which would leave the words of the verse in the correct order, namely that the nipping off and burning mentioned in the verse refer to the head, and the wringing of the blood can nonetheless be done **subsequently** because it refers to the body's blood. Rashi, however, was compelled to invert the word-order because this suggested explanation is impossible, as explained by Ramban.

<sup>165</sup> Verse 17.

<sup>166</sup> Verse 6.

<sup>167</sup> Verse 17.

of the fowl] the burning thereof was done in two separate stages: first he burnt the head, and then he removed the crop [from the body], and cleft it by the wings, and then he burnt the body, as we have been taught in Tractate Zebachim.<sup>168</sup>

**16. AND HE WILL REMOVE ETH MURATHO B'NOTZA-THAH.'** "*Muratho* refers to the place of the digested food, namely 'its crop.' *B'notzathah* means 'together with its entrails.' The word *notzah* is a term for anything which is loathsome. Similarly: *for 'natzu' (they are become loathsome) and are wandered away.*<sup>169</sup> That is what Onkelos intended in translating '*b'notzathah*' as *b'uchleih* (with its digested food). This is also the interpretation of Aba Yosei ben Chanan who said<sup>170</sup> that he removes the stomach together with it [i.e., the crop]. But our Rabbis have said:<sup>171</sup> he cuts out with a knife an opening around the crop like a flap, and removes it together with the feathers [on the skin]." This is Rashi's language.

But it is not correct. For the word *notzah* in all places only means actual feathers. Similarly, *for 'natzu' and are wandered away*<sup>172</sup> means that they have acquired feathers [wings] to fly away from their places and go into exile, and there too they will [constantly] wander, not finding a resting-place. Similarly: *for 'natzoh' (she must fly away) and get away.*<sup>173</sup> The Jerusalem Targum rendered [the above-mentioned verse: *for 'natzu' and are wandered away*]: "for they are 'quarrelsome' and have also wandered away." The Targum thus derived the word *natzu* from the expression, *when men 'yinatzu' (strive) together,*<sup>174</sup> and the verse is thus stating that "they strive with all the nations and wander away from them, and do not continue to live among them." This is a correct interpretation. But the word *notzah* in the sense of "loathsome" as the Rabbi [Rashi] has it, is not found. The interpretation of Aba Yosei which made it incumbent upon the priest to take also the stomach with the crop, is [not because he considers the word *b'notzathah* to mean "the place of its entrails," as Rashi understood him, but rather] because the crop and the gullet together with the stomach, comprising the organs for the digestion of food [in the bird], are all included in the term *muratho*, because in the stomach the food turns into *r'ie* (dung). Aba Yosei thus does not differ at all with the First Sage who says that he should take it with the feathers," for we have been taught in a Mishnah of the sixth chapter of Tractate Zebachim<sup>175</sup> [with reference to the order of the burnt-offering of the bird]: "He [i.e. the priest] came then to the body, and removed the crop and the feathers and the entrails that came forth with the crop, and cast them on the place of ashes." This Mishnah is in accordance with the teaching of Aba Yosei<sup>176</sup> and yet it mentions "the feathers!"<sup>177</sup>

Onkelos' opinion [in translating *b'notzathah* as *b'uchleih*, is not because he considered this to be the Aramaic rendition of the word *b'notzathah*, so that you might think that he is of the opinion that the Hebrew word means "the place of its digested food," as Rashi thought, but rather Onkelos' opinion] is like that of the Sages, that he removed only the crop and its feathers together with the food therein which is the *mur'ah* [but he did not remove its entrails]. Since the priest takes hold of the crop and removes the food therein with it, therefore Onkelos rendered it: "**and he will remove yath zfokeih b'uchleih,**" the expression being as if it had said: "**and he will remove uchleih bi-zfokeih,**"<sup>178</sup> for *uchleih* [according to Onkelos] is the Aramaic for the Hebrew *muratho* [as

<sup>168</sup> Zebachim 65a.

<sup>169</sup> Lamentations 4:15.

<sup>170</sup> Zebachim 65a.

<sup>171</sup> Zebachim 65b.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Jeremiah 48:9. Here too, the *vtordnatzoh* is derived from the original root meaning "*feathers*" hence: "*she must fly away.*"

<sup>174</sup> Deuteronomy 25:11.

<sup>175</sup> Zebachim 64b.

<sup>176</sup> For according to the Sages he removes only the crop but not the entrails.

<sup>177</sup> This proves that Aba Rashi interprets the word *bnotzathah* to mean with "its feathers," and not, as I explained it, that Aba Yosei interprets it to mean "the place of its digested food namely the crop."

<sup>178</sup> Ramban is thus saying that Onkelos in translating the Hebrew phrase *muratho b'notzathah* as *yath zfokeih b'uchleih*, did not put it in the order of the wording of the Hebrew; instead, it is as if he had inverted it and rendered it *yath uchleih bizfokeih*, as the Aramaic *uchleih* is the equivalent of the Hebrew *muratho*, and the Aramaic *bizfokeih* is the equivalent of the Hebrew *b'notzathah*, as explained in the text. The reason for this change is, as explained by Ramban, because the food (*muratho*) is only removable by means of taking away the crop (*zfokeih*). Ramban then brings a number of proofs to illustrate that it is Onkelos' habit to change the order of the Hebrew wording when it appears better to him to do so.

*muratho* is associated with the word *r'ie* — "dung," and "food" turns into dung], whereas *zfokeih* is the translation for the Hebrew *b'notzathah* [as will be explained]. The verse [according to Onkelos] thus means as follows: he should remove the *mur'ah*, which is the food, with the plumage upon it, meaning that he takes the crop with its skin and the feathers upon it. **In a similar way Onkelos translated [the Hebrew 'ki sh'mi b'kirbo' — for My Name is in him<sup>179</sup>]: arei bishmi meimreih ("for in My Name is his word"),<sup>180</sup> which, according to the Hebrew, he should have rendered into Aramaic as follows: arei sh'mi b'meimreih (for My Name is in his word).** But Onkelos changed the order of the wording because of a certain reason known to him.<sup>181</sup> So also he translated the verse: *And the two ends of the two wreathen chains*<sup>182</sup> — "and the two wreathen chains of the two ends." There are many other such cases.

**17. AND HE WILL REND IT 'BICHNAFAV** - "together with its feathers. He need not pluck out the feathers of its plumage. *Knafav* means the actual feathers [not the wings]." This is the language of Rashi. But it is not correct, for if so, then Scripture does not mention from which place he is to rend [the bird], whether from its front or back. Rather, the meaning thereof is as follows: "he will rend it at the place of its wings," for the letter *beth* [in the word *bichnafav*] serves here as "the *beth* of apparatus," [teaching that the rending is to be done from the back of the bird where "the wings" are, for *knafav*, as will be explained, means "its wings," and not "its feathers" as Rashi explained]; similar to the expression, *ba'aron*, (in the ark), *ba'bayith*, (in the house), or *ba'sadeh* (in the field). *Knafav* does not mean "feathers" [as Rashi wrote], but is similar to all expressions of *knafaytm* mentioned in Scripture [which mean wings]: *every bird, whatever has 'kanaf (wings);<sup>183</sup> and he stretches 'knafav'(his wings) towards the south.*<sup>184</sup> Similarly, *'bichnaf (the skirt) of his robe.*<sup>185</sup> *Notzah* is the down [the soft under-plumage] on the body of birds, something like that which is written, *a great eagle with great wings and long pinions, full of 'hanotzah' (down).*<sup>186</sup> Similarly we have learned [in the Mishnah]:<sup>187</sup> "Large feathers and down are both capable of contracting uncleanness and conveying uncleanness, and join together [with the flesh to make up the required size that is needed to convey uncleanness]." The Rabbis have also said:<sup>188</sup> "excepting the beak and claws, the large feathers and the down."

**1. AND HE WILL POUR OIL UPON IT AND PUT FRANKINCENSE THEREON. 2. AND HE WILL BRING IT TO AARON'S SONS.** "This teaches that the pouring of the oil and the mingling of it together with the flour [of the meal-offering] is valid if done by a non-priest. **TO AARON'S SONS THE PRIESTS; AND HE WILL TAKE OUT HIS HANDFUL.** From the taking of the handful [for the altar] and onwards is the duty of the priests." This is the language of Rashi. Now we have to explain that the duty of the priests does not begin with the taking of the handful, for bringing the meal-offering near [to the altar] precedes the taking of the handful, and that too is invalid when done by a non-priest, as He said, *and he will present it unto the priest, and he will bring it near unto the altar,*<sup>189</sup> and afterwards it says, *and the priest will remove from the meal-offering the memorial-part thereof*<sup>190</sup> which is the handful. Thus you see that it is the priest who brings the meal-offering near the altar, to the south-west corner thereof,<sup>191</sup> and after that he removes the handful [to be burnt on the altar]. So also we have learned [in the Mishnah]:<sup>192</sup> **"The acts of laying hands upon the offering, the wavings,<sup>193</sup> bringing [the**

<sup>179</sup> Exodus 23:21.

<sup>180</sup> I.e., he speaks in My Name.

<sup>181</sup> See Ramban *ibid.*, Verse 20 (towards the end - Vol. II, p. 413) where he explains Onkelos' intent in that translation.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 28:25.

<sup>183</sup> Genesis 7:14.

<sup>184</sup> Job 39:26.

<sup>185</sup> I Samuel 15:27. Literally: *"the wing of his skirt."*

<sup>186</sup> Ezekiel 17:3.

<sup>187</sup> Taharoth 1:3.

<sup>188</sup> Sifra, Acharei

<sup>189</sup> Further, Verse 8.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, Verse 9.

<sup>191</sup> See Ramban further, 6:7.

<sup>192</sup> Kiddushin 36a.

<sup>193</sup> These laws applied to certain animal offerings as well as certain meal-offerings. See Menachoth 61a.

**meal-offering] near [to the altar], and removing the handful are performed by men and not by women."** In explanation thereof the Rabbis said [there in the Gemara]:<sup>194</sup> **"bringing near [can be performed only by men] because it is written, *And this is the law of the meal-offering: the sons of Aaron will bring it*<sup>195</sup> — *the sons of Aaron but not the daughters of Aaron.*"** This being the case, the bringing near [of the meal-offering to the altar] is the duty of the sons of Aaron. But the intention of the Sages in saying: "From the taking of the handful and onwards is the duty of the priests" [as quoted by Rashi above], is to say that from this taking of the handful mentioned in this verse and onwards, is the duty of the priests, but not these things which Scripture mentioned here as preceding the taking of the handful, since He mentioned already in this section pouring the oil [and mingling it with the flour], putting the frankincense thereon and bringing it to the priest, and [the priest's] removing the handful. However, bringing it near to the altar is not mentioned here, [but is stated further on in *Seder Tzav* 6:7] that all those things stated here before the taking of the handful — namely, pouring the oil and mingling it with the flour, and bringing it to the priest — are valid if done by a non-priest.

**11. NO MEAL-OFFERING, WHICH YOU WILL BRING UNTO THE ETERNAL, WILL BE MADE WITH LEAVEN.** Here He prohibited the bringing of a meal-offering in leaven form. After that He said, *You will not 'thahtiru' (cause to ascend in fumes) either any leaven or honey*, in order to prohibit the leavening of the handful and burning it upon the altar, this being included in the expression *you will not cause to ascend in fumes* . . . All terms of *haktarah* are expressions of burning aromatics, for druggists say<sup>196</sup> that honey would have been appropriate for the incense,<sup>197</sup> but the Torah prohibited it.<sup>198</sup> Scripture states *any of it* in order to prohibit [leaven or honey] even as a part of it, that is to say, even in one half of the handful. Similarly, one is liable to the punishment of stripes for mixing [leaven or honey with the handful in such a way that it is not recognized], because Scripture included it in saying, *for you will not cause to ascend in fumes 'any' leaven or 'any' honey*, as is explained in Tractate Menachoth<sup>199</sup> and in Tractate Pesachim.<sup>200</sup>

The reason why Scripture mentions here *minchah hi*<sup>201</sup> [in the feminine] while it is written *hu* [in the masculine], and similarly in all places,<sup>202</sup> [will be understood]<sup>203</sup> from the section, *Behold, I send a messenger before you.*<sup>204</sup> So also *'ha'ishah hahi' (that woman)*<sup>205</sup> [is written *hahu* in the masculine, while it is read *hahi* in the feminine], because the feminine is potentially included in the masculine.

**It is possible that the reason why we are forbidden to bring leaven and honey [upon the altar] is as the Rabbi [Moshe ben Maimon] states in the Moreh Nebuchim,<sup>206</sup> where he says that he found it written in their books that the custom among the idolaters was to offer all their meal-offerings only in leavened form, and to season all their sacrifices with honey; therefore He forbade bringing them on His altar.** Our Rabbis have similarly said with reference to monuments [of one stone raised in order to sacrifice on it], that this was a favored mode of worship in the days of the patriarchs,<sup>207</sup> and afterwards G-d hated it<sup>208</sup> because [the Canaanites]

<sup>194</sup> Kiddushin 36a.

<sup>195</sup> Further, 6:7.

<sup>196</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 12:4.

<sup>197</sup> This explains why the Torah uses here the term *thahtiru*. For since honey is mentioned in the verse, and honey would have improved the scent of the incense, Scripture uses a term which is applicable to the burning of aromatics.

<sup>198</sup> In the words of the Talmud Yerushalmi (Yoma IV, 5): "Bar Kappara taught: Druggists in Jerusalem used to say: had the smallest amount of honey been put into the incense no one could have stood its scent."

<sup>199</sup> Menachoth 58a.

<sup>200</sup> Pesachim 43b.

<sup>201</sup> Verse 6. - Actually the word is written *hu [hei-vav-alef]* which is the masculine third person pronoun, but it is read *hi [hei-yod-alef]* which is the equivalent feminine pronoun. Ramban intends to explain why it is written in the masculine when the word *minchah* is in the feminine, and hence Scripture should have written *minchah hi*.

<sup>202</sup> Further, Verse 15, etc.

<sup>203</sup> So expressly stated in Abusaula's commentary on the mystic passages in Ramban. — See Vol. I, Preface p. xii, Note 21-

<sup>204</sup> Exodus 23:20. — Reference is to Verse 21 there, *for My Name is in him* (Abusaula). The implication is that here too one gender is included in the other, namely, the feminine *hi* in the masculine *hu*, as explained in the text.

<sup>205</sup> Deuteronomy 17:5.

<sup>206</sup> Guide of the Perplexed, III, 46.

<sup>207</sup> See Genesis 28:18.

had made it an ordinance of an idolatrous character, as He said, *which the Eternal your G-d hates.*<sup>209</sup>

**Concerning the reason why we were commanded to offer salt with every offering,<sup>210</sup> [Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon] also said<sup>209</sup> that it is because the idolaters rejected it and did not offer it at all to their idols; [therefore He commanded us to have salt in every offering].** It is possible that [we are commanded to offer salt because] it is not respectful that the food which is offered up to G-d should have no flavoring, being without salt,<sup>211</sup> similar to that which is written, *Present it now unto your governor; will he be pleased with you?*<sup>212</sup> That is why the Sages excluded wood and blood<sup>213</sup> from the requirement of being offered with salt [since they are not edible]. Or it may be that there is in all these matters some secret hidden from us.

In the case of leaven and honey Scripture speaks in the plural [*for you will not cause to ascend in fumes, either any leaven or honey*] because it speaks to Aaron and his sons. After that it says, *And every meal-offering of 'your's' will 'you' season with salt,*<sup>214</sup> because it refers to him who brings the meal-offering, concerning whom it said at the beginning of the section, *And if your offering be a meal-offering of the stewingpan;*<sup>215</sup> and the reason [why it refers to salting by the person who brings the offering, is because] it is valid if done by a non-priest,<sup>216</sup> just as pouring the oil and mingling it with the flour are [as explained above in Verse 2]. *Upon all your 'offering' you will offer salt*<sup>217</sup> means "upon all thine offerings" [in the plural], for all offerings have to be offered with salt, just as the meal-offering.

**13. NEITHER WILL YOU SUFFER THE SALT OF THE COVENANT OF YOUR G-D TO BE LACKING FROM YOUR MEAL-OFFERING. "For a covenant was established with salt as far back as the six days of Creation, for the lower waters [i.e., those of the oceans] were promised that they would be offered upon the altar in the form of salt, and [also as water] at the libation of water, on the Festival of Tabernacles."**<sup>218</sup> This is Rashi's language, and it is a homiletic exposition of the Sages.<sup>219</sup> Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra interpreted it in line with the plain meaning of Scripture as follows: "I have brought you into a covenant and made you swear that you would not offer a saltless offering, nor will it [i.e., a saltless offering] be eaten,<sup>220</sup> because it is a mark of contempt." Now since salt is the covenant of the offerings, Scripture made this accord the pattern for all such agreements, **saying of the gifts given to priests and the dynasty of David that they are [an everlasting] covenant of salt,**<sup>221</sup> meaning that they are as everlasting as the covenant of salt of the offerings. There, however, Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra explained:<sup>222</sup> *"A covenant of salt* — a covenant decreed, it being of the

<sup>208</sup> Deuteronomy 16:22.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> Verse 13.

<sup>211</sup> Job 6:6: *Can that which hath no savor be eaten without salt?*

<sup>212</sup> Malachi 1:8. — "The Torah thus teaches us a rule of conduct — that Royal Majesty of heaven is similar to that on earth" (Bachya, in my edition Vol. II, p. 406).

<sup>213</sup> Menachoth 21a.

<sup>214</sup> Verse 13.

<sup>215</sup> Verse 7.

<sup>216</sup> In view of the fact that the salting was done on top of the altar, which no non-priest was allowed to approach, Ramban must mean that if it happened that the non-priest salted it before the offering was taken up to the altar, it need not be salted again. See my Hebrew commentary p. 18.

<sup>217</sup> Verse 13. The word *korbancha* (*your offering*) is in the singular. Since this might be interpreted to refer only to the meal-offering mentioned in this verse, Ramban proceeds to explain that it means here "offerings" in the plural, for all offerings etc.

<sup>218</sup> During the morning Daily Whole-offering on the seven days of the Festival of Succoth, there was in addition to the regular libation of wine, a libation of water on the altar. The drawing of the water from the fountain of Shiloah was marked by a great public festivity held in the Court of the Sanctuary during the evenings of the festival. They were known as the *Simchath Beth Ha'sho'evah* (Rejoicing of the Drawing of the Water).

<sup>219</sup> Numbers 18:19. See Rabbi M. Kasher's Torah Shleimah here, Note 111.

<sup>220</sup> Ibn Ezra's intention in using this phrase ['Nor shall it be eaten'] is unclear to me. Perhaps he means that the priests when eating the flesh of certain offerings [such as the sin-offering, guilt-offering etc., or the Israelite eating the peace-offering] must salt it, otherwise the food is without flavor and thus they show their contempt for it, as they did not take the effort to prepare it properly. The commentators on Ibn Ezra are silent on this point.

<sup>221</sup> Numbers 18:19 [referring to the gifts of the priests]; II Chronicles 13:5 [referring to the kingdom of the House of David].

<sup>222</sup> Numbers 18:19.

root, *a fruitful land into a salt waste*,<sup>223</sup> since a salt waste is as if it has been decreed [upon it that nothing should grow therein]."<sup>224</sup> But there is no sense to his words.

Now it seems to me that since Scripture here states, *the covenant of your G-d*, and does not say "the covenant of the Eternal," which would have been in consonance with the language of the section and the way all the offerings are mentioned [throughout Scripture], or did not say, "the covenant of the Eternal your G-d" - that the reason for this is because salt is derived from water, and it is through the power of the sun which shines upon it that it becomes salt. Now the nature of water is that it soaks into the earth and makes it bring forth and bud; but after it becomes salt it destroys every place and burns it, *that it is not sown, nor bears*.<sup>225</sup> Since a covenant is inclusive of all attributes, water and fire come into it, and *unto her shall come the former dominion*<sup>226</sup> — the Kingdom of G-d, just like salt which seasons all foods and helps to preserve them, but destroys them when they are over-saturated with it. **Thus salt is like the covenant.** It is for this reason that Scripture states, *Ought you not to know that the Eternal, the G-d of Israel, gave the kingdom over Israel to David forever, even to him and to his sons by a covenant of salt*<sup>227</sup> forever? For this too is the attribute of David. Therefore He says in connection with the offerings, *it is an everlasting covenant of salt*,<sup>228</sup> **for the covenant is "the salt of the world," and by virtue of it [the world] exists or may be destroyed.** I have already taught you to understand from our words in other places the meaning of these three words, *brith olam hi (it is a perpetual covenant)*.<sup>229</sup>

**14. V'IM (AND IF) YOU BRING A MEAL-OFFERING OF FIRST-FRUITS.** "The word *im* (if) here has the meaning of *ki* (when), for the bringing [of this meal-offering of the first-fruits] is not a voluntary matter, since Scripture speaks here of the meal-offering of the new barley, which is obligatory.<sup>230</sup> Similarly, '*V'im*' (*and if*) *the Jubilee of the children of Israel will be*<sup>231</sup> [means 'when' the Jubilee will be — for it is bound to come]." This is Rashi's language.

The correct interpretation is that He used the expression *im* (if) because He is not commanding the performance now of this precept [namely bringing the meal-offering of the new barley], and He is thus saying: "When you offer a meal-offering baked on the griddle<sup>232</sup> you will do it in such-and-such a way; and if you offer a meal-offering of the stewing-pan,<sup>233</sup> you will make it in another way; and if the meal-offering you will bring will be the one of first-fruits, you should do it in this manner." Thus the word *im* is here to be understood in its literal sense [namely, 'if']. Then the meaning of the verse, '*V'im*' *the Jubilee of the children of Israel shall be*<sup>234</sup> is as follows: [The heads of the fathers' houses of the tribe of Manasseh] said to Moses: "Even 'if the children of Israel will inherit the Land forever, and will be privileged to sanctify the year of the Jubilee, the inheritance [of Zelophahad] will not return to us" [because his daughters might marry men from other tribes, which would cause the land to be transferred to other tribes].

It is also possible that He is stating: "And if you bring a meal-offering of the first-fruits, you will do it in this prescribed way," as if He were to say, "if the Eternal your G-d will bring you into the Land, and you will reap the harvest thereof and bring the meal-offering of the first-fruits, you will do it in such-and-such a manner;" for G-d always mentions the inheritance of the Land to them conditionally, just as He said, *For if you will diligently keep*

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<sup>223</sup> Psalms 107:34.

<sup>224</sup> So clearly explained in Ibn Ezra (Numbers 18:19).

<sup>225</sup> Deuteronomy 29:22.

<sup>226</sup> Micah 4:8.

<sup>227</sup> II Chronicles 13:5.

<sup>228</sup> Numbers 18:19.

<sup>229</sup> See Exodus 31:16-17, and Ramban there at the end of Verse 13 (Vol. II, p. 548).

<sup>230</sup> Further 23:10. It was brought on the sixteenth day of Nisan — the second day of Passover. It is known as the Omer. For a full discussion see "**The Commandments**," Vol. I, pp. 54-55.

<sup>231</sup> Numbers 36:4.

<sup>232</sup> Verse 5.

<sup>233</sup> Verse 7.

<sup>234</sup> Numbers 36:4.

*all this commandment . . . then will the Eternal drive out all these nations from before you,*<sup>235</sup> and so also in many places.

**3:1. AND IF HIS OFFERING BE A SACRIFICE OF PEACE-OFFERINGS: IF HE OFFER OF THE HERD, WHETHER MALE OR FEMALE.** The reason why the burnt-offering may only be male,<sup>236</sup> whereas in the case of the peace-offering it can be male or female, and the sin-offering must only be female,<sup>237</sup> is very clear, since the *olah* (the burnt-offering) is as its name indicates, [i.e., "ascension" — being that it reaches above all Divine attributes], whilst *sh'lamim* (the peace-offering) is of the expressions: *and all My pleasures 'yashlim' (he will perform* — literally: he will "perfect");<sup>238</sup> *'avanim sh'leimoth'* (whole stones).<sup>239</sup> The sin-offering is in order to appease Him *with the present that goes before*<sup>240</sup> Him. I have already written on this matter.<sup>241</sup> **The guilt-offering must be a male,<sup>242</sup> because the sin-offering is brought for those transgressions [for which, if committed willfully, the sinner] incurs the penalty of excision, in order that the spirit return unto G-d who gave it,<sup>243</sup> but the guilt-offering is not brought for those transgressions for which [if committed willfully] one incurs excision, and therefore it is as if it were for a pleasing odor just like the burnt-offering.**<sup>244</sup> The sin-offering of the prince is a he-goat,<sup>245</sup> because the prince is the sovereign unto whom judgment [rightfully] belongs,<sup>246</sup> and he fights the battles of G-d and lives by his sword;<sup>247</sup> therefore his offering is the same as the he-goat brought in case of idol-worship [by the congregation].<sup>248</sup>

**5. AND AARON'S SONS WILL CAUSE IT TO ASCEND IN FUMES.** This is like His saying further on, *And the priest will cause them to ascend in fumes*<sup>249</sup> for there He alludes to all those portions of the offering which are burnt on the altar, [hence He refers to them in the plural, while here He alludes to the offering as such, and therefore He speaks of it in the singular]. The interpretation [of the Rabbis] on it is as follows:<sup>250</sup> *"And Aaron's sons will cause it to ascend."*<sup>251</sup> *And the priest will cause it to ascend.*<sup>252</sup> *And the priest will cause them to ascend.*<sup>253</sup> Why are all these verses mentioned? *And Aaron's sons will cause it to ascend*<sup>254</sup> — only if the offering is acceptable, but not if it has become disqualified. *And the priest will cause it to ascend*<sup>255</sup> — [this teaches] that he should not mix the fats of one offering with those of another [even though they are both of the flock]. *And the priest will cause them to ascend* — [this teaches] that he should burn them aft at one time."

**9. CHELBO' (THE FAT THEREOF) 'HAALYAH TH'MIMAH' (THE FAT TAIL ENTIRE).** The term *chelev* (fat) in the Sacred Language indicates that part of the fat which is separate from the meat and not joined to

<sup>235</sup> Deuteronomy 11:22-23.

<sup>236</sup> Above, Chapter 1, Verses 3 and 10.

<sup>237</sup> Further, 4:28. This applies only to the sin-offering of an ordinary individual. See further on in the text for the sin-offering of the prince (4:23).

<sup>238</sup> Isaiah 44:28.

<sup>239</sup> **Deuteronomy 27 :6. Since the peace-offering is brought in order to bring peace into the world, it performs the function of harmonizing all attributes, such as justice and mercy. Hence it may be brought from the male or female (Ricanti). See my Hebrew commentary, p. 19.**

<sup>240</sup> Genesis 32:21.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 46:1 (Vol. I, p. 542): *"Jacob offered peace-offerings in order to bring all Divine attributes into accord towards him . . . "* See also ibid., 32:21 (pp. 402-403).

<sup>242</sup> Further, Chapter 5, Verses 15 and 25.

<sup>243</sup> Ecclesiastes 12:7.

<sup>244</sup> Hence just like the burnt-offering is a male [for the reason explained above], so is the guilt-offering.

<sup>245</sup> Further, 4:23; although the sin-offering of a common person is a female, as explained above.

<sup>246</sup> See Ezekiel 21:32.

<sup>247</sup> See Genesis 27:40.

<sup>248</sup> Numbers 15:24.

<sup>249</sup> Further, Verse 16.

<sup>250</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 14:10.

<sup>251</sup> Here in Verse 5 before us, in the case of the peace-offering brought from the herd.

<sup>252</sup> Further, Verse 11 — in the case of the peace-offering of the flock.

<sup>253</sup> Further, Verse 16 - in the case of the peace-offering of the goats.

<sup>254</sup> Here in Verse 5 before us, in the case of the peace-offering brought from the herd.

<sup>255</sup> Further, Verse 11 — in the case of the peace-offering of the flock.

it. *Shuman*, on the other hand, is that fat which is intertwined with the meat and cannot be separated from it, something like that which Scripture states: '*Vayishman Yeshurun*' (*But Jeshurun waxed fat*);<sup>256</sup> *so they did eat, and were filled 'vayash-minu (and became fat);*<sup>257</sup> '*hashmein*' (*make fat*) *the heart of this people;*<sup>258</sup> *and my flesh is lean 'mishamen*' (*and has no fatness*);<sup>259</sup> *and it will be rich 'v'shamein*' (*and fat*);<sup>260</sup> *my soul is satisfied as with marrow 'vadeshen*' (*and fatness*),<sup>261</sup> and similarly in all places. But *cheilev* is the fat which is separate from the meat and covered by a membrane, and is easily peeled off. The Hebrew language never interchanges these terms [*cheilev* and *shuman*] in any place. Thus we say, *basar shamen* (*fat meat*), but not *basar chelev* [since *chelev*, as explained, is the fat which is separate and distinguished from the meat]. Similarly in languages of other nations these terms are separate. The term *chelev* is sometimes used metaphorically, as is written, *when you set apart 'chelbo*' (*the best thereof*) *from it,*<sup>262</sup> since the good part of the produce which is taken up [to be given to the priest], Scripture figuratively calls *chelev*, just as the *chelev* is set apart in the offerings. '*Cheilev kilyoth*' (*the kidney-fat*) *of wheat*<sup>263</sup> -Scripture here compares wheat to the kidneys and the fat therein, just as it states, *and of the blood of the grape you drank foaming wine,*<sup>264</sup> although wine is not blood [hence we must conclude that Scripture only uses these terms figuratively]. *And you will eat the 'chelev*' (*fat*) *of the land*<sup>265</sup> means that they will eat the best of the bullocks, sheep, and goats and all animals. Such is the usage of this figure of speech.

Now the tail does not contain any *chelev* at all,<sup>266</sup> but rather has in it *shuman* (fat) which is not separate from the meat thereof, just as there is *in every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder.*<sup>267</sup> This is confirmed by doctors who in their studies of nature have established the fact that *chelev* [fat which is separate from the meat], is never to be found [in the animal] near the hide, nor in a limb which is always in movement [such as the tail]. The doctors have further said that the nature of *shuman* found in the ribs, sides and tail, which is not separate from the meat, is warm and moist, whilst that fat which can be separated from the meat, such as that which is upon the kidneys, is cold and moist, thick and coarse; it is difficult for the stomach to digest it fully, and it easily spoils; it also increases the white fluid<sup>268</sup> and constipates.

If so, the verse stating, *Eat not any 'chelev*' (*fat*) *nor blood,*<sup>269</sup> does not include the *shuman* (fat) which is upon the tail, for that is not *chelev* by name or nature. If all fat were to come under the term *chelev*, then all fat in an animal — on the shoulders and sides — would not be allowed to be eaten! For Scripture does not say: "All fat which is offered unto G-d you will not eat" [so that you would include in this prohibition the fat of the tail, since it is offered as a fire-offering on the altar]. Rather, He states that "the *chelev* (fat) of all cattle which are brought as

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<sup>256</sup> Deuteronomy 32:15.

<sup>257</sup> Nehemiah 9:25.

<sup>258</sup> Isaiah 6:10.

<sup>259</sup> Psalms 109:24.

<sup>260</sup> Isaiah 30:23.

<sup>261</sup> Psalms 63:6. It should be noted that this verse does not contain the root *shuman*, but *deshen*. We must assume then that Ramban considered them equivalent terms. This is strengthened by an examination of the Hebrew wording of the verse: '*k'mo chelev vadeshen tisba nafshi.*' Now *deshen* is thus in parallelism to *chelev*; hence *deshen* must here be understood as *shuman*, as explained above.

<sup>262</sup> Numbers 18:30.

<sup>263</sup> Deuteronomy 32:14.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Genesis 45:18.

<sup>266</sup> Having established the premise that the term *chelev* has a figurative meaning, Ramban now proceeds to his main theme here: that the tail of the animal contains no *chelev* [which is the term for the fat which is forbidden to be eaten] at all, but rather it contains *shuman* [which is the fatty substance contained in the meat which cannot be separated from it, and is permitted to be eaten]. **At the end of this lengthy discussion it will be made clear that Ramban's intention is to refute a major contention of the Karaites, who prohibited the eating of the fat of the tail, while the true tradition of the Rabbis permits it to be eaten.**

<sup>267</sup> Ezekiel 24:4.

<sup>268</sup> The ancients believed that a person's physical and mental constitution is determined by the proper balance of the four bodily fluids which exist in every man. These are "the four humors" — the red, the white, the green, and the black — which vary constantly in man and determine his state of health and disposition at any given moment. Since the eating of *chelev* increases the white fluid beyond the proper proportion, it affects the health of the person adversely.

<sup>269</sup> Further, Verse 17.



offerings upon the altar, must not be eaten."<sup>270</sup> It is indeed impossible to say that He prohibited all these fats of the animal which are offered on the altar, for if so the kidneys and the lobe above the liver would be forbidden to be eaten [since they are offered on the altar]!<sup>271</sup> Rather, whatever fat comes under the term *chelev* [as explained above], is forbidden to be eaten, even though it is not brought on the altar, such as the fat on the spleen; and that which is not called *chelev* may be eaten even though it is offered on the altar, such as the [fat of the] kidneys and the lobe above the liver, and similarly also that of the tail [which even though it is brought on the altar, may be eaten because it is *shuman* and not *chelev*]. Similarly, Scripture states in connection with the command of the installation of the priests, *And you will take of the ram 'ha'chelev' (the fat) and the tail,*<sup>272</sup> and at the performance thereof it is written, *And he took the fat, and the tail,*<sup>273</sup> for the tail is not *chelev*. Now this verse [before us] which states '*chelbo ha'alyah th'mimah*', means that he will offer up [from the peace-offerings] the fat thereof, together with the entire fat tail, meaning that when he removes the "entire fat tail" until the rump-bone, he must take with it much fat that is attached to it on the inside. Thus the Rabbis have said in Torath Kohanim:<sup>274</sup> "This tells us that he must also take the fat near the tail, which is the fat between the sinews [in the loins]."

In my opinion the purport of this verse is also like that of the other verse: *And he will offer of it all 'chelbo' (the fat thereof): 'ha'alyah' (the fat tail), and the fat that covers the inwards.*<sup>275</sup> So here likewise He says, *And He will offer of the sacrifice of peace-offerings* all the fat thereof. In these two verses [just quoted], He first makes a general statement, that [the priest] should offer all the fat thereof, and then He mentions in detail all the parts that he should offer [namely, *the fat tail entire . . . and the fat that covers the inwards . . . and the two kidneys, and the fat upon them . . . and the lobe above the liver . . .*]. Now not everything that is mentioned here is *chelev* [fat forbidden to be eaten], for the two kidneys [themselves] and the lobe above the liver are not at all included in the term *chelev*. Thus He stated in the section of *Bayom Ha'shemini*:<sup>276</sup> *And 'ha 'chelev'(the fat), and the kidneys, and the lobe of the liver,*<sup>277</sup> mentioning the *chelev* by itself and then the other inwards by themselves, even as He said, *And you will take of the ram 'ha'chelev' and the tail.*<sup>278</sup> If so, the reason why the tail is offered [on the altar] is not because it is included here in Verse 9] in the term *chelbo*. Rather, He states here that the priest should burn [on the altar] from the peace-offerings all the fat thereof, and then He proceeds to explain all the inwards [which he should offer], some being *chelev* and some not. The meaning of the verse in the case of the sin-offering stating, *And all the fat thereof he will take away, as 'chelev' (the fat) is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace-offerings,*<sup>279</sup> is not to refer only to that which is strictly speaking *chelev*, for if that were so, the kidneys and the lobe on the liver [which are not *chelev*] would not be offered up in the case of the sin-offering. Rather, the intention of the verse is that he is to take away the *chelev* together with all the things that are removed from the peace-offerings. Similarly, [the verse stating in the case of the she-lamb brought as a sin-offering], *And all the fat thereof will he take away, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace-offerings,*<sup>280</sup> means that he is to take away as he had done in the case of the peace-offerings, meaning everything that he had taken away there, including the tail with its fat. Similarly, *And they put the 'chalavim' (fats) upon the*

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<sup>270</sup> Ramban's intent is to refer to the following verse: *For whosoever eats the fat of the beast, of which men present an offering unto the Eternal, even the soul that eats it will be cut off from his people* (further, 7:25). Now the verse does not state "For whosoever eats the fat which men present as an offering ..." [so that you could argue, since the tail and the fat thereon are offered upon the altar, therefore they may not be eaten]. Rather, the verse states, *For whosoever eats the fat 'of the beast' of which men present an offering . . .*, thus teaching that the *chelev* of any animal which can be brought as an offering — whether it is actually brought as a hallowed offering or is eaten as common food — is forbidden to be eaten. Thus the verse establishes that *chelev* of the ox, sheep, and goat [from which offerings can be brought] is forbidden to be eaten, whether it be an offering or common food.

<sup>271</sup> Verses: 4 and 10, etc. **And yet even the Karaites do not forbid these foods!**

<sup>272</sup> Exodus 29:22. This shows that the fat of the tail is not called *chelev*.

<sup>273</sup> Further, 8:25.

<sup>274</sup> Torath Kohanim, Vayikra 19:2.

<sup>275</sup> Further, 7:3.

<sup>276</sup> "On the Eighth Day" of Initiation. It is the third section in this Book of Vayikra, known as *Shemini*.

<sup>277</sup> Further, 9:10. The use of the separate terms there thus clearly proves that not everything mentioned is *chelev*; hence we may also say that the *alyah* mentioned is not *chelev*.

<sup>278</sup> Exodus 29:22. This shows that the fat of the tail is not called *chelev*.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., 4:31.

<sup>280</sup> Ibid., Verse 35.

*breasts, and he caused the fats to ascend in fumes*<sup>281</sup> means [the *chelev*] together with all that is removed from them.

I have had to discuss this point at length in order to shut up the mouths of the Sadducees,<sup>282</sup> may their name be erased [from memory], for in matters of Torah it has been said, *Answer a fool according to his folly*,<sup>283</sup> and the Rabbis have also said,<sup>284</sup> "Be diligent in learning Torah, in order to<sup>285</sup> be able to answer the unbeliever."

The Gaon Rav Saadia<sup>286</sup> explained it to them,<sup>287</sup> by saying that *chelbo ha'alyah* is missing a connective *vav*, which would make it: *chelbo v'ha'alyah* - (its fat "and" the tail) [thus clearly meaning that the tail is not included in the *chelev*]. But Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra refuted Rav Saadia Gaon by saying [that "from a grammatical point of view this could not be possible, for if so] it should have said *chelbo elyato*<sup>288</sup> or *hachelev ha'alyah*.<sup>289</sup> But Ibn Ezra's refutation is not valid, for we find [Scripture stating], *And all Israel and their elders, and officers, and their judges*<sup>290</sup> I will yet mention<sup>291</sup> a great mistake which Rabbi Abraham ibn Ezra made in his arguments with them [i.e., the Karaites], in which he spoke more wrongly than they.<sup>292</sup> However, the Gaon's interpretation is not correct,<sup>293</sup> and surely it is not an argument sufficiently persuasive to permit the eating [of the tail because of it]. But the interpretation which our Rabbis advanced<sup>294</sup> on the verse, *You will eat no fat, of ox, or sheep, or goat*,<sup>295</sup> that He prohibited only [that kind of fat like] the fat of the ox which is common to all [i.e., the sheep and the goat, thus excepting the fat of the tail of the sheep, which is not found in the ox], that is a proper interpretation [from which we may clearly know that the tail is permitted to be eaten]! But in order not to give contestants an occasion

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<sup>281</sup> Ibid., 9:20.

<sup>282</sup> So also in Ibn Ezra here. The "**Sadducees**," strictly speaking, were a sect during the Second Temple that denied the authority of the oral tradition. The name **Sadducee**, however, became a synonym for all those who denied Talmudic authority. The reference here is definitely to the **Karaites** - a sect which appeared in the Gaonic period (760 Common Era) which rejected the authority of the Oral Law, and based itself on individual interpretation of the Torah. A major contention of theirs (based upon the present verse) was that the tail is forbidden to be eaten since it is here called *chelev*. See also Maimonides who writes: "the heretics who here in the Orient are called Karaites" ("**The Commandments**," Vol. I, p. 160).

<sup>283</sup> Proverbs 26: 5. Ramban's allusion [in his words "for in matters of Torah it has been said, *Answer . . .*"] is to a point the **Sages** have made regarding an obvious contradiction in the Book of Proverbs. In Verse 4 there it states, *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like unto him*, and immediately in the following verse it states, *Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes*. The Sages explained that there is no contradiction: "in matters of Torah answer him, but in other matters do not" (**Shabbath 30b**). It is to this principle that Ramban alludes in writing, "for in matters of Torah it has been said ..."

<sup>284</sup> Aboth 2:14.

<sup>285</sup> "**In order to.**" In our standards text of the Mishnah: "**and know what to.**"

<sup>286</sup> See in Exodus, Vol. II, p. 99, Note 230.

<sup>287</sup> I.e., the Karaites. "Saadia persisted in fighting **Karaism** with literary weapons; and throughout his checkered life he continued to combat its apostles with unrelenting vigor, so that he became the most dreaded and most hated opponent of the [Karaites] sect down to our own times" (H. Malter, "Saadia Gaon," p. 262).

<sup>288</sup> In other words, since *chelbo* comes with the pronominal suffix [meaning "its fat"], the word *ha'alyah* (the tail) should likewise have come in that form: *elyato* ("its tail").

<sup>289</sup> Or since *v'ha'alyah* (according to Saadia Gaon's interpretation) comes without the pronominal suffix, the word *chelbo* should also not have it, making it — *hachelev v'ha'alyah*. Thus Ibn Ezra is saying that the Karaite interpretation still stands, for since it is written *chelbo ha'alyah* it would appear that *ha'alyah* is in apposition to *chelbo*, thus explaining: "What is *chelbo Ha'alyah*" — Ramban, however, will refute this argument of Ibn Ezra, bringing proof from another verse in Scripture which mentions two nouns together, and yet one is written with a pronominal suffix and the other without. Thus Saadia Gaon's refutation of the Karaite interpretation is valid, and the tradition that the tail is not *chelev* is confirmed. See, however, further in text where Ramban comments on the Gaon's interpretation.

<sup>290</sup> Joshua 8:33. Here *u'zkeinav* (and their elders) comes with a pronominal suffix, and *v'shotrim* (and officers) does not. In our case too it is therefore correct to say, as Saadia Gaon does, that *chelbo ha'alyah* means *chelbo v'ha'alyah*, and the two nouns do not stand in apposition to each other, thus proving that the *alyah* is not *chelev*.

<sup>291</sup> Further, 7:25.

<sup>292</sup> Ramban's intent is to Ibn Ezra's statement there that *chelev* of a cattle slaughtered as common food is not forbidden to be eaten. That opinion is more harmful than what the Karaite have said. For in abstaining from eating the fat of the tail no infringement of the Torah is incurred, whilst in eating of the *chelev* of cattle slaughtered as common food, one violates a prohibition of the Torah!

<sup>293</sup> In other words, Ibn Ezra's argument against the Gaon's interpretation is surely not valid, as explained above. Yet the Gaon's interpretation is also not persuasive, since his explanation is dependent upon a missing connective *vav*, making the word *ha'alyah* — *v'ha'alyah* ("and" the tail). Such an interpretation is not sufficiently convincing to base thereon the permission to eat the tail.

<sup>294</sup> Chullin 117a.

<sup>295</sup> Further, 7:23.

to dispute [the tradition of the Rabbis], we have had to bring the [other] proofs and arguments which we have written.

**12. AND IF HIS OFFERING BE A GOAT.** He mentions here the species, thus meaning, "if of the species of goats is his offering," [and thus includes male and female]. This is like the opinion of Onkelos who translated: "and if of the *'bnei* (species of) the goats is his offering." Similarly, that which He said in connection with the burnt-offering, *whether of the sheep, or of the goats*,<sup>296</sup> also means of their species [for since the male of the goats is called *tayish*, the verse there which speaks of a burnt-offering which can be only a male, must perforce mean "the species of the goats," which automatically includes the males].

In my opinion<sup>297</sup> the Sacred Language is not particular as to the names of animals, for the majority of them have the same name for both male and female, such as camel, ass, rock-badger, hare, and swine, and among the birds the young pigeon and the turtle-dove. Even among the species which do have different names for the male and female — such as *shor* and *parah* (ox and cow), *kesev*, *kisbah* (he-lamb, ewe-lamb), *tayish* and *eiz* (he-goat and she-goat) — Scripture is not particular, and will sometimes say *seh* and *shor* of the female, similar to that which is written, *'V'shor o seh'* [literally: "and ox or lamb] *you will not kill it and its young both in one day*,<sup>298</sup> which applies only to the dam and the lamb [it being permissible to slaughter the male parent and its young in one day], in accordance with the opinion of the Sage who says<sup>299</sup> that [in animals] one does not take into consideration the seed of the male parent. Similarly, *of 'ha'izim' (the goats) for a burnt-offering, he will offer it a male without blemish*,<sup>300</sup> means of the *t'yashim* (the he-goats). *And if his offering be an 'eiz' (a goat)*<sup>301</sup> means a male or female [since a peace-offering, which is the subject of this verse, can be brought either from the male or the femals]. So also, *And if his means suffice not for a 'seh' (lamb)*<sup>302</sup> means *a ewe-lamb or a she-goat* [as is expressly stated there in the preceding verse].<sup>303</sup>

## Ketubim: Tehillim (Psalms) 73:1-28

Rashi	Targum
1. A song of Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, to the pure of heart.	1. A psalm composed by Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, to the pure of heart.
2. But as for me, my feet had almost turned away, in an instant my steps would have been swept away.	2. But my feet had almost slipped; my steps had all but faltered.
3. For I envied the perverse; I would see the tranquility of the wicked.	3. For I became jealous of the mockers whenever I would see the welfare of the wicked.
4. For there are no fetters to their death, and their health is sound.	4. For they are not dismayed and daunted by the day of their death; their opinions are sought out, and their heart is fat and strong.
5. In the toil of mortal man they are not, neither are they plagued with mankind.	5. They do not toil with the toil of men who are occupied with Torah; and they are not smitten with the righteous/generous sons of men who endure sufferings.
6. Therefore, they wear pride as a necklace; the robbery	6. Because of this, pride has adorned them, a crown that

<sup>296</sup> Above, 1:10.

<sup>297</sup> The above was the interpretation of Ibn Ezra. Hence Ramban now states, "in my opinion ..."

<sup>298</sup> Further., 2:28.

<sup>299</sup> Chullin 78b. The name of the Sage is Rabbi Yehudah.

<sup>300</sup> Above, 1:10.

<sup>301</sup> Here in Verse 12.

<sup>302</sup> Further, 5:7.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, Verse 6. The section there deals with the offering of higher or lower value, Scripture first stating that where the offender can afford it he should bring as a sin-offering a ewe-lamb or a she-goat. Then follows the verse: *And if his means suffice not for a 'seh' (lamb)*. The word *seh* in this case must perforce mean a ewe-lamb or she-goat. Thus it is proven that Scripture uses the term *seh* also for the female.

Rashi	Targum
that they commit envelops their hips.	they place on their heads because of their rapacity.
7. Because of their fat, their eyes bulge; they surpassed the imaginings of their heart.	7. Their faces are distorted by fat; their carvings have transgressed, the heart is ashamed.
8. They consume, and speak wickedly about oppression; they speak about the Most High.	8. They will decay because of fatness; and they will speak to cause harm and to oppress; they will speak from the arrogance of their heart.
9. They have set their mouth against Heaven, and their tongue walks through the earth.	9. They have set their mouth against the holy ones of heaven; and their tongue flares against the holy ones of the earth.
10. Therefore, His people will return here, and the waters of the full [stream] are drain water to them.	10. Then he turns against the people of the LORD, to rule them; and they will smite them with hammers, and cause many tears to flow from them.
11. And they say, " <b>How does God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High?</b> "	11. And they will say, " <b>How then does God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High?</b> "
12. Behold these are wicked, yet they are tranquil in the world and have increased wealth.	12. Behold, these are the wicked who dwell securely in this age; they have acquired property, they have procured wealth.
13. But for nought I cleansed my heart and bathed my hands with cleanliness.	13. Truly in vain have I purified my heart, and washed my hands in purity.
14. And I was plagued all the days, and my chastisement was every morning.	14. And I have been smitten all the day; and my admonition has come with every dawn.
15. If I said, "I shall tell it as it is," behold I have made the generation of Your children into traitors.	15. If I said, "I will talk like them" behold, I would have done evil to the generation of Your children.
16. And when I ponder to know this, it is iniquity in my eyes.	16. And I thought to know this, but it is a weariness in my sight.
17. Until I came to the sanctuaries of God, and I understood their end.	17. Until the time of redemption, when I come to the sanctuaries of God, I will understand their fate.
18. Only in slippery places do You set them; You cast them down to ruin.	18. Truly You have placed them in dark places, You have thrown them into the wasteland.
19. How they became desolate instantly! They were completely consumed by terrors.	19. How they have become a desolation in a moment! They are finished, destroyed because of chaos.
20. As a dream without awakening; O Lord, in the city You will despise their form.	20. Like a dream of a man who awakes: the LORD in the great day of judgment, when they awake from their graves; in anger You will despise their likeness.
21. For my heart was in ferment, and my mind was on edge.	21. For my heart will feel pain, and my kidneys burn like fire.
22. But I was brutish and I did not know; I was [as] a beast with You.	22. And I am a fool, and I do not know; I was reckoned as a beast with You.
23. Yet I was constantly with You; You grasped my right hand.	23. But I am continually with You; You have grasped my right hand.
24. With Your counsel You led me, and after[wards], You took me [for] glory.	24. You will guide me by Your counsel; and after the glory that You commanded to come upon me is complete, You will take me.
25. For whom do I have in heaven, and I desired no one with You on earth.	25. Who, like You, is mine in heaven, but You? And besides You I desire no friend on earth.
26. My flesh and my heart yearn; God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.	26. My body and my heart are destroyed; God is the Mighty One who tries my heart and my portion forever.
27. For behold, those who have distanced themselves from You will perish; You have cut off anyone who strays from You.	27. For behold, the wicked who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all who stray from the fear of You.

Rashi	Targum
28. <b>But as for me-God's nearness is my good; I have placed my refuge in the Lord God, to tell all Your mission.</b>	28. <b>But to be near to the LORD is good to me; I have placed my confidence in the LORD God, to tell to all the righteous/generous the commandments of Your charge.</b>

## Rashi's Commentary for: Psalms 73:1-28

**1 A song of Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, etc.** Since the topic of this psalm deals with the troubles that befall Israel, he commences it in this manner. And this is the meaning: Although I cry out and am dismayed at Israel's troubles, I knew that the Holy One, blessed be He, is good to them, and that He brings evil upon them for their own good, in order to give them merit in the life of the world to come.

**2 But as for me** before I laid this to my heart.

**my feet had almost turned away** and my steps swep

**3 For I envied the perverse** Those who pervert their ways, whose tranquility I would see.

**the perverse** Heb. בהוללים, mixed, as (Isa. 1:22): "your wine is diluted (מהול) watter."

**4 For there are no fetters to their death** Heb. חרצבות, an expression of tying, as (Isa. 58:6): "to undo the fetters (חרצבות) of wickedness," meaning the locks of the fetters with which they bind the poor. Here, too, there are no pains to their death. Those who die among them die healthy, [strong as] a palace, without pains. But our Rabbis explained חרצבות as an abbreviation, meaning that they are not (שאין) frightened (חרדין) or saddened (עצבין) by the day of death (Shab. 31b). Another explanation: that the Holy One, blessed be He, does not delay (מאחר) their desire (צביונם).

**6 Therefore, they wear pride as a necklace** Because of this, pride adorns them as a necklace, insofar as it ascends upon his neck.

**the robbery that they commit envelopes their hips** The robbery they commit makes them fat, enveloping their buttocks and hips with th

**7 Because of their fat, their eyes bulge** Their eyes bulge because of the abundant fat, for in an emaciated person, the eyes are sunken.

**they surpassed the imaginings of their heart** More than what their heart hopes for and awaits, came to them. In the attainment of their hand, they surpassed the desire of their heart.

**8 They consume** their neighbors.

**and speak wickedly about oppression** To oppress the needy.

**they speak about the Most High** e.g. Pharaoh, Sennacherib, and Nebuchadnezzar. [Pharaoh said] (Exod. 5:2): "Who is the Lord that I should obey Him?" [Sennacherib said] (Isa. 36:20), "Who are they among all the gods of the lands...?" [Nebuchadnezzar said] (Isa. 14:14), "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds." That is the meaning of: "They have set their mouth against Heaven."

**10 Therefore, His people will return here** Since His people sees that the way of the wicked prospers, they will return on the way of the wicked, to adopt their ways.

**here** Heb. הֵלֵם, as (Jud. 18:3): “Who brought you here (הֵלֵם) ?” [Equivalent to] פֶּה.

**and the waters of the full are drain water to them** And the waters of the full stream they are words of Torah are considered by them as water that drains out, an

**11 And they say, “How does God know”** How can we say that there is knowledge in the Holy One, blessed be He, and that His Torah is true?

**12 Behold these are wicked** They [are wicked] and transgress His Torah; yet they are tranquil in the world and increase power and wealth.

**they are tranquil in the world** An expression of tranquility.

**have increased** Heb. הִשְׁגוּ, have increased. Menachem (p. 72) explains: יָשׁוּב עִמּוֹ הַלּוֹם, the wicked will return to crush (לְהִלֵּם) the people of the Holy One, blessed be He. The first interpretation I learned from the words of Rabbi Meir the son of Isaac, the cantor, may the memory of the righteous be for a blessing.

**13 But for nought I cleansed my heart** All this refers back to: “And they say, ‘How does God know?’ “ They also say, “But for nothing and in vain we keep the commandments of the Holy One, blessed be He, for behold, we are plagued all the days.”

**14 and my chastisement** appears all day; constantly, from morning to morning, new troubles are renewed.

**15 If I said, “I shall tell it as it is”** Said Asaph, “If I said in my heart to tell everything as it is, all that His people say about this.”

**behold I have made the generation of Your children into traitors** That is to say that I would make them into traitors and wicked men.

**16 And when I ponder** in my heart.

**to know this** what the manner of the Holy One, blessed be He, is.

**So it is iniquity in my eyes.** This manner appeared to me as iniquity and not justice.

**17 Until** I came to the sanctuaries of God, which are in Jerusalem, and saw what happened to Sennacherib. Then I understood the end of the wicked, that it is to destruction. Then I said, “All the good that comes to them is only slippery places; for the Holy One, blessed be He, makes their way slippery, that it should be easy and smooth, so that they should not put their heart to return to Him, and they should perish.”

**18 Only in slippery places do You set them** All the goodness that comes to them, for ultimately, You cast them down to ruin.

**19 by terrors** By demons.

**20 As a dream without awakening** As a sleep without end (without awakening), which is an eternal sleep, so did they have (Isa. 37:36): “And an angel of the Lord went forth and slew...of the camp of Assyria.”

**O Lord, in the city You will despise their form** In Jerusalem, with which they dealt evilly, there the form of their image was despised, and they were all burnt.

**21 For my heart was in ferment** Before I saw this downfall with the holy spirit, my heart was in ferment

because the way of the wicked prospered, and my mind was on edge (אשתונן), an expression of a sharpened sword (שנון). When it is reflexive, the “tav” is placed in the middle of the radical, as is the case of every word whose radical commences with “shin.”

**22 But I** was brutish, and I did not know what this manner was, and I was as a beast with You.

**23 Yet I** Although I saw all this constantly, I was with You, and I did not move from fear of You.

**You grasped my right hand** to strengthen me in Your fear when my feet are about to turn from Your way, as it is stated above (verse 2): “my feet had almost turned away.”

**24 You led me** Heb. תנחני, [like] נחיתני, You led me.

**and after[wards], You took me [for] glory** If the cantillation sign were on קָבוֹד, its interpretation would be: After You bestowed upon Sennacherib all the glory You had allotted to him, You will take me to You. You have performed wondrous miracles for Israel and have destroyed Sennacherib. Now that the cantillation sign is on וְאַחַר, this is its interpretation: (and afterwards,) You took me to glory; You drew me to You for glory and beauty.

**25 For whom do I have in heaven** [Was there] any angel that I chose for me as a god? I chose only You.

**26 My flesh...yearn** My flesh and my heart yearn for You. **yearn** Heb. כלה, an expression of desire, as (119:81): “My soul yearned (כלתה) for Your salvation.”

**27 who strays from You** Who separates himself from You.

**28 Your mission** Your message; the holy spirit that comes into my heart to say it.

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## Meditation from the Psalms

### Psalms 73:1-28

By: H.Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David

The third book of Tehillim<sup>304</sup> begins with this psalm. Whereas the first two books of Psalms are dedicated primarily to specific, personal events in the lives of individuals, the last two books concern general, universal themes which demonstrate God’s goodness. The introductory verse of this psalm is a resounding declaration of faith which eloquently sets the tone for the ensuing compositions: Truly God is [naught but] good to Israel!

The psalmist surveyed Jewish history, past, present, and future, and beheld only misery and travail for the Jews, while evil men flourished. Countless other observers have had their faith weakened by the same gnawing question: Why does they way of the wicked prosper.<sup>305</sup>

The superscription of our psalm ascribes authorship to Assaf.<sup>306</sup> Assaf addresses those plagued by indecision and

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<sup>304</sup> Corresponding, in the Torah, to the book of Vayikra (Leviticus).

<sup>305</sup> Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 12:1

<sup>306</sup> This is the second psalm attributed to Assaf, one of the ten composers who contributed to the Book of Tehillim (Bava Basra 14b). In addition to this work, Assaf wrote eleven more psalms (73-83) making him the most prolific psalmist after David himself. Assaf was the leading Levite musician of his times [I Chronicles 16:5,7; 25:1,2,6] and his name is often equated with that of David, [Nehemiah 12:46]. Assaf was more than a composer, he was also endowed with the spirit of prophecy [I Chronicles 25:2]. Many centuries later we find that when King Chizkiyahu rededicated the Temple he commanded the Levites to praise HaShem With the words of David and Assaf the Seer [II Chronicles 29:30, see Tanna d’Bei Eliyahu Chap. 30]. The Sages differ as to the precise identity of Assaf. Rabbi Yochanan says that Assaf is one of the three sons of Korach who jointly composed many of the psalms. However, since he was a devoted Torah scholar, he merited the privilege of composing songs himself as well as in collaboration with his brothers. Based on a series of verses (I Chronicles

doubt. 'Do not be troubled by seeming inconsistencies', he counsels, 'for everything God does to Israel is good. He causes you to suffer now, so that the fruits of your good deeds may be preserved for the future world of reward'.<sup>307</sup> Remember this and no complaints will ever escape your lips; instead, your heart will overflow with endless hymns of gratitude.<sup>308</sup>

Our psalm, and Ashlamata, are all about a famous question asked by the Prophet:

*Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 12:1 Right would You be, HaShem, were I to contend with You, yet will I reason with You: Why do the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they secure that deal very treacherously?*

We touched briefly on this subject when we looked at Psalms chapter 12. However, because our psalmist devoted this entire psalm to this question, and it is the subject of our Ashlamata, I would like to examine this question in greater depth.

This famous question needs to be answered in order that we should begin to understand the ways of HaShem. This question is especially important at Rosh HaShana (Yom Teruah).<sup>309</sup>

In various places, the Torah compares a person to a tree:

*Devarim (Deuteronomy) 20:19 A person is like the tree of a field...  
Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 65:22 For as the days of a tree will be the days of my people.  
Yirmiyahu (Jeremiah) 17:8 He will be like a tree planted near water...*

All men enter the world with their tree planted on the middle line between good and evil. Their branches hang on both sides and they will bear fruit on both sides. HaShem will bring mitzvot and sins in order that they should test them. Most (99.99%) all people will remain firmly planted and will never move their tree off that middle line.

In Beresheet (Genesis) 3:9, Adam and Chava had just eaten some fruit from the forbidden tree and, sensing HaShem's presence in the Garden of Eden, they hid among the trees. While they were hiding, HaShem asked Adam a one-word question. In Hebrew that word is *ayeka?* In English it means, "**Where are you**"? This question continues to reverberate through time to confront every man: Where are you?

Each man has the power of choice, and is able to choose either side, knowingly and willingly, as well as to possess whichever one he wishes. Man was therefore created with both a good inclination (yetzer tov) and an evil inclination (yetzer hara). He has the power to incline himself in which ever direction he desires.<sup>310</sup>



Therefore, the physical world was made neutral, left for man to determine how it would be used. One world, two possibilities, and man is the one to determine whether or not he walks that path, or stumbles it in. But, try it he must, for that is what he was created to do.

Those who are righteous/generous, the tzaddikim, in this world have made a conscious, decision to plant their tree on the side of righteousness/generosity. Those who are wicked, in this world, have made a decision to plant their tree on the side of wickedness. Yet, most people never make a decision

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6:22-28 citing the lineages of Assaf and Aviassaf) Rav maintains that Assaf could not have been one of Korach's sons (Shir HaShirim Rabbah 4:4).

<sup>307</sup> Radak; Rashi

<sup>308</sup> These opening remarks are excerpted, and edited, from: *The ArtScroll Tanach Series, Tehillim*, A new translation with a commentary anthologized from Talmudic, Midrashic, and rabbinic sources. Commentary by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer, Translation by Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Feuer in collaboration with Rabbi Nosson Scherman.

<sup>309</sup> I learned this lesson from Rabbi Akiva Tatz.

<sup>310</sup> Derech HaShem, 1:3:1



to move their tree one way or the other, and thus they remain in the middle, balanced between good and evil, they are still firmly straddling the line, a very bad position to be in. They fail to do what they were created to do.

Rosh HaShanah is a day tailor made by HaShem, for planting one's tree on the side of righteousness/generosity. We were born to choose life. We were born to become tzaddikim!

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:19** I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both you and your seed may live: 20 That you may love the HaShem your G-d, and that you may obey His voice, and that you may cleave unto Him: for He is your life, and the length of your days: that you may dwell in the land which HaShem sware unto your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.*

The type of choices that are able to accomplish an attachment to HaShem, are those choices taken for the express purpose of attaching to life, and to good, instead of what is temporary, and therefore to the evil.

These kinds of choices are made in the context of confronting moral dilemmas when we are torn in two directions, and we do not have a powerful inner program instilled by heredity or environment pointing us in the right direction. We desire one thing, but we know that the right decision is in the other direction, not because of our inner program but because HaShem told us in the Torah that that is the way to go. It is in these sorts of situations that present us with the opportunity of attaching ourselves to righteousness/generosity, to life.

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 30:15-19** Look, I have placed before you today the life and the good, and the death and the evil, that which I command you today, to love HaShem your LORD, to walk in His ways, to observe His commandments, His decrees, and His ordinances ... But if your heart will stray and you will not listen, and you are led astray, and you prostrate yourselves to strange gods and serve them, I tell you today that you will surely be lost ... I have placed life and death before you, blessing and curse; and you will choose life so that you will live, you and your offspring...*

Now, let's look at the implications that can be derived from the fact that our tree will always have some branches on the other side of this line, no matter which decision we have made. The Midrash provides a perfect introduction to this subject as it states the way HaShem acts in a very succinct way:

**Midrash PESIQTÁ deRAB KAHANA Pisqa Nine IX:I** [Concerning the verse: When a bull or sheep or goat is born, it will remain seven days with its mother; and from the eighth day on it will be acceptable as an offering by fire to the Lord (Lev. 22:27)]: *Your righteousness/generosity is like the mountains of God, Your judgments are like the great deep; [man and beast You save, O LORD] (Ps. 36:6). R. Ishmael and R. Aqiba: R. Ishmael says, "With the righteous/generous, who carry out the Torah, which was given from the mountains of God the Holy One, blessed be He, does righteousness/generosity like the mountains of God. Your righteousness/generosity is like the mountains of God. But with the wicked, who do not carry out the Torah, which was given 'from the mountains of God,' the Holy One, blessed be He, seeks a strict accounting, unto the great deep. Your judgments are like the great deep. R. Aqiba says, "All the same are these and those: the Holy One, blessed be He, seeks a strict accounting with [all of] them in accord with strict justice. He seeks a strict accounting with the righteous/generous, collecting from them the few bad deeds that they do in this world, in order to pay them an abundant reward in the world to come. And He affords prosperity to the wicked and gives them a full reward for the minor religious duties that they successfully accomplished in this world, in order to exact a full penalty from them in the world to come."*

Now that we have succinctly seen how HaShem works, let us examine this concept in more detail. We shall continue to use the metaphor of the tree to help explain how HaShem works.

If we have made a conscious decision to move our tree to the side of righteousness/generosity, then we are on the road to becoming a great Tzaddik. Nevertheless, we will still have some branches which hang over the side of

wickedness. HaShem, in His mercy, will assist us in either moving our tree more, or in pruning the branches which are on the side of wickedness. The pruning of the branches is what we see as the tribulations that the righteous/generous encounter in their walk with HaShem. The sufferings and trials of the righteous/generous are simply the pruning of their wayward branches. These branches are the sins which the righteous/generous commit. Since evil is temporary, it's *reward* (punishment) is paid out in this world. HaShem can see that this tree will be with Him in the Olam HaBa, the world to come. In that world of clarity, there will be no sin and no ambiguity. Therefore the sins of the righteous/generosity must receive their *reward* (correction) in this world, because in the Olam HaBa there is only righteousness/generosity.

People who have attached themselves to the Eternal, even if they have only done so once in their lives, will make it to the Olam HaBa eventually, in spite of the multitude of their transgressions. Nevertheless, those transgressions must be corrected in this world.

But what about that person's past transgressions? His transgressions are a barrier to the enjoyment of the Olam HaBa and consequently they must be dealt with and purified. Consequently, the transgressions of such a person must be dealt with either in this world or in Gehinom (hell). But once again utilitarian considerations mandate that the necessary purification be accomplished in this world. Therefore, anyone who belongs in the Olam HaBa but is blemished by transgressions, as most of us are, this world can logically be expected to be a vale of tears.

Jewish tradition teaches that HaShem's policy is never to allow a person's mitzvot (commandments) to be cancelled by his transgressions. Therefore, if a person performed his mitzvot with the type of dedication that is required to attach himself to HaShem and to eternal life, this act altered his inner reality permanently. He is now a person who is attached to the Olam HaBa once and for all and he will eventually enjoy that life.

We certainly do not want to think of ourselves as wicked. But most of us know that we are not tzaddikim gemurim, "totally righteous/generous people" either. If so, we will make it to the Olam HaBa with HaShem's help, as all people in general do except for the wicked. But this means that something has to be done to cleanse us of our many evil deeds. This can either be done by the means of hardships that we suffer in this world, or by subjecting us to the tortures of Gehinom or hell after we die.

As the tortures of hell are infinitely more painful than any tribulation we might experience in this world, we ought to prefer to complete our purification in this one. So why, on Rosh HaShana, are we asking HaShem for an easy year? And how could the decree of a good year possibly be considered a favorable judgment?

*Shabbath 104a* If one comes to cleanse himself, he is helped by HaShem.

There is an additional component that we need to be aware of. The righteous/generous is seeking an eternal reward and is not interested in a temporary reward, and because HaShem has promised an eternal reward, the ONLY reward is the reward in the Olam HaBa, the world to come. Because the righteous/generous man has not attached himself to the *temporary* world, any reward in this world becomes unavailable to him. He is not attached to this world.

On the other hand, if we have made a conscious decision to move our tree to the side of wickedness, then we are on the road to becoming a great rasha, a wicked/mean person. Nevertheless, we will still have some branches which hang over the side of righteousness/generosity. Even the most wicked/mean person does some mitzvot, some kindness in this world. HaShem, in His mercy, will assist the rasha in either moving his tree more, or in pruning the branches which are on the side of righteousness/generosity. The pruning of the branches is what we see as the prosperity that the wicked encounter in this world. The prosperity of the wicked is simply the pruning of their wayward branches. These branches are their mitzvot. HaShem can see that this tree will NOT be with Him in the Olam HaBa, the world to come. In that world of clarity there can be no sin and no ambiguity. Therefore the mitzvot of the wicked must receive their "reward" (blessing) in this world, because in the Olam HaBa there is only righteousness/generosity. In the Olam HaBa, the world of clarity, the wicked/mean will simply

not exist.

Reward in this world is mainly distributed to those who cannot receive their reward in the Olam HaBa because they simply won't make it there. (The exceptions are too complicated to explain in the context of this essay.) But even such people, known as reshaim gemurim, or "totally evil/mean", have many good deeds to their credit. They may have been good fathers or husbands, they may have helped people when they felt the urge, and consequently they need to be rewarded.

Of course, it is impossible for us to grasp how such people with all these good deeds to their credit can be considered reshaim gemurim without appreciating how evil is to be understood, according to Jewish tradition.

Nevertheless, Jewish tradition dictates that it is impossible to receive the reward for any mitzva (good deed) in this world:

***Kiddushin 39b** Yet is it a fact that he who performs one precept in addition to his [equally balanced] merits is rewarded? But the following contradicts it: He whose good deeds outnumber his iniquities is punished, and is as though he had burnt the whole Torah, not leaving even a single letter; while he whose iniquities outnumber his good deeds is rewarded, and is as though he had fulfilled the whole Torah, not omitting even a single letter! — Said Abaye: Our Mishnah means that a festive day and an evil day are prepared for him, Raba said: This latter agrees with R. Jacob, who said: There is no reward for precepts in this world.<sup>311</sup> For it was taught: R. Jacob said: There is not a single precept in the Torah whose reward is [stated] at its side which is not dependent on the resurrection of the dead. [Thus:] in connection with honouring parents it is written, that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee. In reference to the dismissal of the nest it is written, that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days. Now, if one's father said to him, 'Ascend to the loft and bring me young birds,' and he ascends to the loft, dismisses the dam and takes the young, and on his return falls and is killed — where is this man's happiness and where is this man's prolonging of days? But 'in order that it may be well with thee', means on the day that is wholly good; and 'in order that thy days may be long', on the day that is wholly long.*

The commentators explain that it would be utterly cruel of HaShem to reward any good deed in this world when the option exists to reward it in the next. The reward for any good deed performed by someone with a share in the Olam HaBa, the world to come, should automatically be received later on simple utilitarian grounds. The payoff in this world is incomparably less, and rewarding the good deed here would be an unconscionable waste of a valuable resource.

The truth is that the reward of a mitzva simply doesn't fit into this world. If you lined up the pleasure felt by all human beings from the beginning of the world to the present and squeezed it into a single moment, it would still not equal a moment's pleasure in the Olam HaBa.

Nachmanides explains that the word *tov*<sup>312</sup> or "good", refers to something "everlasting", and that the word *ra* or "evil" refers to something "temporary". This view is intuitively sensible as well, HaShem wants the good to last forever, whereas evil is clearly a temporary phenomenon. According to this perception, a rasha is not necessarily an evil/mean person in the common sense of the word; rather, he is a person who is attached only to the temporary and transient and has never connected himself to the everlasting.

As Nachmanides explains: Life and good and death and evil are not different things but synonymous; the good is life everlasting, and the evil is death because it is temporary. This passage states that life is gained through choice: **choose life so that you will live**. The rasha is not evil in the common sense; he is merely a person who chooses the

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<sup>311</sup> In this world we receive an expense account in order to have the resources to accomplish the mitzvot, but this is not the reward, it is just an expense account.

<sup>312</sup> Beresheet (Genesis) 1:4

temporary and the short-lived rather than the everlasting.

For the rasha who has failed to attach himself to the eternal even once in his life, but who has performed many good deeds which must be rewarded, this world is the only place where such rewards can be made available, he does not exist in the Olam HaBa! As the rewards of mitzvot are so incomparably large, we would expect him to have a wonderful life in this world. Thus the wicked prosper in this world, but they do not exist in the Olam HaBa.

Further, the wicked does not believe in an eternal existence and would not want his reward in the next world. He wants his reward in this world, and he wants it NOW! Therefore, HaShem must pay him in this world. He would not want any other reward.

In the end of days, HaShem will reveal Himself and say just two words: "**Ani HaShem** - I am HaShem," and all will become crystal clear to us. Everything will make sense; it will all fit. We'll see that there was a divine scheme. A sequence of events had to take place the way it did for our ultimate benefit. And we will see clearly that even what seemed bad and unjust was, without a doubt, orchestrated by HaShem for our benefit.

### Cause and Effect

This world and what happens in it is not about reward and punishment. As we have explained, reward and punishment become a part of our world due to purely secondary considerations. This world is a workplace. The Divine policies that apply here are generated primarily by concerns over maximizing production, just as you would expect in any industrial setting. After all, the product of this world is the manufacture of eternal life. Practically speaking, this means that the creation of a place in Olam HaBa for all of us is the focus of Hashgacha Pratit, Divine Providence.

There are three primary factors involved: We all must be placed into a situation that will force us to produce. For example, suppose **A** is sent into the world to correct the character trait of arrogance and cruelty. The extent of the correction achieved will determine **A**'s place in the Olam HaBa. Providence will have determined that **A** must be born rich or become wealthy early in his adult life. Such a life situation will guarantee that he will always contend with the character traits he was sent to correct. People will constantly ask him for help, and with each instance he will have confront his streak of cruelty/meanness. The very fact that everyone will always be asking him for help and attempting to curry favor with him will ensure that he has to confront his trait of arrogance.

On the other hand, **B** is sent to the world to correct the trait of self-pity and to demonstrate the cheerful acceptance of one's lot. Providence will arrange for **B** to be poor, as his poverty will automatically force him to contend with the very problems he was sent into the world to work on. If **A** were poor and **B** were rich neither would automatically be forced to do their jobs, and their productivity would be entirely dependent on their inner motivation, a very inefficient policy in terms of assuring maximum productivity. As they say, necessity is the mother of invention. No one has ever come up with a better motivator. **A**'s wealth and **B**'s poverty thus have zero relationship with reward and punishment. The determination is based on purely utilitarian considerations.

The second function of Providence is to provide help. As the Talmud states "someone who seeks to make himself spiritually impure, they open the way for him, and if someone desires to purify himself, heaven assists him"<sup>313</sup>. Providence is always there to provide assistance; how much assistance, and what sort will be available, is again based on considerations of productivity.

Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzatto in "Derech HaShem", "The Way of God", explains that there are three levels of assistance in either direction. The person who begins on the path towards the Olam HaBa, the world to come, automatically receives some assistance. The person who is firmly set on his way gets more; his assistance comes

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<sup>313</sup> Yoma 38b

in the form of redefining his job so that it is easier to complete. The person who has already gone most of the way gets the most assistance; HaShem provides him with whatever it takes to guarantee that he successfully completes his job.

But if we want HaShem to help us and lead us away from the wrong choice and along the path of life and goodness, then we have to do something equal and similar to deserve it. We have to go out onto the roads, where the roads are forked and there is a choice that needs to be made, and we have to stand there and tell other Jews, which way they should go, we have to go out there and scream "go in the right path, go in the path of goodness, away from the avenger, the Satan, away from the yetzer hara, the evil inclination".

For the rasha who is headed in the opposite direction there are also three levels of "assistance". Someone who has begun on the path away from the Olam HaBa loses the assistance he could have received and is left to his own devices, but Divine Providence doesn't hinder him from turning back to face the right direction either. On the other hand, for the person who is well on his way on the road that leads away from the Olam HaBa is positively hindered from turning back. Divine Providence places him in a situation that makes it difficult for him to change directions, while the confirmed rasha is placed in a life situation that renders a change in direction next to impossible.

Luzatto provides a practical example to bring this down to earth. Changing one's direction in life requires introspection, self-criticism and thought. These in turn require opportunity and motivation. Thus the rasha may be so loaded down with the trials and cares of poverty and ill health that his daily struggles make it impossible for him to enjoy the peace of mind that is required to really look closely at his life and figure out that he is headed in the wrong direction. Or Divine Providence may decide to bless the rasha with great wealth which will remove his motivation to indulge in searching self-criticism. Why rock the boat when everything is going well? The method selected by the Providence will depend on whether the rasha needs to be rewarded for his good deeds in this world or not.

This determination of Divine Providence, of how much positive help a person deserves, or how many obstacles should be placed in his path, is a function of judgment. This is what the judgment of Rosh HaShana is about.

### **The Judgment of Rosh HaShana**

Let us return to our examples **A** and **B**.

**A**, the wealthy man who was sent into the world to struggle with arrogance and cruelty has been doing a poor job. He hasn't been at all charitable and he has become unapproachable and haughty. He knows about the workings of Providence that we have just described and stands before HaShem on Rosh HaShana, desperately afraid. His wealth was given to him only to ensure a productive struggle with his negative character traits. As he is losing the struggle and not being productive, if he were HaShem, at this point he would decide to take his wealth away as a means of making the task of reaching his objective more cumbersome and difficult.

What can he do about it? He should say to HaShem that he realizes that until now he has been deficient in his task but from now on he intends to fully engage in the activities for which he was born. If he can persuade HaShem of his sincerity, he will not lose his wealth.

**B**, also stands before HaShem knowing that his poverty is a result of the workings of Providence. But he has done an excellent job and worked on his self-pity and has tried to accept his situation with good cheer. He tells HaShem that he has struggled hard and long and been productive and now he would like some help. He would like his task made easier and therefore there is no more need for him to be poor. Let HaShem consider what he has accomplished as enough and let him contend with other character traits such as arrogance and cruelty. Let Providence place him in a life situation that would make him productive in these new tasks. Let Providence make him rich.

Rosh HaShana is indeed about judgment. The judgment doesn't concern ultimate rewards but is about the availability of Divine assistance. Unlike the ultimate rewards which are the direct results of the inner transformations accomplished by the person himself and therefore cannot be awarded but must be chosen, assistance is a variable commodity whose availability is never absolutely fixed. Like everything else in this world it is relative rather than absolute, and human beings can employ their creative ingenuity to increase it.

The wicked/mean prosper because they have chosen evil and death. They are receiving the reward for their mitzvot in a temporary world because they are attached to temporary things only.

### **In The Nazarean Codicil**

The idea that certain things receive their due in this world and others in the next world, is clearly spelled out in the remes of the Nazarean Codicil:

***Luqas (Luke) 16:19-31** There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: 20 And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, 21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. 22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 23 And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. 25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. 26 And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. 27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: 28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.*

This passage warns us to hear and heed the law of Moshe. This is just another way of warning us to choose life! Choosing life is nothing more than moving your tree. After all, moving our tree to the side of righteousness is the ultimate choice for life.

The physical world was made neutral, left for man to determine how it would be used. One world, two possibilities, and man is the one to determine whether or not he walks that path, or stumbles it in. But, try it he must, for that is what he was created to do.

### **The Worm on the Hook of Reality**

It is possible to believe that our prosperity is due to our own hard work and wisdom. When we believe this, we must also believe that HaShem does not control His world. Nevertheless, it is easy to deceive ourselves and believe in our own abilities.

Hard work does not bring prosperity; HaShem brings prosperity. When people work hard and prosper, they can fool people into believing that they achieved their own prosperity. We must **constantly** acknowledge that HaShem is in control of our prosperity and all of our circumstances, and we must verbalize this to others. If we fail to alert others to HaShem's total control, then we become the worm on the hook of reality. We deceive others into imitating us so that they can achieve what we achieved. We become like the wicked who believe in their own hard work, looks, wisdom, etc. and that those are what brought our success.

**Do not become the worm on the hook of reality!**

## Ashlamatah: Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8

Rashi	Targum
1. ¶ Hear now what the Lord says; Rise; contend with the mountains, and may the hills hear My voice.	1. ¶ Hear now what the LORD is saying: Rise up, contend with the mountains and let the hills hear your voice.
2. Hear ye, O mountains, the controversy of the Lord; and you mighty ones, the foundations of the earth; for the Lord has a controversy with His people, and with Israel He shall contend.	2. Hear the LORD's case, you mountains, and you roots of the foundations of the earth, for there is a case before the LORD against His people, and against the house of Israel He is conducting a suit.
3. O My people, what have I done, and how have I wearied you? Testify against Me.	3. My people, what good have I said that I would do to you and I have not done it? Or what severe hardship have I increased against you? Testify before me.
4. For I brought you up out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.	4. For I brought you up from the land of Egypt and rescued you from the house of bondage; and I sent before you my three prophets. Moses to teach the tradition of judgments, Aaron to atone for the people. and Miriam to instruct the women.
5. My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab planned, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him. From Shittim to Gilgal, may you recognize the righteous deeds of the Lord.	5. My people, remember what Balak king of Moab advised and what Balaam son of Beor answered him. Were mighty deeds not done to you from the valley of Shittim to the house of Gilgal so that you might know the righteous/generous deeds of the LORD?
6. With what shall I come before the Lord, bow before the Most High God? Shall I come before Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves?	6. With what will I worship before the LORD, or do homage to God whose Shekinah is in the high heavens? Will I worship before Him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?
7. Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with myriad streams of oil? Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?	7. Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of streams of oil? Will I give my first-born for my transgressions, the loved one of my body for my own sins?
8. <b>He has told you, O man, what is good, and what the Lord demands of you; but to do justice/charity, to love loving-kindness, and to walk discreetly with your God. {S}</b>	8. <b>It has been told to you, o man, what is good. and what does the LORD seek from you, except to carry out true justice and to love acts of kindness. You will be modest by walking in the fear of your God. {S}</b>
9. The voice of the Lord calls out to the city, and the wisdom of the Torah, the one who sees Your name; hearken to the staff and Who appointed it.	9. With a cry the prophets of the LORD call out of the city, and the teachers fear Your name, Hear O king and prince, and the rest of the people of the land,
10. Does the house of the wicked last long, [or do] the treasures of wickedness? And an ephah of leanness is condemned.	10. Are there still in the house of the wicked man storehouses of wickedness and fraudulent measures bringing a curse?
11. Will I merit with scales of wickedness or with a bag of deceitful weights?	11. Can they be acquitted despite wicked scales and a bag in which there are greater and smaller weights?
12. For the wealthy thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof speak lies, and their tongue is guile in their mouth.	12. Whose rich men fill their storehouses by violence, and whose inhabitants speak falsehood, with deceitful tongues in their mouths.

Rashi	Targum
13. Therefore I, too, will smite you with sore wounds and make [you] desolate because of your sins.	13. I for My part have brought upon you sickness and plague and I have made you desolate because you have sinned.
14. You shall eat and not be sated, and it shall bend you over in your innards; and you shall overtake, but you shall not rescue, and those whom you rescue I will deliver to the sword.	14. You will eat, but not be satisfied; and there will be sickness in your insides. You will obtain, but not carry off, and what you do carry off I will deliver to the sword.
15. You shall sow, but you shall not reap; you shall tread the olives, but you shall not anoint yourself with oil; and the must; but you shall not drink wine.	15. You will sow but not reap, you will tread the olives, but not anoint yourself with oil; you will press grapes, but not drink wine.
16. And the statutes of Omri shall be observed, and every deed of the house of Ahab; and you shall walk in their counsels, in order that I make you an astonishment, and its inhabitants a hissing; and the disgrace of My people you shall bear. {P}	16. For you have kept the decrees of the house of Omri and you have performed the practices of the house of Ahab, and you have followed their laws so that they might deliver you to desolation and her inhabitants to devastation. You will receive the scorn of My people. {P}
1. Woe is to me, for I am as the last of the figs, like the gleanings of the vintage; there is no cluster to eat; the first ripe fig my soul desires.	1. The prophet said, 'Woe is me! because I have become like one of the good taken away, in the time when the pious vanished from the land like late summer fruit, like gleanings after the vintage. There is not a man who has good works I desire the good.
2. The pious have perished from the land, and there is no upright among men; they all lurk for blood; each one hunts his brother with a net.	2. The pious have vanished from the land; there is none upright among men. All of them lie in wait to shed innocent blood, they deliver one another to destruction.
3. [In return] for the evil of their hands, do they expect that He will benefit them? The prince asks, and the judge is in the payment, and the great man speaks what is in his heart-and they weave the web.	3. They do evil with their hands and do not do good. The ruler asks, and the judge says, Act for me that I might reward you; and the great man expresses the desires of his heart. Woe to them because they have corrupted it.
4. The best of them is like a brier, the most upright, [worse] than a thorn hedge. The day to which you look forward-your visitation-shall come; now will be their perplexity.	4. It is as difficult for the good among them to get away from his power as from a thornbush, and for the upright among them as from a thorny hedge. Evil is the day in which you hoped for good; the time of the punishment for your wickedness has arrived. Now their confusion will come to pass.
5. Believe not a friend; trust not a prince; from her who lies in your bosom guard the openings of your mouth.	5. Do not rely on a friend, do not trust an intimate. Guard the words of your mouth from the wife of your covenant.
6. For a son disgraces his father; a daughter rises up against her mother; a daughter-in-law, against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the members of his household.	6. For in that time a son will spurn his father, a daughter will quarrel with her mother, a daughter-in-law with her mother-in-law with contempt, a man's own household will be his enemies.
7. But I will hope in the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God shall hearken to me.	7. But I will rejoice in the Memra of the LORD, I will exult in the God who accomplishes my salvation; my God will hear my prayer,
<b>8. Rejoice not against me, my enemy; although I have fallen, I will rise; although I will sit in darkness, the Lord is a light to me. {P}</b>	<b>8. Do not rejoice over me, O Rome my enemy; though I have fallen, I will rise, though I have sat as in darkness, the LORD will shine upon me. {P}</b>



## Rashi's Commentary to: Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8

**1 with the mountains** -with the Patriarchs.

**the hills** -the Matriarchs.

**3 what have I done for you** -Put your heart to recognizing what benefit I have done for you.

**and how have I wearied you** -with My worship?

**Testify against Me** Heb. עֲנֵה לִּי

**4 For I brought you up** -Although I bestowed all this benefit upon you, I did not weary you with much worship or with large sacrifices.

**Moses, Aaron, and Miriam** - *Jonathan* paraphrases: Moses to teach the transmission of the laws, Aaron to atone for the people, and Miriam to instruct the women.

**5 and what Balaam the son of Beor answered him** -(Num. 23:8) "How shall I be angry if God is not angry?" for I did not become angry all those days. [from *Berachot* 4a]

**from Shittim** -where you sinned before Me. You should recognize My righteous deeds, for I did not withhold My kindness and My assistance from you until I brought you to Gilgal, and I conquered the land before you.

**6 bow** I will be humbled.

**7 streams of oil** -for meal offerings.

**Shall I give my firstborn?** -as a sacrifice for my transgression.

**8 He has told** -The Holy One, blessed be He, has told you what is good for you to do.

**and to walk discreetly** - *Jonathan* renders: Walk discreetly in the fear of your God. Another explanation: And walk discreetly. The standard of flesh and blood is not like the standard of the Holy One, blessed be He. The standard of flesh and blood is: If one man embarrasses his fellow and comes to placate him, the fellow says to him, "I will not accept your apology until so and so and so and so, before whom you disgraced me, come." But the Holy One, blessed be He, desires only that the man's return to Him be between the two of them. [from *Pesikta d'Rav Kahana* 163b]

**9 The voice of the Lord calls out in the city** -The voice of the prophets of the Lord calling out, calling them [the people] to repentance. [from *Jonathan*]

**and the wisdom of the Torah, the one who sees Your name** -The prophet who sees Your name calls out the wisdom of the Torah; i.e., the one who puts his heart to contemplate and to see your ways. The word תִּישָׁיָהּ refers to the verse above it.

**hearken to the staff and Who appointed it** -Bend your ears, and hearken to the staff of retribution that will punish you, concerning which the prophets warn you; and hearken to who it is Who appointed that retribution, whether He has the ability to fulfill what He decreed. But *Jonathan* did not render in this manner.

**and the wisdom of Torah, the one who sees Your name** From here we deduce that whoever recites daily a verse beginning [with the letter] and ending [with the letter] as his name begins and ends, the Torah saves him from Gehinnom.

**10 Does the house of the wicked last long, [or do] the treasures of wickedness?** -The “hey” of **שָׁחַד** is vowelized with a “patach” [not a kamatz] because it denotes a question. And this is its meaning: **עוֹד** is an expression of longevity. **שָׁחַד** is like **שָׁחַדָּה**, is there. In I Chronicles (2:13) we find: “Ishai the father of David,” instead of “Yishai.” Here, too, is **שָׁחַד** instead of **שָׁחַדָּה**. And so in II Samuel (14:19): “If anyone can (**שָׁחַד**) turn to the right or to the left.” [This is identical to] “If anyone can (**שָׁחַדָּה**) turn to the right or to the left.” So did *Jonathan* render it: Is there. Will it enter your mind that the house of the wicked will last long, and the treasures of wickedness?

**And an ephah of leanness is condemned** -A small measure with which your wealthy deceive the poor and bring them to leanness - that is condemned by the wrath of the Holy One, blessed be He.

**13 I will smite you with sore wounds** -I have made your wounds sore - strong and ill and incurable.

**and make [you] desolate** Heb. **אֶמְשַׁחֲךָ**, to make you desolate because of your

**14 and it shall bend you over in your innards** Heb. **אֶמְשַׁחֲךָ**. The food that you eat - I will bring a curse into it within your intestines, and it will cause you illness, that you will be ill and walk bent over. So it is explained in *Sifre*: How do we know that, even within the intestines? Scripture states: “And it shall bend you over in your innards.” In the parashah of Ekev, in expounding (Deut. 11:12) “The eyes of the Lord your God are upon it,” *Jonathan*, too, renders [our verse] in this manner: And it shall be to you for illness and a wound in your intestines.

**and you shall overtake** -your enemies who lead your sons and daughters away, into captivity; but you shall not rescue them, and if you rescue them, their end will be to the sword. In the name of Rabbi Menahem I heard: You shall gain your desire for sexual intercourse, but you shall not ejaculate. You shall not have the strength to ejaculate semen; and, if you do ejaculate them [and beget children], their end will be that I will deliver them to the sword [of the enemy].

**16 And the statutes of Omri shall be observed** -I know that you will not obey Me, but through you and your children will all the statutes of Omri and Ahab [the evil kings of Israel] be observed.

**and the disgrace of My people you shall bear** -You shall bear the iniquity for the disgrace that the peoples of the world deride My people, for the Torah admonished them concerning (Deut. 25: 14): “You shall not have in your house two kinds of ephah,” but they do not keep it.

## Chapter 7

**1 Woe is to me** -The prophet laments over himself, “Woe is to me that I was appointed a prophet at this time, when there are no righteous people in the generation.”

**as the last of the figs** Heb. **אֶמְשַׁחֲךָ**. This is vowelized with a “chataf kamatz” because it is not a verb in the present tense, like: **יֹשֵׁב**, sits, and **אֹמֵר**, says; rather, it is a gerund, as in (Isa. 33:4): “The gathering of (**רְפוּאָה**) the locusts”; like the gathering of **רְפוּאָה**. These are the last figs, which are inferior. And so did *Jonathan* render: as the late figs of the summer.

**as the gleanings of the vintage** - As the gleanings after the vintage. [from *Jonathan*]

**there is no cluster to eat** -As the *Targum* renders: There is no man who has good deeds.

**a first ripe fig my soul desires** -A good fig, which ripens in its time, as the *Targum* renders: My soul desired the good ones.

**2 and there is no upright among men** -There is no upright man among men.

**each one hunts his brother with a net** -They hunt with their net and with their trap.

**3 [in return] for the evil of their hands, do they expect that He will benefit them?** -Do you expect that He will benefit you as the reward for the evil of your hands?

**the prince asks** -for a bribe.

**and the judge** -who judges the case is also in the payment. When he is a robber and is liable according to law, he says to his fellow judge, "Do me a favor in this case, and I will vindicate you in another case."

**and the great man speaks what is in his heart** -The king or the prince states in the case what his heart desires.

**what is in his heart** Heb. הַתְּנַפְשׁוּ. He speaks what is (הַנְּהִי) to his will and to his desire. Cf.(Jer. 15:1) "I have no desire for this people." And so did *Jonathan* render: The desires of his heart.

**and they weave the web** -They made it into a rope of sin amongst the three of them. As the cart ropes, so is the sin, for a rope is braided of three strands. So have I found in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Taanith* 2:1): We made it like a web of sins.

**4 The best of them is like a brier** -The best among them - it is as hard to extricate oneself from his hand as from a brier (*Targum Jonathan*). It is as hard to extricate oneself from their hand as [it is to extricate] the briers that are entangled in wool.

**the most upright, [worse] than a thorn hedge** -The most upright among them is worse than a thorn hedge.

**than a thorn hedge** Heb. מִמְּסוּכָה. Cf. (Isa. 5:5) "Remove its hedge (מִשׁוּכָתוֹ)."

**the day to which you look forward** -On the day to which you look forward for good, your visitation shall come.

**their perplexity** Heb. מְבוּכָתָם. [*Jonathan* renders:] עֲרֻבֵלְהוֹן. Cf. (Ex. 14:3) "They are entangled (נִבְכְּתִים)

**5 Believe not a friend** [This is to be understood] according to its apparent meaning. But our Sages explained it as referring to the Most High. Do not sin and say that the Holy One, blessed be He, is our Friend, and He will forgive us. [from *Hagiga* 16a]

**from her who lies in your bosom** -Your soul will testify against you.

**the openings of your mouth** Heb. פִּתְחֵי. The words of your mouth, the openings of your mout

**7 But I will hope in the Lord** -The prophet is saying so.

**8 Rejoice not... my enemy** -Babylon and the wicked city of Rome.

**Verbal Tallies**  
**By: H. Em. Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David**  
**& HH Giberet Dr. Elisheba bat Sarah**

**Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:1 – 3:17**  
**Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8**  
**Tehillim (Psalms) 73**  
**1 Pet 1:1-12, Lk 9:51-62, Acts 19:1-20**

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Ashlamata are:**

LORD - יהוה, Strong's number 03068.  
Called / Cries - קרא, Strong's number 07121.  
Spoke / Spoken - דבר, Strong's number 01696.

**The verbal tallies between the Torah and the Psalm are:**

Spoke / Spoken / Speak - דבר, Strong's number 01696.  
Saying / Say - אמר, Strong's number 0559.

**Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:1** And the **LORD** <03068> called <07121> (8799) unto Moses, and spake <01696> (8762) unto him out of the tabernacle of the congregation, saying <0559> (8800),

**Micah 6:9** The **LORD'S** <03068> voice cries <07121> (8799) unto the city, and the man of wisdom will see your name: hear you the rod, and who has appointed it.

**Micah 6:12** For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken <01696> (8765) lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 73:8** They are corrupt, and speak <01696> (8762) wickedly concerning oppression: they speak loftily.

**Tehillim (Psalms) 73:11** And they say <0559> (8804), How does God know? and is there knowledge in the most High?

## NAZAREAN TALMUD

SIDROT OF VAYIKRA (LEV.) 1:1 – 3:17

“VAYIQRÁ” “AND CALLED”

BY: H. EM RABBI DR. ADON ELIYAHU BEN ABRAHAM &  
H. EM. HAKHAM DR. YOSEF BEN HAGGAI

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM SHAUL  
TOSEFTA  
LUQAS (LK) 9:51 – 56 & 9:57 - 62  
Mishnah נ:נ

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM TSEFET  
PESHAT  
1 TSEFET (PET.) 1:1 – 2 & 1:3 - 12  
Mishnah נ:נ

¶ And now it happened that when the days were approaching for him to be taken up, he (Yeshua) determined to appear in Yerushalayim. And he sent messengers ahead of him, and as they went they entered into a village of the Shomron in order to prepare for him. And they did not accept him because he was determined to go to Yerushalayim. Now when his talmidim Ya'aqob and Yochanan saw it, they said, “Master, do you want us to call fire to come down from the heavens and consume them?” But he turned around and rebuked them, and they proceeded to another village.

¶ And as they were traveling on the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go!” And Yeshua said to him, “Foxes have dens and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no permanent place to lay his head.” And he said to another, “Follow me!” But he said, “Master, allow me to first go and bury my father.” But he said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead! But you go and proclaim the kingdom –governance, (sovereignty through the bate Din and Hakhamim) of God.” And another person also said, “I will follow you, Master, but first allow

Tsefet, a Shaliach (apostle – emissary)<sup>314</sup> of Yeshua HaMashiach, to the predetermined<sup>315</sup> sojourners of the Diaspora of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and of Bithynia, according to the foreknowledge<sup>316</sup> of G-d the Father, in the Ruach HaKodesh (breath of holiness). Setting you apart to obedient compliance (of the Torah), made ritually clean<sup>317</sup> through the life and teachings of Yeshua HaMashiach. May chesed (loving-kindness) and shalom (peace – wholeness) be multiplied to you.

¶ Blessed be the God and Father of our Master Yeshua HaMashiach, who according to His (God's) great chesed (loving-kindness) has renewed a living hope to us through the resurrection of Yeshua HaMashiach from the dead, to an incorruptible inheritance,<sup>318</sup> undefiled, and unfading, reserved for you in the heavens. Who by the virtuous power of G-d, having been kept through faithfulness to redemption ready to be revealed in these last days.<sup>319</sup> In which you should greatly rejoice, for yet a little while, if need be, grieving in the greatest manifold testing's of your faithful obedience.<sup>320</sup> So that the testing's of your trustworthiness being much more precious than that of gold that perishes, but being purified by fire, similarly that you might be found worthy of praise and honor and glory at the unveiling of Yeshua HaMashiach. Even though you have not seen him, you love him; whom you do not see at the present, but being faithfully obedient to him you exult with unspeakable joy, and having been glorified, obtaining the goal of your faithful obedience, to the redemption of your souls.

¶ Concerning this redemption the prophets sought and carefully investigated it, prophesying about the loving-kindness that is to be yours; seeking to know when, or what manner of season, the Ruach HaMashiach made clear to them, testifying beforehand

<sup>314</sup> We should see these words as words coming from a Hakham.

<sup>315</sup> ἐκλεκτός – *eklektos*, elect, predetermined

<sup>316</sup> πρόγνωσις – *prognosis* “foreknowledge” or that which has been prophesied.

<sup>317</sup> Also associated with נְשָׂא - meaning prophecy

<sup>318</sup> Note here the connection to the previous pericope where Yeshua talked of the Hakhamim that receive their reward, “will not lose their reward.

<sup>319</sup> Lit. End times

<sup>320</sup> Paraphrased to remember the testing's of Abraham Avinu

me to say farewell to those in my house.” But Yeshua said, “No one who puts his hand on the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom –governance, sovereignty (through the bate Din and Hakhamim) of God!” of the sufferings of Mashiach, and the glories that should follow. It was not revealed to them, but to us, they for whom they ministered the things, which are now reported to you by those who have handed down the Mesorah to you in the Ruach HaKodesh, breathings of the Oral Torah sent from the Heavens; which things the holy messengers desired to understand.

SCHOOL OF HAKHAM SHAUL  
REMES  
2 LUQAS (ACTS) 19:1 – 12 & 19:13-20  
Mishnah א:א

¶ And now it happened that while Apollos was in Corinth, Hakham Shaul traveled through the highlands country and came to Ephesus. There he met some talmidim<sup>321</sup> preparing for conversion. And he said to them, “Did you receive (Heb. kibal)<sup>322</sup> the Oral Torah (Orally breathed Torah [Ruach HaKodesh]) when you dedicated<sup>323</sup> yourselves to accept the Torah?” And they said to him, “We have not even heard<sup>324</sup> of the Mesorah yet!” And he said, “Were you immersed?”<sup>325</sup> And they said, “we have been immersed with Yochanan’s immersion of repentance (in preparation for the coming of the kingdom/governance [sovereignty] of God through the Hakhamim and Bate Din.”<sup>326</sup> And Hakham Shaul said, “Yochanan immersed with an immersion of repentance, telling the people that they should become faithfully obedient to the one who was to come after him—that is, Yeshua.” And when they heard this, they were immersed on the authority of the Master Yeshua. And when Hakham Shaul laid hands on them,<sup>327</sup> the Nefesh Yehudi came upon them and they began to speak in different languages and to prophesy. Now the total number of men was about twelve.

¶ And he entered into the Synagogue<sup>328</sup> of the Tz’dukim and was speaking with great authority for three months,<sup>329</sup> discussing with them the advancement<sup>330</sup> of the kingdom/governance sovereignty of God through

<sup>321</sup> Because these ‘talmidim’ have no ‘Hakham,’ (no Hakham is mentioned) and from the unfolding of the events we can determine that they were preparing for conversion to Judaism. These ‘talmidim’ may have believed that Yeshua was Messiah, but there is not any real evidence to speak of here. If they listened to Yochanan, they would most likely have believed that his appearing was eminent.

<sup>322</sup> The expression and nomenclature is that of the reception of the Oral Torah. And as it is said: “Mosheh received (kibal) the Torah from Sinai and gossiped (umesorah) it down to Yehoshua, and Yehoshua gossiped it down to the Elders, the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets gossiped it down to the Men of the Great Assembly. They (the Men of the Great Assembly) emphasized three things; Be deliberate in judgment, make stand many disciples, and make a fence around the Torah” (P. Abot 1:1).

<sup>323</sup> Here we use “dedicated” as an interpretation for πιστεύω – pisteuo following the hermeneutic of logic, knowing that the season of dedication .i.e. Hanukah is upon us. TDNT 6:173 In the section “Classical Usage” we see that the idea of πιστεύω is used in a legal (Torah) sense relating to the Oral Torah (our interpretation)

<sup>324</sup> We have not “heard” ἀκουστός, ἀκούω – akouo received the Orally transmitted Torah as of yet

<sup>325</sup> Note the connection between the reception of the Mesorah and immersion. This demonstrates the necessity of receiving the Mesorah as a means of “salvation – redemption.” The question may also be translated as “Have you been immersed yet?” We would then expect from contextual implication that they would have replied, “With Yochanan’s immersion of repentance.” For translation of “Were you immersed?” see, Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Acts of the Apostles: a New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2008. p.643

<sup>326</sup> Yochanan’s immersion was the immersion of repentance, in the anticipation of the coming Kingdom/governance (sovereignty) of G-d through the Hakhamim and Bate Din as opposed to human kings and presidents.

<sup>327</sup> While we have no set precedent for “laying hands on the new converts,” there are those references in the Nazarean Codicil that would suggest that it might have been a Nazarean practice of the early community.

<sup>328</sup> This was most likely a Synagogue of Tz’dukim – Sadducees. The Tz’dukim accepted only the Written Torah. Likewise, they leaned towards the side of being epicurean. Consequently, they related to the more influential upper class. Neusner, Jacob. *First-Century Judaism in Crisis: Yohanan Ben Zakkai and the Renaissance of Torah*. Augmented ed. New York: Ktav Pub. House, 1982. p. 36. The Ramban on the Torah Seder accompanying this pericope of Hakham Shaul declare the Karaites to be the modern descendants of the Tz’dukim.

<sup>329</sup> Hakham Shaul must have been lecturing weekly on the Mesorah of the Master, pointing to the Messianic interpretations of the Torah/Mesorah. After three months the Tz’dukim could no longer tolerate the teachings permeated with Messiah and the eternal aspects of G-d’s kingdom/governance through the bate Din.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. Williams, C. S. C. *A Commentary on the the Acts of the Apostles*. [S.I.]: Black, 1975. p. 220 comments on Acts 19:8

the Hakhamim and Bate Din.<sup>331</sup> **But when they became stubborn and rebellious, speaking negatively of the Way (Derekh HaShem through the Mesorah) before the congregation, he departed from them and took away the talmidim, and began guiding them through daily lectures in the school<sup>332</sup> of Tyrannus (meaning: "Sovereign").**

¶ **And now it happened that this continued for two years, so that all the residents of Asia heard the word (Mesorah) of the LORD, both Jews and Greeks. And God was performing many virtuous acts through the hands of Hakham Shaul, so that even kippt<sup>333</sup> and talitoh<sup>334</sup> that he had made were carried away to those who were weak (in Torah observance), and their defects and shedim departed from them.<sup>335</sup>**

¶ **But some traveling Jewish exorcists also attempted to invoke the name of the Master Yeshua over those who had shedim, saying, "I adjure you by Yeshua whom Hakham Shaul preaches!" (Now Sheba B'ne Sheba (seven sons of a certain Sheba), a Jewish (Levitical) priest,<sup>336</sup> were doing this.) But the shadé answered and said to them, "Yeshua I know, and Hakham Shaul I recognize, but who are you?" And the man who had the shadé leaped on them, overpowered all (seven) of them, and prevailed over them, so that they ran away from that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all who lived in Ephesus,<sup>337</sup> both Jews and Greeks, and fear fell upon them all, and the authority of the Master Yeshua was exalted.**

¶ **And many of those who had faithfully obeyed came, confessing and disclosing their practices, and many of those who practiced idolatry brought together their books and burned them up in the sight of everyone. And they counted up their value and found it was fifty thousand silver coins. In this way the word (Mesorah) of the LORD continued to increase and prevailed mightily.**

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**Nazarean Codicil to be read in conjunction with the following Torah Seder**

<b>*Lev 1:1 – 3:17</b>	<b>Ps 73</b>	<b>Micah 6:9-16 + 7:7-8</b>	<b>1 Pet 1:1-2, 3-12</b>	<b>Lk 9:51-56, 9:57-62</b>	<b>Acts 19:1-12, 19:13-20</b>
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**COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM TSEFET'S SCHOOL OF PESHAT**

**THE CHOSEN**

In a manner of speaking 1<sup>st</sup> Tsefet (Pet) 1:1 begins very much like Mordechai (Mark) 1:1. Mordechai begins with the Hebrew words "Resheet." Resheet speaks of the principle thing of importance, the chief etc. 1<sup>st</sup> Tsefet (Pet) 1:1 speaks of the elect, chosen or first ordained.

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<sup>331</sup> Because the Tz'dukim stood for the strict adherence of the "Written Torah," they would not be amiable in relation to the Oral Torah as taught by the Hakhamim. The Tz'dukim had their "Soferim" that took the place of the Rabbis/Sages/Hakhamim. Therefore, they would not be willing to accept the Mesorah of the Master or any thoughts concerning the resurrection of the dead. The concept of the "kingdom/governance of G-d" through the Hakhamim and their Bate Din was most likely repulsive to them. Likewise, they would not accept the concepts of the Olam HaBa and the Kingdom being "Eternal."

<sup>332</sup> σχολή – *schole* (School) There is some conjecture here as to the true nature of the "school." And, the exact time of day that Hakham Shaul may have lectured in that place. These lectures again, may have lasted for three and one half years period in order to fully establish the congregants in the Peshat, Mishnaic Import of Hakham Tsefet.

<sup>333</sup> Both Greek words σουδάριον – *soudarion*, and σιμικίνθιον, σιμικίνθιον – *simikinthion*, derived from Latin suggest a later alteration of the text, removing the true articles being constructed by Hakham Shaul.

<sup>334</sup> These *talitoh* were most likely *talitoh katanot*, worn close to the human body. The Greek word χρώς – *chrōs*, implies that something has come in close contact with the skin.

<sup>335</sup> The obvious reason for the departure of the shedim is the observance of Torah and mitzvot. Those wearing kipptoh and talitoh were freed from their oppressive agents through their faithfulness to Torah halakoth.

<sup>336</sup> Was Sheba (7) a Kohen Gadol? Most certainly not!

<sup>337</sup> Herein we can see the purpose for Hakham Shaul's writing to the Ephesians.

Hakham Tsefet's idea of being "chosen" best being understood when we dissect the Greek word ἐκλέγομαι – *eklegome*. This Greek word is a compound word comprised of two Greek words ἐκ and "lego" from its root is "logos" – meaning "a word spoken." When applied contextually we see that Hakham Tsefet is speaking to the ἐκλέγομαι – *eklegome* "the chosen," or "elect" in the Diaspora. This means that Hakham Tsefet is speaking to the B'ne Yisrael who are the chosen throughout the Diaspora. Therefore, we understand that **out of** the endless stream of Adam's seed, G-d chose the B'ne Yisrael to be His special people. The prefix of our Greek word, ἐκλέγομαι – *eklegome* is ἐκ or ἐξ – *ek ex*, meaning "out of." However, ἐκ or ἐξ – *ek ex*, contextually means that this selecting "out of" occurred before the foundation of the earth.

**Ephesians 1:3 – 6 To be read on Nisan 18, connecting Chesed coupled with prophecy**

**Let the God and Father of our master Yeshua HaMashiach be Blessed<sup>338</sup>, having blessed<sup>339</sup> us in Messiah with every spiritual<sup>340</sup> blessing<sup>341</sup> in the heavens,<sup>342</sup> even as He (God) has elected<sup>343</sup> (separated)<sup>344</sup> us<sup>345</sup> (the Jewish people) to be in union with him<sup>346</sup> Messiah **before the foundation of the world<sup>347</sup>** to be Tsadiqim (*a-gios*) and blameless in His God's presence in love. He God appointed us as His chief/principle<sup>348</sup> adoption<sup>349</sup> as His own (children) through Yeshua HaMashiach according His desire and good will to the praise of the honour of His chesed (loving-kindness), in which He has made us accepted as the one beloved.**

In concise terms, Hakham Tsefet and Hakham Shaul<sup>350</sup> show us that the selection of the B'ne Yisrael took place before the foundation of the earth. Because this is a Peshat commentary, we understand that the phrase "before the foundation of the earth" means before B'reshet (Gen) 1:1. When speaking in Remes this phrase means, before the events of Har Sinai i.e. since Abraham. This tells us that the Matan HaTorah is the "foundation of the earth."

<sup>338</sup> Lit. good words εὐλογέω Therefore, we see that the appropriate blessings should be said. General "barakhot" (blessings) follow the format of "Blessed are you O Lord God..."

<sup>339</sup> The "blessing" mentioned here is in past tense.

<sup>340</sup> πνευματικός Lit. Spirituals. Here we must note that the language is identical to 1Co. 12:1, where the text of the Authorized Version reads "spiritual" gifts. Gifts is added. "Gifts" is NOT implied. Therefore we see in πνευματικός the essence of the soul Heb. נְשָׁמָה a soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, passion, appetite, emotion. Str. H5315, TWOT 659b

<sup>341</sup> εὐλογία πνευματικῆ - good spiritual words. However, these words are the words spoken from the upper triad of the bench of three. Hokhmah – Binah & Da'at. ChaBaD. To put this more succinctly these "words" are the judgments of the Hakhamim. We also see these word applying to the Mesorah – Oral Torah. In these "breathings", we have good spiritual (breathed) words.

<sup>342</sup> ἐπουράνιος compound ἐπι and οὐράνιος point of origin being "from the heavens" the spiritual environs of the ethereal world. (see v4 below) Therefore, "from the heavens" means that the decisions (halakhic judgments which from the Bench of there are the judgments which are "binding on earth" because they have been made in the spiritual world.

<sup>343</sup> ἐκλέγω Greek ἐκλέγω is compound. ἐκ meaning out of λέγω logos or Word, Aramaic Memra. This translation can be read "out of words" meaning that there were NO words spoken in our creation, or that this is a reference to being created and given a mission while we were in an ethereal state *spirit*. Regardless the ethereal world of God is without words. Herein we see God speaking to us the plan/mission of our lives without words. וְשֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ Gen. 1:1 can be translated שֵׁם אֱלֹהֵינוּ In the head, i.e. God's head. These events took place in the timeless expanse of the "heavens" i.e spirit - ethereal world before there were words and letters. In this environment words are not spoken. ALL communication is "KNOWING" not hearing, but SEEING - which is not seeing with the eye of the body but the eye of the soul – spiritual being.

<sup>344</sup> cf. Eze. 20:38 LXX. Kittel, G. (Ed.). (1964). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. 4 ). (i. Geoffrey W. Bro, Trans.) Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p. 145

<sup>345</sup> We need to now alert the reader to pay special attention to Hakham Shaul's (Paul) "us" and "you." Hakham Shaul's use of we, us and you are key to determining who he is addressing.

<sup>346</sup> see 1:11 below

<sup>347</sup> We interpret this to mean at or before Har Sinai. The foundation of the world was G-d's giving of the Torah. However, the Greek word καταβολή – *katabole* also means, "to conceive." Therefore, we can see that G-d conceived the Jewish people before all others and before there was an earth. Thus, it can also be interpreted to mean that G-d conceived the Jewish people before Har Sinai, which is a very reasonable and an allegorical thought. The notion of καταβολή – *katabole* is also related to the thought of injecting or depositing semen into the womb.

<sup>348</sup> cf. TDNT 6:685 3. Metaphorical. Here our Ephesians text is Remes/Allegorical bordering So'od. Therefore, we see that the Jewish people are the Chief/principle adoption above all others. προορίζω can mean beforehand. προορίζω can have the connotation of "to foreordain," "to predestine." Since God is eternal and has ordained everything before time, προορίζειν is a stronger form of ὀρίζειν. προγινώσκειν is the same. See B'reshet 42:22 where Reuven equates the soul of Yosef with his blood.

<sup>349</sup> υιοθεσία = υιο son θεα derived from *Theos* God

<sup>350</sup> Author of the Letter to the Ephesians



Jewish Scholars have suggested that this is the day, "The earth stood still."<sup>351</sup>

The Peshat interpretation of ἐκλέγομαι – *eklegome* would then mean that before time, or the foundation of the earth G-d dictated (logos) the mission of each soul to him before he was created, or before the earth was created. Because there is no such thing as a single independent soul in Judaism, we must understand the idea to mean that G-d dictated to the B'ne Yisrael their mission in the earth before there was a cosmos.

How are we to understand this from Peshat?

The earth/cosmos is built on the structure of the orally breathed Torah, i.e. the "Oral Torah." It was the Oral Torah, breathed out of the mouth of G-d, which caused the cosmos to begin its assembly. This is self-evident when reading B'resheet (Genesis). The repeated refrain "and G-d said," is G-d's recital of the Oral Torah, the "foundation of the world." Not only is the Oral Torah the "foundation of the world," it is the oral account of the history of the heavens and earth as well. This means that the history of the world/cosmos is wrapped up in the Oral Torah. To find one's place in history is to find his place in the Oral Torah. To reject the Oral Torah is to nullify one's place in history and more specifically the Olam HaBa. If the Torah – *nomos*<sup>352</sup> is the structure of the universe, we must opine that the Oral Torah is the structure both of the Y'mot HaMashiach (Days of Messiah) and the Olam HaBa (the ever coming world). We further state that Halakhic application of the Oral Torah is a means for the restoration of Gan Eden (Paradise).

### **THE ORAL TORAH IS THE PROVIDENCE OF G-D'S "FOREKNOWLEDGE"**

The written Torah is wound in a spiraling scroll. The Oral Torah is a scroll that contains the history of the cosmos written on its leaves. As such, the foreknowledge of G-d is recorded on the pages of the Oral Torah. The **foreknowledge**<sup>353</sup> of G-d the Father, is breathed out **in the Ruach HaKodesh** (breath of holiness) **setting you, the B'ne Yisrael apart.** The breathing of G-d was the recital of the Oral Torah used in the creating of the cosmos. Herein the *Keri'at Shema* – recital of the Shema, becomes an essential part of Jewish life. "Hear O Yisrael," the words of the "orally breathed Torah" with the mission and agenda of Jewish life that are uttered each day as the infrastructure of the cosmos.

**Abot 6:2** Every day a Heavenly voice issues forth from Mount Horeb (Sinai) to proclaiming: "Woe to humankind for their contempt of the Torah" and whoever is not occupied with the Torah is rebuked, as it is said – "As a golden ring in a swine's snout, so is a beautiful woman who deviates from discretion" (Mishle/Proverbs 11:22) And it is said – And the Tablets are the work of God and the writing is God's writing engraved upon Tablets" (Shemot 32:16) Read not engraved [*charuth*] but freedom [*cheruth*], for there is no one free save one who is occupied with Torah study. And anyone who is occupied with Torah study will become exalted, as it said – "From God's gift [Mattana] to God's heritage [Nachaliel] and from God's heritage [Nachaiel] to the high places [Bamoth]" (B'midbar 21:19).

Adam and Havah experienced this voice on a daily basis.

**B'resheet 3:8 "They (Adam and Havah) heard the voice of halakhah (i.e. walking) from the Breath of the LORD God in the garden."**

Do we need to return to the Garden to hear the voice that Adam and Chavah heard daily? NO! G-d has given us living voices from which we hear the daily breathed Torah just as it was uttered in Gan Eden (Garden of Eden). Every day we can hear the voice of the Ruach HaKodesh (breath of holiness – the breathing of the Oral Torah) breathed through the mouths of the Hakhamim in their lessons of the Torah.

<sup>351</sup> This is because at that moment in time everything achieved its intended potential in space and time.

<sup>352</sup> Nomos is the Greek word for Written Torah/Oral Torah. However, this word is like the Hebrew word Torah in that it takes on all the meanings of Torah. Torah is not strict law. It is also education, principles rules etc.

<sup>353</sup> **πρόγνωσις** – *prognosis* "foreknowledge" or that which has been prophesied.

## RITUAL PURITY AND MESSIAH

Hakham Tsefet stealthily places his subtle allusion to the defunct Levitical Priesthood in his opening pasuk (verse). We have translated the allusion as “**Setting you apart to obedient compliance (of the Torah), made ritually clean<sup>354</sup> through the life and teachings of Yeshua HaMashiach.**” The obvious thing we should see from this pasuk is that Messiah functioned as Kohen (Priest). However, he is referred to as a Kohen Gadol in Hakham Shaul’s letter to the Bereans (Hebrews). This “Priesthood” is not from the Levitical line. This priesthood is after the order of Melchizedek. The Priesthood of Melchizedek is the priesthood of the firstborn. As we will see in the Remes commentary below, Yeshua restored the Priesthood of the firstborn through his life of sacrificial righteous/generosity. The purity we now experience is through the washing of the Torah.

**Ephesians 5:25-27 Husbands, love<sup>355</sup> your wives,<sup>356</sup> even as Messiah also loved the Esnoga and gave himself for it,<sup>357</sup> that he might sanctify (set apart) and cleanse<sup>358</sup> it **with the washing of water<sup>359</sup> by the Torah,**<sup>360</sup> that he cause it to stand by<sup>361</sup> himself as the glorious Esnoga/Congregation, without spot or wrinkle or any such things,<sup>362</sup> but that it should be holy and without blame.<sup>363</sup>**

The Torah is a cleansing agent that supersedes the “mayim chayim” (living waters). How can water that only touches the body cleanse the soul? The Living Torah, i.e. the Oral Torah has the ability to reach into the deepest recesses of the soul and cleanse even the darkest places. The Neshamah then exudes the energy/power of G-d that ritually cleanses the whole being.

For those who may not realize what has happened with the readings of Mordechai (Mark) and 1<sup>st</sup> Tsefet (Pet) being exchanged, Hakham Tsefet intentionally makes this exchange. His allusion points to the fact that the Levitical Priesthood is now defunct and that the Priesthood of the firstborn is now reinstated.

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## COMMENTARY TO HAKHAM SHAUL’S SCHOOL OF REMES

We now begin the investigation of the most fascinating pericopes of 2 Luqas (Acts). The events at hand are filled with a number of nuances and allegorical hints (Remes). Therefore, we would remind the readers that Remes

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<sup>354</sup> Also associated with נבִּיָּה - meaning prophecy

<sup>355</sup> The numerical value of love (ahavah) is thirteen, which is also the number of unity. Therefore, Hakham Shaul calls us to be at unity with our marital partner and God. Ahavah also means to give. The context is that of giving rather than demanding. **Proverbs 10:12** Hatred stirs up strife: But love atones for all sins. Also, note the relationship to “love” in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Parnas, the feminine aspect of the Parnasim.

<sup>356</sup> This command appears nowhere else. It is exclusive to Hakham Shaul. However, we see that high ethic that is presented to the Congregation of the Master.

<sup>357</sup> The devotion of a whole life to the preservation and establishment of the ethic of the Mesorah. This is the life’s work of Messiah.

<sup>358</sup> καθαρίζω – *katharizo* infers ritual purity.

<sup>359</sup> The Torah washes? What does the Torah wash? The Torah washes that mind, Nefesh bringing it to a higher state of consciousness.

<sup>360</sup> Note that it by means of the Oral Torah that the Esnoga, Congregation of Messiah is “set apart” and “cleansed,” made ritually whole. The phrase ῥῆμα – *rhema* can only refer to the “spoken” Torah i.e. Mesorah. Therefore, the means by which we are “cleansed is the Oral Torah.

<sup>361</sup> The Congregation of the master is an offering for the sake of the whole world. For G-d so loved the Gentile that he gave his only son. This refers to Messiah and the Jewish people. The talmidim of the Master are his offering to the world as a means of tikun. The Congregation of Messiah is given a role in the plan of tikun. The role that they play is in speaking out the Oral Torah, which is the cleansing agent for the whole world. The text should read that he, Messiah caused his Congregation to stand at his side etc. Παρίστημι – *paristemi* can also mean to “serve at his side.”

<sup>362</sup> How is it that the Congregation of Messiah is presented “spotless” etc? The work of the Chazan, which we thought of as punishment turned out to be the true manifestation of Chesed. In other words, the fruit of discipline is reward.

<sup>363</sup> This means that the Congregation of Messiah is blameless with regard to the Oral Torah, being the standard of true holiness. The Congregation of Messiah stands out as exceptional in merit and blameless in their conduct. This is the true price of belonging to the Congregation of Messiah.

means that we will be embracing non-literal events to teach spiritual truths. The actors on the stage are not literal and the stories haggadic in nature. Hakham Tsefet's ingenuity has passed to his talmid Hakham Shaul who carefully lays out the events before us.

## THE CASE OF THE MISSING HAKHAM

Hakham Shaul "coincidentally" happens to meet 12 "talmidim." Interestingly these "talmidim" have no mentioned Hakham. Obviously, Hakham Shaul did not intend for us to know those circumstances. We must unravel the allegory with the present materials. What seems also evident is that these "talmidim" are not full converts yet. They have "dedicated themselves to Torah observance." The idea of dedication to the Torah is an underlying idea in the Greek word πιστεύω – *pisteuo*, which we usually translate as "faithfulness" or faithful obedience." In the present case, we can determine that these "talmidim" are dedicated to becoming Jewish.

The question that we might place in Hakham Shaul's mouth with regard to the "talmidim" as an interpretative key is, "where are you in the process of conversion"? Have you received (Heb. kibal) the Mesorah (Orally breathed Torah – from a Hakham) yet? Their response might have been "we do not have, or know what a Hakham is, nor do we understand what the Mesorah (spirit/breath of holiness) is." In reading and interpreting the scenario, in our pericope, we would not expect anything different. Why not? If the reader looks on **CAREFULLY** it will become self-evident what has happened to these poor lost talmidim. "**And he entered into the Synagogue<sup>364</sup> of the Tz'dukim (Sadducees) and was speaking with great authority.**" One would not expect these talmidim to know anything about the Mesorah/Oral Torah if they attended a Synagogue of the Tz'dukim. We can state with confidence that this was most likely a Synagogue of **Tz'dukim** – Sadducees. The Tz'dukim accepted only the Written Torah. Likewise, they leaned towards the side of being epicurean. Consequently, they related to the more influential upper class.<sup>365</sup> The "sola scriptura" mentality originated with the Tz'dukim (Sadducees). These Tz'dukim do not have "Hakhamim" per se. They have soferim (scribes) but not Sages/Hakhamim. Furthermore, they would not have known anything about the Oral Torah.

## A PRELUDE TO EPHESIANS A PRELUDE TO THE REVELATION

The present pericope sets the stage for the book of Ephesians. Not only does it set the stage for Hakham Shaul's letter to the Ephesians it lays the foundation for the "Revelation" of Messiah.

**Revelation 2:1 ¶ "To the Sh'l'ach Tzibbur (Hazzan) of the Synagogue in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in his right hand, the one who walks among the seven golden meneroth, says this: I know your works and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men. You put to those to the test who call themselves Sheliachim, and they are not, and you found them to be false. And you have perseverance and have endured for my authority's sake, and have not grown weary. 'But I have this against you, that you have left **the first love,**<sup>366</sup> the B'ne Yisrael. 'Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent and do the principal works again; or else I am coming to you, and will remove your menorah (i.e. Seven Paqidim) out of its place -- unless you repent.**

The interpretative key to the above So'od is found in Revelation 1:20.

**Revelation 1:20 "As for the So'od of the seven stars which you saw in my right hand, and the seven golden meneroth: the seven stars are the Sheliachim Tzibbur (Hazzan) of the Synagogue of the seven congregations**

<sup>364</sup> This was most likely Synagogue of **Tz'dukim** – Sadducees. The Tz'dukim accepted only the Written Torah. Likewise, they leaned towards the side of being epicurean. Consequently, they related to the more influential upper class. Neusner, Jacob. *First-Century Judaism in Crisis: Yohanan Ben Zakkai and the Renaissance of Torah*. Augmented ed. New York: Ktav Pub. House, 1982. p. 36

<sup>365</sup> Neusner, Jacob. *First-Century Judaism in Crisis: Yohanan Ben Zakkai and the Renaissance of Torah*. Augmented ed. New York: Ktav Pub. House, 1982. p. 36

<sup>366</sup> This is a reference to G-d's **FIRST LOVE**, the B'ne Yisrael. The Ephesians may have "fallen in love" with the Jewish people and then through testing and trial turned away. Nevertheless, the **FIRST LOVE** is Yisrael!

**(Synagogues), and the seven meneroth are the seven Congregations (Synagogue).**

Where would Hakham Yochanan get the idea to pen these words?

**2 Luqas 19:9 But when they** (the Tzdukim – Sadducees) **became stubborn and rebellious, speaking negatively of the Way** (Derekh HaShem through the Mesorah) **before the congregation, he departed from them and took away the talmidim**, and began **guiding** them **through daily lectures in the school<sup>367</sup> of the Sovereign** (Tyrannus).

Hakham Shaul followed the idea that is presented in the book of Revelation (which was held in oral form at this point in time)..

The rest of the present pericope will reveal the Remes foundation for the Letter to the Ephesians.

Before we endeavor to elucidate the reason for the Letter to the Ephesians, we need to look at the great cover up. The usual translation of the present pericope says that Hakham Shaul's "headband" (where he perspired during his labor) and "apron" were distributed to heal those who touched them. **BALONEY!** Is our translation a denial of the supernatural power of G-d? Heaven forbid! Interestingly the Greek text borrows two Latin words to describe these "handkerchiefs and aprons." Something smells like a Monk that has been monkeying with the text! The Latin words are a subtle hint that someone altered the text.

Therefore, what is the true meaning of "handkerchiefs and aprons?" Hakham Shaul was not in the business of a stonemason. His occupation was that of manufacturing ritual items like Kippot and Tallithot (katanot in the present case). It is amazing that the blatant truth is right before our eyes and we miss what is being said. Ok, so they altered the text and you need to read Greek.

The usual translation reads, "And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul." The Greek word for these "extraordinary" virtuous acts is **τυγχάνω** – *tugchano* that has a literal meaning of "hitting the mark." This is actually a synonym for obedience to the Torah, which among other things means to hit the mark. The Hebrew word for sin (*chattath*) means to miss the mark i.e. disobedience to the Torah. Hakham Shaul is in the business of helping talmidim stand, i.e. be able to hit the mark. The sicknesses are REMES – referring to something other than Peshat! These diseases are the plagues of the soul, which are healed through Torah observance!

## **A CASE FOR EPHESIANS**

We have seen above how the present pericope is related to the Ephesians. What we do not see are minor Remes details. The subtle hint will elude the reader who hurries through his lesson. Hakham Shaul is a well-trained Sage. He has covered every aspect of the four levels of hermeneutic in these few pasukim (verses). He begins a narrative about Sheba B'ne Shaba. Firstly, let us reiterate that the Remes text here shows us the failure of seven sons of a Priest named Sheba. The text reads "High Priest." The difficulty here is that he is not a "High Priest." However, most scholars agree that he is of the true Levitical line. Therefore, this subtle reference demonstrates that the Priest and his sons are failures without any spiritual power or authority of their own. In fact, they know this and try to use the authority of the Master. Again, we reiterate what we have stated above, the Levitical Priesthood was transferred to the Priest of the Firstborn when Yochanan stated "I must decrease and you must increase." The words Yochanan spoke, "I need to be immersed by you" shows Levitical concession to the Priesthood of the firstborn.

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<sup>367</sup> σχολή – *schole* (School) There is some conjecture here as to the true nature of the "school." And, the exact time of day that Hakham Shaul may have lectured in that place. The lecture again, may have lasted for three and one half years to found that congregants in the Peshat, Mishnaic Import of Hakham Tsefet.

## **SHEBA B'NE SHEBA**

Most of our readers will know that we have inaugurated a new translation of Ephesians concurring it to the counting of the Omer. Furthermore, the sections are concurring to match the custom of associating each day with one of the seven lower sefirot which can be found in almost any Siddur. These seven *sefirot* represent one of the seven Paqidim governing the congregation.

1	Masoret	Loving-kindness
2	Sheliah (Hazzan)	Strength (Din – Judgment)
3	Darshan (Prophet)	Compassion (Beauty)
4	Parnas #1– Pastor	Virtue – Confidence, Victory
5	Parnas #2 – Pastor (f.)	Sincerity (Glory)
6	Parnas #3 - Pastor	Foundation Emet – Truth
7	Moreh – Teacher	The Kingdom

Hakham Shaul subtly shows the Remes text of his letter to the Ephesians that it is based on the principle of counting of the Omer.

For those who are not familiar with the Hebrew titles Sheba B'ne Sheba we will translate. Sheba is the number seven, and therefore we have a play on the number seven. The non-literal Remes would allow us to say that we have seven times seven, for the 49 days of counting the Omer. The seven sons refer to the seven lower sefirot. Consequently, Hakham Shaul gives us a hint (Remes) that he would write a semi-acrostic styled letter to the Ephesians based on this criterion.

Why does Hakham Shaul say that he spent 24 months (2 years) speaking with authority in that place. The subtlety is amazing “the first mention of 24 is with regard to the “DEDICATION” of the Mishkan.”<sup>368</sup> However, the Remes continues when we realize that there are 24 books to the Tanakh. Hakham Shaul stayed long enough to marry the Oral Torah to the written Torah and to witness the demise of the Tz'dukim (Sadducees). Furthermore, the connection to the Kohanim is with regard to the 24 courses of Mishmarot. Again, this shows that the Levitical line is defunct and that the Firstborn are reinstated to their original vocation/call of being the Priests.

Amen Vamen

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## **Questions for Reflection**

1. From all the readings for this week, which particular verse or passage caught your attention and fired your heart and imagination?
2. In your opinion, and taking into consideration all of the above readings for this Sabbath, what is the prophetic message (the idea that encapsulates all the Scripture passages read) for this week?

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## **Blessing After Torah Study**

**Barúch Atáh Adonai, Elohénu Meléch HaOlám,  
Ashér Natán Lánu Torát Emét, V'Chayéi Olám Natá B'Tochénu.  
Barúch Atáh Adonái, Notén HaToráh. Amen!**

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<sup>368</sup> For more relationships to the number, twenty-four see His Eminence Rabbi Dr Hillel ben David's exposition on the number twenty-four. <http://www.betemunah.org/twentyfour.html> .

Blessed is Ha-Shem our God, King of the universe,  
Who has given us a teaching of truth, implanting within us eternal life.  
Blessed is Ha-Shem, Giver of the Torah. Amen!

“Now unto Him who is able to preserve you faultless, and spotless, and to establish you without a blemish, before His majesty, with joy, [namely,] the only one God, our Deliverer, by means of Yeshua the Messiah our Master, be praise, and dominion, and honor, and majesty, both now and in all ages. Amen!”

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## Next Shabbat:

### Shabbat “Nefesh Ki Techetá” – “When a person sins”

Shabbat	Torah Reading:	Weekday Torah Reading:
<b>נֶפֶשׁ כִּי-תִחַטֵּא</b>		<b>Saturday Afternoon</b>
“Nefesh Ki Techetá”	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 4:1-4	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 5:1-3
“When a person sins”	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 4:5-7	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 5:4-6
“Cuando alguna persona pecare”	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 4:8-12	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 5:7-9
Vayiqra (Lev.) 4:1-35	Reader 4 – Vayiqra 4:13-21	
Ashlamatah: Ezekiel 18:4-13, 32	Reader 5 – Vayiqra 4:22-26	<b>Monday &amp; Thursday Mornings</b>
	Reader 6 – Vayiqra 4:27-31	Reader 1 – Vayiqra 5:1-3
Psalms 74:1-23	Reader 7 – Vayiqra 4:32-35	Reader 2 – Vayiqra 5:4-6
	Maftir – Vayiqra 4:32-35	Reader 3 – Vayiqra 5:7-9
N.C.: 1 Pet 1:13 - 2:3; Luke 10:1-12; Acts 19:21-41	Ezekiel 18:4-13, 32	

**שבת שלום**  
Shabbat Shalom

Hakham Dr. Yosef ben Haggai  
Rabbi Dr. Hillel ben David  
Rabbi Dr. Eliyahu ben Abraham