

וַיִּקְרָא

VAYIKRA/AND HE CALLED Vayikra/Leviticus 1:1-5:26

The book of **Vayikra**, as the **3rd book of Moshe**, is the **heart of the Torah**. It is an **ancient tradition** that **little boys** who are beginning to read will **begin their study** of the **Torah** with the book of **Vayikra**. Jewish teacher **Avraham Yehoshua Greenbaum** writes: (emphasis mine)

“...the **Torah code of sacrifices and purification** may appear **ancient, primitive, complicated and irrelevant**. But if we are **willing to explore the Torah** with the **fresh eyes of children**, ready to **take the word of G-d on trust, with faith and belief**, we can discover that the **sacrificial system contains the keys to repentance** and the healing of the soul and the entire world.”

Mark 10:15 "Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of Yah as a little child will by no means enter it."

Vayikra contains **247 of the 613 instructions** in the **Torah**. Known as the **book of the Levitical Law**, it is considered to be the most “**Jewish**” of the **Bible**. It is also the **least understood and studied** by the **Christian community**.

The word **Leviticus** is **derived from both Greek and Latin** and means “**pertaining to the Levites**”. This would appear to be an **appropriate title** since the book is **full of rituals** for the **priests**, who were **descended from the tribe of Levi**, and specifically from **Aharon**. The word **Vayikra** (And he called - וַיִּקְרָא) just happens to be the **first Hebrew word** of the book and **seems to imply nothing of the responsibilities of the priests** or point to the many **sacrifices and rituals** contained within. Let’s dig a little deeper as we know that **nothing is happenstance** in the Word of יהוה.

There are several interesting **teachings** just on וַיִּקְרָא, the **very first word**. Many of them point to the **unusual way** the word **appears** in the **ancient Torah scrolls**. Its **final letter** (Hebrew reads right to left), the **aleph (א)**, is written much **smaller** than the **other letters**:

וַיִּקְרָא

In its appearance the **aleph (א)** is **very insignificant**. The **standard size letters** spell out the word **vayikar** (וַיִּקְרָ), which can mean “**and he encountered**” or “**and he chanced upon**”. Unlike **vayikra (וַיִּקְרָא)**, which refers to a “**calling**” or a “**purposeful meeting by request**”, **vayikar (וַיִּקְרָ)** suggests an “**accidental meeting**” or just a “**mere event**”.

The sages have pointed out the **differences** between the **call to Moshe (וַיִּקְרָא אֶל-מֹשֶׁה)** which **begins Vayikra (And יהוה called to Moshe)** and **יהוה’s appearance to the pagan prophet Bilaam**:

Bemidbar/Numbers 23:16 And יהוה met Balaam (וַיִּקְרָא יְהוָה אֶל-בְּלָעָם), and put a word in his mouth, and said, "Go back to Balak, and thus you shall speak."

Thus it is pointed out that **יהוה reveals Himself** to the **pagan Balaam** by an **incomplete form of address (vayikar - וַיִּקְרָ)**, whereas to the **prophets of Israel** He appears in a **complete form of address** containing the

aleph (vayikra - וַיִּקְרָא). It is worth noting that **pictographically**, the **aleph** (א) is an **ox head**, representing **power and strength**. The **golden calf** that the Israelites worshipped showed their **association** with **Elohim** and the **ox**. The **aleph** points to the **Almighty** as many of the **titles** for **יהוה** begin with **this letter** (א) - **El** (אֱלֹהִים), **Elohim** (אֱלֹהִים), **El Shaddai** (אֱלֹהֵי שַׁדַּי), **Elohay Tzvaot** (אֱלֹהֵי צְבָאוֹת), etc. **יהוה**, by virtue of His **leaving off the aleph** in His **appearance** (vayikar - וַיִּקָּר), **did not completely reveal Himself** to the **pagan Balaam**. His call to **Balaam** was only for the **purpose of accomplishing His will**. The **small aleph** (א) in **Vayikra 1:1** is also a **visual** of what our **strong and powerful Messiah** (א) did for us (**humbled Himself**) in order that we are now even able to **RESPOND** to His **call** (vayikra - וַיִּקְרָא) to us:

Philippians 2:5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Yeshua the Messiah,⁶ who, being in the form of Elohim, did not consider it robbery to be equal with Elohim,⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men.

An interesting **contrast** on the **small aleph** is that you can find a **large aleph** in the ancient scrolls at the **beginning of the first word in 1 Chronicles 1:1**:

אָדָם

This is the word “**Adam**”. The **small aleph** is understood to **represent the humility of Moshe** (and by **association, Yeshua**), whereas the **large aleph** represents the **arrogance of Adam**, or **man** in general. We know that the **cause of the first sin** was the **arrogant attitudes of Adam and Chava** (Eve) who **believed the words of the serpent** who told them that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil **they would become as great as Elohim!** **Moshe and Yeshua**...both portrayed very **humble people**.

Just one last thought on the aleph. Mostly, the **aleph** is a **silent letter** at the **end of a word**. The **small aleph** teaches us that we must be very **sensitive** to the **call**. For **those who look**, it will be **visible**. For **those who listen**, you will **hear the difference**. If you do not **look or listen**, **vayikra** (וַיִּקְרָא) will become **vayikar** (וַיִּקָּר). **We do not want to be without the aleph!**

For the last several weeks, we have been studying the **Tabernacle**, its **furnishings**, and the **priestly vestments**. We have learned “**why**” the **Almighty desired for the Tabernacle to be built**:

Shemot/Exodus 25:8 "And let them make Me a sanctuary, that I may dwell among them.

Last week, in an extraordinary **climax** to the **building of the Tabernacle**, we saw the **Shekinah glory** of **יהוה** come down to **fill the Tabernacle**:

Shemot 40:34 Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of יהוה filled the tabernacle.

Baruch HaShem! So we’ve accomplished the goal, right? **He is dwelling among us**. Hmm... something is still **amiss**:

Shemot 40:35 And Moshe was not able to enter the tabernacle of meeting, because the cloud rested above it, and the glory of יהוה filled the tabernacle.

The glory of יהוה has come down to fill the Tabernacle, and even the faithful Moshe is not able to enter the place where He is dwelling. This leads us into the book of Vayikra:

Vayikra 1:1 Now יהוה called to Moshe, and spoke to him from the tabernacle of meeting, saying, ² "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to יהוה, you shall bring your offering of the livestock -- of the herd and of the flock.

Now instead of being called up to the summit of the Mountain, Moshe is summoned into the Tabernacle. Moshe's communication with the Almighty would continue, only the location has changed. There are still more laws to learn. What was יהוה eager to share with Moshe? His words were instructions and commands for the future relationship of how man would approach יהוה, give thanks, make vows, atone for sin, and seek forgiveness.

All of these instructions would open up the door for יהוה's will to be accomplished – for Him to be able to once again dwell with His chosen people. In fact, you may remember that the whole rest of the Scriptures will focus on this objective until we get to the last chapters of Revelation where this process is completed and we will dwell with Him for all eternity.

Sadly, many who have become believers in Yeshua have labeled Vayikra as “obsolete” or “done away with”. In doing so, they have thrown out the holiness code and have lost the instructions on how to “draw near” to יהוה in order that He might “dwell with us”:

2 Corinthians 6:15Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶ And what agreement has the temple of Yah with idols? For you are the temple of the living Yah. As Yah has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their Adonai, And they shall be My people." ¹⁷ Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says Adonai. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

By ignoring the sacrifices, a believer cannot have the proper understanding of what Yeshua's sacrifice did for us...or better yet, what His sacrifice continues to do for us. The sacrificial system taught how the death sentence יהוה decreed against man, as a sinner, was atoned for when an innocent animal died in his place. This substitution principle is pointed to in Vayikra 1:2. R. Shneur Zalman, the first Rebbe of Lubavitch points out a grammatical oddity. First our English translation:

Vayikra 1:2 "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When any one of you brings an offering to יהוה....

However, in the Hebrew the word order of the sentence is strange and unexpected. For the above phrase, “when one of you brings an offering”, we would expect the Hebrew words - אִתְּךָ מִכֶּם פִּי־יִקְרִיב. Instead the Hebrew is written אִתְּךָ פִּי־יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם, which literally translates “any man of you when he offers an offering of you”. The essence of sacrifice, said R. Shneur Zalman, is that we offer ourselves!

Galatians 2:20 "I have been crucified with Messiah; it is no longer I who live, but Messiah lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of Elohim, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

“Offering” is the translation of the Hebrew word **korban** (קָרְבָּן). This word is found **25 times** in our parasha. **Korban** is used exclusively with reference to humanity’s relationship with יהוה, and it can only be understood from the meaning that lies at its root, **karov** (קָרַב), which means “to approach”, “to come near”, or “to enter into a relationship”. We have already been given an **order in the Torah**. **First**, we must **build the Tabernacle**, according to the **pattern (Torah) יהוה has given us**. Then we are to **draw “close”** (karov - קָרַב) to Him through the **written and Living Torah, Yeshua**. Even now we are **constructing our Tabernacle within our own selves** by being **doers of Torah** through the **power of the Spirit**. If we want to have the **Spirit of the Messiah “dwell”** within our **bodily Tabernacle**, then we must apply the **lessons of the korban** (קָרְבָּן).

You may remember **Yeshua** speaking of “**korban**”. In the **1st century**, some of the **Pharisees** had **elevated their own traditions** to being **sufficient** for “**drawing near**” to the **Almighty**, and called them “**korban**”. When people **elevated traditions over the Word**, **Yeshua** always set them straight:

Mark 7:9 He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of Yah, that you may keep your tradition." ¹⁰ "For Moshe said, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' ¹¹ "But you say, 'If a man says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is korban" -- ' (that is, a gift to Yah), ¹² "then you no longer let him do anything for his father or his mother, ¹³ "making the word of Yah of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."

Thus we can understand “**korban**” to be an **expression of worship**, as **taught by יהוה**, whereby one is able to **bring the offering of his commitment and loyalty** to his **Creator**. This week we are introduced to **five major types of offerings or korbanote** (plural of korban):

- **Olah** (Elevation offering) – for **total consecration** of the **offerer’s life** to יהוה
- **Mincha** (Grain offering) – token of the **offerer’s life** to his **fellow man**
- **Shelamim** (Peace offering) – symbolizes **fellowship between יהוה and His people**
- **Chatat** (Sin offering) – brought to **atone for personal or congregational sin**
- **Asham** (Guilt offering) – brought for **sins not considered as serious** as the sin offering, swearing falsely, etc.

All of these different types of **offerings** are for **drawing near** to יהוה. However, only the **last two** are **offered for sins**. The **first three** are also **voluntary offerings**, whereas the **last two** are **commanded**. **Baruch A. Levine** in *The JPS Torah Commentary* notes that: (emphasis mine)

“the **chatat** and the **asham** were **offered for the purpose of securing God’s forgiveness**. Their presentation was **obligatory**, pursuant to transgressions of religious law, **committed either by omission or through inadvertent violations**. In most cases, the sacrifice served to **remove the charge against the offenders** and to **restore them to a proper relationship with Elohim** and to **fit membership in the religious community.**”

To **understand** more fully the **sacrifices** and some **very important and misunderstood concepts** of the **Brit Chadasha**, we must also understand that there are **two basic types of sins**:

- **Intentional**
- **Unintentional**

The **definitions** of these words can **vary slightly** from our **Western mindset**. It appears that only those **sins committed in out-right rebellion** are termed as “**intentional**”. **Sins committed** because of **carelessness**, or **omission**, or because of **perhaps fear** are usually **defined as unintentional**. However, the important point to remember is that **under the Levitical system**, there is **NO sacrifice for intentional sin**. That meant **technically EVERYONE** could be **found guilty under the Law** because **all have sinned!**

Ecclesiastes 7:20 For there is not a just man on earth who does good And does not sin.

Bemidbar 15:30 ' But the person who does anything defiantly,... he shall be cut off from among his people. ³¹ 'Because he has despised the word of יהוה', and has broken His commandment, that person shall be completely cut off; his guilt shall be upon him.' "

The **sacrificial system atoned** for **unintentional sins**. These sins were **still serious** because they **resulted in impurity** that could **keep יהוה** from **dwelling in the Tabernacle**. Thus the lesson learned is that even when we are **merely careless** or **insensitive in our treatment of others**, the **risk** is there for **banishing the Almighty from our presence**.

Now if you **committed a sin of rebellion** (intentional), then you would be turned over to “**The Law**”. In these cases the **Law would deal directly with the offender, imposing real punishments**. This is the **same way our justice system works today**. The **punishment for intentional sin** was **either death or banishment from the camp**. To an **Israelite**, **banishment** was as **good as death** because **now you were separated from יהוה**.

Obviously, **many Israelites lived in fear** of being brought to trial for “**intentional sins**”. **Romans 3:23** speaks to where we **all stand**:

Romans 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of Yah,

And this is the **penalty for sin**:

Ezekiel 18:4 "Behold, all souls are Mine; The soul of the father As well as the soul of the son is Mine; The soul who sins shall die.

But look at what **Yeshua has accomplished for us**:

Romans 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Messiah Yeshua, ²⁵ whom Elohim set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance Elohim had passed over the sins that were previously committed,

John 3:16 "For Yah so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Romans 5:11 And not only that, but we also rejoice in Elohim through our Adonai Messiah Yeshua through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

Don't miss the point here! **Under the Levitical system (The Law)**, there was **NO reconciliation for those who sinned intentionally**. And **all were guilty of some form of rebellion**. But through the **order of Melchizedek**, of which **Yeshua is Priest and King**, we can **now obtain forgiveness for all sins, even intentional sins!** Before **Yeshua**, under the **Levitical system**, **sin** could be handled in **one of two ways**:

- **By the Sacrificial system (upon committing an unintentional sin)**

- **By the Law (intentional sin)**

Our **sinful actions** have **consequences**. In order for **right standing** to **take effect**, a **redemptive action** must be **executed upon a completely innocent creature**. The **sacrificial system** was a **system of grace** because **you escaped death** by the **innocent animal** which **paid for your sin**. We are **still under this system of grace** because now through **faith in Yeshua**, He has become our **payment for sin!** And **He** is a **better way** because **His blood is good for both intentional and unintentional sin** by virtue of the **order of Melchizedek!** This is the **Gospel of Messiah! Baruch HaShem!** Now we can better understand verses like this:

Galatians 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Messiah, to a different gospel,⁷ which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Messiah.

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Galatians 3:13 Messiah has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree")'

- **The curse of the law was death for intentional sin**

Isn't it awesome what a **bit of perspective** will **accomplish** for us in **understanding the Scriptures?** Now read what **Paul** had to say in **Romans**:

Romans 6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?¹⁷ But Yah be thanked that **though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.**¹⁸ **And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.**

Do you **understand** now how the **law has not been abolished?!!** We still must **attempt to keep His commandments**. **Obedience still leads to righteousness**. But we have **"been set free from sin"** because **now** there is **forgiveness** from **"intentional sin"** because of the **sacrifice of Yeshua**. But **without Yeshua**, an **offender is still under the curse of the Law**.

The **earthly Levitical system** was meant to be a **picture of how the heavenly worked**. All **earthly systems** are **inferior to what they shadow**. **Yeshua is a High Priest** of the **heavenly order of Melchizedek**:

Psalms 110:4 יהוה has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

The **Law never failed** because it was **never designed to forgive intentional sin**. The **requirements of the Torah are still in force**. It's just that **today** we have the **Spiritual option**:

Romans 8:2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Yeshua the Messiah has made me free from the law of sin and death.³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh (it was an **earthly system**), Yah did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: **He condemned sin in the flesh,**⁴ **that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit** (this is the **heavenly system**).

The **Melchizedek** (means “king of righteousness) system, where the **High Priest** is the “**Priest of the Almighty**” was prophesied:

Bereshith 14:18 Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of El Elyon (God Most High).

Psalm 110:4 יהוה has sworn And will not relent, "You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 10:16 "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says יהוה: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,"¹⁷ then He adds, "Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."¹⁸ Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Now you can **understand** one of the reasons that the **Pharisees** were so **angry** with **Yeshua**. It must have been very **confusing** when **Yeshua** began **forgiving intentional sins**:

Matthew 9:1 So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city.² Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Yeshua saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, "Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you."³ And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, "This Man blasphemes!"

Luke 7:37 And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Yeshua sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil,³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil....Then He turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has washed My feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head."⁴⁵ "You gave Me no kiss, but this woman has not ceased to kiss My feet since the time I came in."⁴⁶ "You did not anoint My head with oil, but this woman has anointed My feet with fragrant oil."⁴⁷ "Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little."⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."⁴⁹ And those who sat at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "Who is this who even forgives sins?"⁵⁰ Then He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you. Go in peace."

The **Levitical Law** did not allow for forgiveness of intentional sins. When **Yeshua** granted forgiveness to those who were **obvious sinners**, it must have seemed like **blasphemy** to those who were **zealous for the Law**.

Okay, let's go in another direction now. As we look at the **first three offerings**, there is a **phrase** repeated **ten times**...it is actually only **two Hebrew words**:

A burnt offering, an offering made by fire - עֹלָה אֲשָׁה

Let's play with these **Hebrew words** a little bit. We can **change the vowels** because actually **vowels** were **added much later** to the **ancient scrolls**, thus we can arrive at a **whole new meaning**:

An ascending woman or an ascending wife - עֹלָה אֲשָׁה

The **first verse** where these words appear is in **Vayikra 1:9**. We find **other interesting words** when we play with the **vowels** and consider their **roots**:

Vayikra 1:9 'but he shall wash its inner parts (וַיִּכְרֹס בְּוֶרֶךְ - can also mean “and they shall draw near”) and its legs (וַיִּכְרֹס עַל - can also mean “and they shall bow”) with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as a burnt offering (עֹלָה), an offering made by fire (זֶבַח), a sweet aroma to יְהוָה.

Putting this all together then, I came up with something like this –

Vayikra 1:9 and they shall draw near and they shall bow, He shall wash with water. And the priest shall burn all on the altar as an ascending wife, a sweet aroma to יְהוָה.

Wow! Do you see a picture here of the **bride drawing near, humbling herself and allowing herself to be washed with the water of the Word?** She becomes a **living sacrifice on the altar**, a **sweet aroma to יְהוָה**. We can see **this picture** in these **verses** from the **Brit Chadasha**:

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

*2 Corinthians 2:14 Now thanks be to Yah who always leads us in triumph in Messiah, and **through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place**.¹⁵ For we are to Yah the fragrance of Messiah among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.*

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Messiah also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to Yah for a sweet-smelling aroma.

The **last two offerings** in our Torah parasha were **offered because of sin**. **Rabbi Amnon Bazak** made some very interesting comments about the “**Asham**”, the **guilt offering** that had to be brought as **atonement** for **certain very specific sins** (**misuse of sacred property**, such as by deriving a benefit from the flesh of a sacrifice; or **taking a false oath** denying a financial obligation). **Bazak** writes: (emphasis mine)

“The **Asham** is **different** from the **Chatat sacrifice**, which is brought as **atonement** for ‘**regular**’ sins. The **Ramban** explains that the **unique character** of the **Asham** can be seen in its **name**: ‘The name **Asham – guilt** – implies something special for which the **guilty person** should feel **desolate** and **lost**’ (Vayikra 5:15). The difference between the sacrifices can also be seen in the details of the offerings. The various types of **Chatat** can be brought from **different types of animals**, while the **Asham**, as is emphasized each of the three times that it is mentioned, is ‘**an unblemished ram** from the sheep, **with the proper value**’ (Vayikra 5:15, 18, 25). What is the **significance** of this **unique aspect** of the **Asham**?

First of all, let us analyze the word ‘**b’erkecha**’ (בְּעֵרְכֶךָ) – **with the proper value**. The first time it appears, an entire explanation is given, ‘...an **unblemished ram** from the sheep, **with the proper value in Shekels of silver, holy Shekels**’ (5:15). How much should the animal be worth? ...the word ‘**b’erkecha**’, which can be interpreted not as ‘**your value**’ but simply as **value or worth**, appears in the Torah in only **one other context, a donation for a holy purpose according to a numerical worth assigned to every person**. In the portion of Bechukotai (Vayikra 26:3-27:34), the Torah gives a **list of the values of people** according to their age. It emphasizes that the money should be donated in a specific way: ‘**All values shall be in holy Shekels**’ (Vayikra 27:25). The similar language used in both cases might lead us to the **conclusion** that in this week’s portion also, the **relevant amount is the value of the person; that is, one should sacrifice a ram whose value is the same as his own**. This would mean that a person who is between the ages of twenty

and sixty, when his personal value is highest, must bring a **ram** which is worth fifty Shekels, while if he is a different age the ram would have a lower value. **This clearly leads to the concept that a sacrifice can be viewed as a 'substitute' for a man.** Since he has committed such a terrible sin, he should in principle offer himself as a sacrifice. Bringing a ram that is a value equal to his own is a symbolic way for a person to offer himself as a sacrifice.

It is now clear why the animal that is sacrificed for an Asham is a ram. The idea that an animal can be used as a replacement for a human sacrifice can be seen as based on the affair of the **binding of Yitzchak**. This is the only place in the Torah where a **man** was put on an **altar as a sacrifice**, and he was **then replaced by an animal**. 'And Avraham lifted up his eyes and he saw another **ram** and offered it as an Olah sacrifice **instead of his son.**' (Bereshith 22:13). This shows more than any other even that a **sacrifice can be viewed as a substitute for a man**, and this takes on special significance when the **ram** has the **same value as the man.**" (end of quote)

If a **ram** could be a **substitute for a man**, then it should be easy to see the **innocent Yeshua** as a **substitute** for **mankind**.

Okay, the **last two offerings** in our Torah reading are offered because of **sin**. Again we find a phrase **repeated multiple times**:

"the priest shall make an atonement for him"

Let's pull out just one particular verse where this phrase is found:

Vayikra 4:26 'And he shall burn all its fat on the altar, like the fat of the sacrifice of the peace offering. So the priest shall make atonement for him concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him.

Atonement can be thought of as a "**covering**". There are **two types of atonements** referred to in the **first five chapters** of **Vayikra**. The **first** is related to the **voluntary offerings** and is **atonement for the person**. The offering is given for the **purpose of drawing near to יהוה**, thus he is in need of some sort of "**covering**" in order to **approach a Holy Elohim**. This is provided as a result of the **Olah offering**. **Yeshua** is our **Olah offering**. He is our "**covering**" that allows us to **boldly approach the throne** of יהוה.

The **second type of atonement** was **an atonement for his sin**. Note in **Vayikra 4:35** that the **sin was forgiven him**:

Vayikra 4:35 Then the priest shall burn it on the altar, according to the offerings made by fire to יהוה. So the priest shall make atonement for his sin that he has committed, and it shall be forgiven him.

We know from **Hebrews 10** that **though the sin was forgiven, it was not taken away** by the **animal sacrifice**. These **sacrifices had to be offered again and again** for the same sin. Still, the **offering of the sacrifice provided them with a covering** that **repaired their relationship** with יהוה. The **sacrifice of Yeshua paid the price for ALL sin, intentional and unintentional**. Sin was **forgiven AND taken away**. Forgiveness was **granted through faith and by confession and repentance**.

The **sacrifice of Yeshua** is in fact **timeless**. **Revelation** supports this:

Revelation 13:8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

In the Father's eyes, the **Son's sacrifice** has always been seen in the **present tense**. It **supersedes time**. **John the Immerser** recognized **Yeshua** as the **Lamb of Elohim**:

*John 1:29 The next day John saw Yeshua coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The **Lamb of Elohim** who takes away the sin of the world!"*

Now here's a **question** for you. **Which** of these **sacrifices** that we have studied in **Vayikra** is the one that **"takes away the sin of the world"**? **None** of them do this! Remember that the **Law never** was **meant to take away all sin**. The **sacrifice** being referred to here is the **Passover Lamb**. Now any **unbelieving (in Messiah) Jew** will tell you that the **Passover Lamb** was **not sacrificed for sins**. But what do we know of these **Passover lambs**?

- These **lambs protected** them from **death** – in the same way **Yeshua saved us** from being **condemned by the Law** and **sentenced to death** because of our **intentional sin**
- The **Passover Lamb freed** them from **slavery to Egypt** – we are **freed** from our **slavery to sin** through the **death of our Passover Lamb**

The **offerings for sin** are **no longer necessary** because of **Yeshua's perfect fulfillment**. That does **not mean** that we do not **suffer consequences for our sin**. But the **price has already been paid**, and we **do not need to make another sacrifice for our sin**. Instead we **repent** and **ask for forgiveness through faith in Yeshua**. This is what **provides our atonement**, and **allows us to come near to the Father**.

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

John 14:6 Yeshua said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Now of course we know that there is no **Temple** where we can actually make an **offering**. However, we know that even **after Yeshua's resurrection offerings were made** by the **believers**. They were not made for **sin**, but for the purposes **they were designed for....for complete devotion, for making vows, for total surrender, for obedience, and for thankfulness of יהוה's provision**. Today, as **believers in Messiah**, we are **living stones** offering up **spiritual sacrifices**, representing the **complete surrender** of our **lives**:

1 Peter 2:5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to Yah through Yeshua the Messiah.

A **person bringing an animal** for one of these **voluntary offerings** must **lean with both hands** upon the **head of the animal**. Many say in this way the **animal** became a **substitute** for the **person's sin**. While this is **true** for the **guilt** and the **sin offerings**, there are **other reasons for leaning**. It may be because they were **dedicating all of their strength and purpose to יהוה**. They may be **stating a specific spiritual goal or offering praise to יהוה**. The **smoke** from the **offered animal** then **rises as a sweet aroma to יהוה**, representing the **man being elevated to heavenly stature**. The **offering** is about **dedication and transformation**.

Okay, just one more **question**. **Did Yeshua ever make an offering**? Hmmmm.....He was a **respected Rabbi** and **He kept Torah**. **He loved the Father** and **He totally surrendered His will** to Him. Of course He **would**

not have needed to **make an offering for sin**, but wasn't He **completed dedicated to the Father**? Wouldn't He have wanted to **publically express His love for His Father**? Wouldn't the people around Him have **expected Him to make these offerings**? Plus we read **no criticisms by the Pharisees that He was not making offerings**. These verses **demonstrate His commitment**:

Matthew 26:39 He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, **not as I will, but as You will.**"

John 17:4 "I have glorified You on the earth. **I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**

So what can we gain from **study** of the **sacrifices**? First of all, be **aware** that these **Levitical sacrifices** had **nothing to do with "being saved"** or with **"eternal salvation"**. They were and they are **about worshiping יהוה**. What we learn from them can benefit us as we too **desire to improve our relationship** with the **Almighty** and as we learn how to **"draw near"** that **He may dwell** in our **midst**.

Shabbat Shalom!

Ardelle