



Parasha Vayikra

March 28, 2020

Parasha: Leviticus 1:1-5:26

Haftarah: Isaiah 43:21-44:23

Ketuvim Shlichim: Hebrews 10:1-14

Shabbat shalom Mishpacha! The Book of Leviticus, *Vayikra* in Hebrew, immediately follows the activities of constructing and furnishing the Tabernacle, in the closing chapters of the Book of Exodus. The name of this *parasha*, *Vayikra*, the first one in the Book of Leviticus, means “and He called.” *1 Now Adonai called to Moses and spoke to him out of the Tent of Meeting, saying: 2 “Speak to Bnei-Yisrael, and tell them:* (Leviticus 1:1-2a TLV). ADONAI called to Moses from within the Tabernacle and gave him instructions for the offering of sacrifices, the way in which Israel was to maintain a proper relationship and fellowship with Him at that time. And, these sacrifices and offerings would continue throughout the years as Israel’s only means of dealing with sin until Yeshua’s sacrifice many hundreds of years in the future.

But, why were sacrifices necessary? Why did ADONAI tell them to do these things? Why did they have to do all of these things? The truth is that sacrifices were absolutely necessary! They were necessary so that ADONAI, who could not look upon sin, could have fellowship with Israel, the people whom He had chosen and had redeemed from Egypt. When ADONAI created the earth, it was a perfect world, a world without sin. Our ancestors, *Adam* and *Chava*, Adam and Eve, were created into a sinless world, a world without death. But, when they sinned, death entered the earth. But, ADONAI knew all along that they would, and as a loving G-d, created a way that the one who sinned could come back to Him. When a person sins, it is a sin against our Creator and the sinner deserves to die. *20 The soul that sins, he will die.* (Ezekiel 18:20 TLV). The soul of a sinner is equated with the actual person and the person is responsible for his own actions. We are all responsible for our actions, responsible for our sins. And, according to ADONAI’s rules, if we sin, we deserve to die. No exceptions; even the least of sins! Suppose you stole \$1. Without ADONAI’s mercy you would die for that sin; you would die for any sin, no matter how small. It doesn’t have to be stealing a million dollars or murder. Even the simplest violation of ADONAI’s law is deserving of death in His eyes. But ADONAI showed Moses the way in which Israel could have a substitute to die in their place. Since the penalty for sin is death, someone or something, an innocent one, had to die. The innocent ones in G-d’s plan for that day were the bulls, goats, lambs and birds. And, the sacrifices and offerings described in *Parasha Vayikra* and our next *parasha*, *Tzav*, were the ways that some sins could be atoned for. The *Yom Kippur* sacrifices, the annual time of forgiveness for the nation of Israel, are described separately. But, the sacrifices in these two *parshiot* are ones which could be presented at the daily times of sacrifice.

We frequently hear that these sacrifices were only for unintentional sins and *Torah* does say that in Leviticus 4 and 5 (Leviticus 4:2, 13, 22, 27; 5:15, and 18). But, if that was so, how could one who intentionally committed a sin be forgiven? I don’t know the complete answer, but there are other verses which seem to deal with intentional sin. This is a little

more than we have time to discuss today, but In Leviticus 6:2, the *Torah* does say that fraud, lying, and theft are to be atoned for by repentance, repayment, and blood sacrifice. Those would seem to be intentional sins. There are also references in Leviticus 5:1 and 5:4 which may be referring to intentional sin. I have to believe that because of ADONAI's mercy that there was a way for the people to atone for intentional sin and it most likely was through sincere repentance plus a sacrifice.

There are five types of offerings prescribed in *Parasha Vayikra*. We will not have time to cover the different offerings in detail today, but they are important for us to know about. I'm on my soapbox again about *Torah* study! It is important that we all know about these offerings and have some understanding of them. Bible study, including the study of *Torah*, is vitally important today and is probably the most neglected area among Yeshua's followers today. We pray and we praise and we worship, but as individuals, we don't do much studying. Don't just depend on others to sift it and feed it to you. Study it yourself! *5 Make every effort to present yourself before God as tried and true, as an unashamed worker cutting a straight path with the word of truth* (2Timothy 2:15 TLV). I have attached a small amount of information about these five sacrifices in Addendum 1 at the end of this written message. You can read it on our website, www.beitshalom.us under the message tab. But, I encourage you to find your own references and *Parasha Vayikra* on your own.

The five sacrifices are: *olah*, the burnt offering, *mincha*, the meal offering, *sh'lamim*, the peace offering, *chatat*, the sin offering and *asham*, the guilt offering. Only the last two, the sin offering and the guilt offering, deal with sin. And, only does the sin sacrifice require the guilty person to lay his hands on the head of the sacrifice, confess his sins and then kill it by cutting its throat. *4 He is to bring the bull (for the sin offering) to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before Adonai, lay his hand on the head of the bull, and slaughter it before Adonai* (Leviticus 4:4 TLV). Understanding the offerings which ADONAI allowed through the ministry of the Levitical priesthood will help you to better understand Yeshua's sacrifice which He, Himself, made as new High Priest after the order of *Malkitzedek*. The Tabernacle was the only place where these daily offerings could be brought. The purpose of all of these different offerings and sacrifices was to allow the individual Israelite to atone for sins which separated him from ADONAI and restore their relationship. But, as long as there was sin in an individual's life, ADONAI could not look upon him. But, through the sacrifice, the Israelite was able to repent and receive forgiveness and return to his relationship with ADONAI. The shed blood was a covering over the sin. With some of these sacrifices, the Israelite could also give a praise or a thank offering to express his love for ADONAI.

We've noted that there were five different kinds of daily offerings and also the yearly *Yom Kippur* sacrifice in the Tabernacle. Since we have no Tabernacle or Temple or Levitical priesthood today, those sacrifices are no longer effective. We now have Yeshua's sacrifice, but what kind was it? Was His body one of these or was He some other kind of offering?

We know the most about Yeshua as a special sacrifice called the *Qorban Pesach*, קָרְבַּן פֶּסַח, the Passover lamb. But, the Passover lamb eaten in Egypt was not a sacrifice for sin nor did the Passover lamb eaten at Passover in later years represent a sin offering. It was Yeshua, Himself, the Son of G-d, who authorized His body as a special sacrifice for sin. At His last Passover, He instituted the sacrifice of a special Passover lamb for the sins of the people, His own body. *19 And when He had taken matzah and offered the bracha, He broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, given for you"* (Luke 22:20 b TLV). This is the sacrifice which we most often connect with Yeshua, His body as the Passover lamb. Who would say that this was not within the authority of the Son of G-d? And, this is very much on our minds right now as we are now only ten days away from *Pesach*.

During this same Passover *Seder* with His disciples, there was something else for which He needed to prepare them. They were still very much unaware of what was really going on. They didn't understand what He said about His body being broken and would not understand what he would tell them next. The next thing He told them about was the New Covenant which ADONAI had promised 600 years earlier through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:30-33), but it is not likely that it came to their minds that night. 20 *He took the cup after the meal, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you"* (Luke 22:20b TLV). As He gave them that cup, He told them what would happen the next day. It was the cutting of the New Covenant, a blood covenant, through the shedding of His own blood. And, it would happen less than 24 hours in the future, around 3 PM the next day. But, they were clueless. They didn't understand. Nevertheless, when Yeshua died on the stake, His blood cut the covenant and established a New Covenant with Israel. It is a covenant which anyone can become a part of by calling on Yeshua. When they trust in Him, they become a citizen of the Commonwealth of Israel.

There are verses which allude to Yeshua's sacrifice in Isaiah 53. Verse 10 says: *10 Yet it pleased Adonai to bruise Him. He caused Him to suffer. If He makes His soul a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the will of Adonai will succeed by His hand* (TLV). Isaiah tells us that the suffering servant whom we know is Yeshua is a guilt offering, an *asham*, אֲשָׁמ. One of the reasons for presenting this type of sacrifice in the Tabernacle was if a person was not certain that a sin had been committed. An *asham*, a guilt offering, was for several purposes; to atone for a breach of trust, for stealing from the altar or if a person did something marginal and was not certain that a sin was committed. If they thought they may have sinned, but weren't completely sure, they could bring an *asham*. Doesn't that seem to fit Yeshua's sacrifice? He was not guilty of anything, but He accepted guilt for you and for me and for the sins of the world. This verse also says, *He will see His offspring*. We are His offspring, His children, those of us who have accepted His sacrifice. The last part of this verse, *the will of Adonai will succeed by His hand*, tells us that it was ADONAI's will that His Son would die for our sins. That was ADONAI's plan from the beginning. It was not an afterthought, and it was foreshadowed in this sacrifice of the Tabernacle.

There is one more sacrifice which Yeshua fulfilled. It is the goat of *Yom Kippur*. In the Tabernacle and later in the Temple, a male goat chosen by lot was sacrificed on the Day of Atonement. Its blood was sprinkled on ADONAI's throne on earth, the cover on the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies, by the High Priest. At ADONAI's perfect time, Yeshua died as a sacrifice on a stake for our sins and then rose from dead to His Father in Heaven. What He did in Heaven was to fulfill the annual *Yom Kippur* sacrifice. And, His death and resurrection brought about some major changes. 1) Yeshua entered His office as *Cohen Gadol*, the High Priest after the order of *Malchitzedek*. On the day of His death and thereafter, Yeshua is the only authoritative High Priest and the only Mediator of ADONAI's covenant. Only His sacrifice is effective for sin. All of the animals sacrificed for sin from the time of His death until when the Temple was destroyed were empty sacrifices. 2) The Levitical High Priest serving in the Temple and all High Priests after him lost their authority from ADONAI as mediators of His covenant. Caiaphas, the High Priest the year of Yeshua's death, officiated in the Temple that Passover and following Day of Atonement, but it meant nothing. His authority was gone. He and others continued to serve as High Priests and sacrifice goats on *Yom Kippur* for another forty years until the Temple was destroyed, but it accomplished nothing and meant nothing. The writer of Hebrews describes in graphic detail for us what took place when Yeshua ascended to His Father and began to officiate as High Priest: *11 But when Messiah appeared as Kohen Gadol* (High Priest) *of the good things that have now come,*

*passing through the greater and more perfect Tent (the Tabernacle in Heaven) not made with hands (that is to say not of this creation), 12 He entered into the Holies (the Holy of Holies) once for all—not by the blood of goats and calves but by His own blood, having obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9:11-12 TLV). Yeshua replaced the Levitical High Priest and as the only authorized High Priest, He took His own blood into the Holy of Holies of the true Tabernacle, the Tabernacle in Heaven. These verses describe the eternal *Yom Kippur* sacrifice which Yeshua made for us which takes away sin forever! But, even though the earthly Temple sacrifices ended, a blood sacrifice was still required to cover sin. ADONAI said: 11 For the life of the creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your lives—for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life (TLV). It was Yeshua's human life which died and atoned for our sins. Most don't think of it, but when we accepted Yeshua, we placed our hands on His head, looked Him in the eyes and killed Him. It was all of our sins which killed Him.*

What we've just covered is one example of why the *Torah* is still important. It's here to teach us. There is a prophetic picture in today's *parasha* in these Tabernacle sacrifices. There is a foreshadowing of Yeshua in the earthly mediator, the Levitical High Priest, Aaron. There is a foreshadowing in the various daily sacrifices in the Tabernacle, in the Passover lamb in Egypt, in the physical sacrificial goat of *Yom Kippur*, and in the physical Tabernacle and Temple on earth. All these things were a picture of what was to come and now has come. These sacrifices were completed in ADONAI's perfect and original plan. Yeshua, His Son, the Mediator of the New Covenant, now serves as the High Priest and sits at the right hand of the Father making intercession for us.

I am so glad that Yeshua paid the price for my sins and that I don't have to sacrifice animals to stay in relationship with G-d. But, to have that relationship and to be sure that sins are forgiven, we cannot just be passive believers. The original truth about sin is still in effect. As ADONAI said through Ezekiel: 20 *the soul that sins, he will die* (Ezekiel 18:20 TLV). And we all sin. All of Adam's descendants sin. No matter how much we desire not to sin, we many times still do. ADONAI wants us to come to Him, to love Him, and to have fellowship with Him. But He doesn't force us. We have to make that choice. Yeshua's gift of salvation is available to everyone. Every person can exercise their free will and repent of their sins, accept Yeshua's sacrifice on the stake and receive the promise of eternal life. Everyone who sincerely repents receives this promise. But, it's not a fire insurance policy. It won't keep a person out of Hell, eternal separation from G-d, if it's not a sincere commitment. What comes to mind regarding this is the parable of the sower. Some people who hear G-d's word about Yeshua are like seed sown along the road. But, they don't understand it and then *HaSatan* comes and convinces them its not necessary and takes away what was sown in their heart. Others hear the Word who are like seed sown on rocky ground. They receive it, but because it has no root in their lives, they fall away when trouble comes. Others are like seed sown among thorns, but the things of the world and the lure of wealth choke out G-d's voice in their life and they turn away. But, we must be like the seed sown on the good soil. These followers of Yeshua are the ones who understand His call to be His disciples, serve Him faithfully and bear much fruit for Him. What this means is that we can't accept Yeshua's sacrifice and then live our lives anyway we want. We must sincerely follow Him. There are some who call themselves Christian and some who call themselves Messianic who are not really Yeshua's followers. Many terrible things have been done by those calling themselves Christians, things such as the Crusades, the Catholic Church's Inquisition and the Holocaust. Those followers of Yeshua, followers in name only, commit the sins listed in the *Tanakh* and the *Ketuvim Sh'lichim* and don't worry about repenting. Many in this group are relying on fire insurance for hereafter, but not knowing that their policy was revoked by the

issuer. Some say “once saved, always saved.” I say that too, but the truth is that only ADONAI knows who is really saved. So, don’t waste your time arguing this point about salvation; just submit and truly follow Yeshua and you will be “once saved, always saved.” Some listen to false teachers who say that you only have to repent once and then Jesus forgives you are forever. But, the real truth is that we all must repent daily. We all sin and we must repent to remain in good standing with our Messiah, even as we continue to serve Him and to follow Him. Repentance is a very necessary thing for all followers of Yeshua. We should repent every day, even more often if we recognize that we have sinned. And, at His place on the right of the Father, Yeshua stands ready to forgive us.

The coronavirus has caused a great deal of repentance in the last few weeks. People are crying out all over the world and we have prayed as a body of believers here at *Beit Shalom* that their repentance would be sincere and would bring change. But, the coronavirus and what is going on throughout the whole world should also remind us that, even we, as dedicated followers of Yeshua, must repent. Some have said that this plague is the Pale Horse Judgment of Revelation. I believe that it is, at least a part of it, but it is not the end. There are a few more things which must happen before Yeshua returns. *7 When the Lamb opened the fourth seal, I heard the fourth living creature saying, “Come!” 8 Behold, I saw a horse, pale greenish gray. The name of the one riding on it was Death, and Sheol was following with him. Authority was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill by sword and by famine and by plague and by the wild beasts of the earth* (Revelation 6:7-8 TLV). My understanding of these verses is that they tell of all the wars, the famines and the plagues of the earth throughout time. The Covid-19 Coronavirus is just one of them. Here are a few others. The Black Death caused by fleas carried on rodents wiped out 50,000,000 people, over 60% of Europe’s population, between 1346 and 1353. They blamed it on the Jews as some are blaming the coronavirus on them now. What are called the American plagues, diseases like smallpox which were brought to the Americas by European explorers after 1492, by some estimates wiped out 90% of the indigenous population, the Aztecs and Incas and others. What was called the Spanish Flu in 1918 killed 100,000,000 people worldwide. In 1957-58, the Asian Flu claimed more than 1,000,000 lives. And, the AIDs Pandemic has claimed 35,000,000 lives since 1981. Those are just some of the plagues which have occurred throughout the centuries. I took this information from a list of 20 plagues and have listed the web address as Addendum 2 at the end of the written message in case you want to know more. The coronavirus is bad, but it’s not in league with these. And, please don’t listen to conspiracy theories. The internet is full of them. All they are trying to do is spread fear.

In the daily Bible reading schedule from the MJAA, we have recently been reading Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. I was really struck by the similarity of the situation between the Kingdom of Judah and Nebuchadnezzar’s attacks on Jerusalem and the coronavirus in the world today. I’m sure that was as unreal to those in Jerusalem then as it seems to us now; almost like a dream. But, pinch yourself. It’s no dream! We are in a life and death situation. Even as ADONAI told those in Judah that He was bringing destruction on them through Nebuchadnezzar, He gave them a way of salvation; a way that their lives could be spared. *2 ...thus says Adonai: “He that remains in this city will die by the sword, by famine, and by plague, but anyone who goes out to the Chaldeans will live—so he will keep his life like the spoils of war, and will live.” 3 Thus says Adonai: “This city will surely be given into the hand of the army of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it”* (Jeremiah 38:2-3 TLV). There were three waves of captivity. The first wave took Daniel and many in the ruling class to Babylon. The second wave took away Ezekiel, the remainder of the upper class, the middle class, and the craftsmen. The third wave took a few, but destroyed most of the people left in Judah. Those left and who were killed at that time is what Jeremiah prophesied about in

these verses. The leaders would not listen to the prophet, rebelled and went to Egypt believing that it would be safe. But, he also attacked Egypt and they all lost their lives there. Had they surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar's forces in accordance with G-d's word through Jeremiah, they would have lived as did those in the first two waves. As unlikely as it may seem, surrendering to Nebuchadnezzar at that time is a parallel with surrendering to Yeshua in our global coronavirus pandemic. But, I'm not just speaking about being saved. Yes, millions need to be saved. But, I'm speaking about being sold out to Yeshua; giving Him everything. I cannot tell you that if you do this, your physical life will be spared, but I do pray that we will all survive. I can tell you that your eternal spirit will live forever with Yeshua if you surrender completely to Him.

But, we're not just playing church. This is serious business for all of us. Each one of us, we, the *mishpacha* of this congregation, as well as all of the Body of Messiah, must examine ourselves. We all have idols in our lives and we must get rid of them. I know that I have them. I've just recently had to dethrone King Food from his throne in my life, not because I purposefully chose to, but because I was forced to do it because of heart trouble if I wanted to live. And, Food's high place has been torn down in my life, but there are other areas that I need to examine. I encourage each one of you to set up a quiet time to sit down and see what idols may be in your life. Today, we don't have *Asherah*, *Molech* or *Ba'al*, the idols which caused ADONAI to destroy Jerusalem and send the remnant to Babylon. But, we do have money, pleasure, social position and a host of other idols. In their proper perspective, there is nothing wrong with any of these. But, if we place them above serving Yeshua, then, they are idols in our lives. We are commanded to give and give generously of the money that G-d has allowed us have. But, do we? ADONAI has commanded us to gather ourselves together weekly, but do we? 3 *"Work may be done for six days, but the seventh day is a Shabbat of solemn rest, a holy convocation"* (Leviticus 23:3). A convocation is a gathering ordained by ADONAI and He has told us to gather ourselves before Him on *Shabbat*. And, the writer of Hebrews has reminded us that we should not neglect it: 25 *And do not neglect our own meetings, as is the habit of some, but encourage one another—and all the more so as you see the Day approaching* (Leviticus 10:25 TLV). We can't gather physically right now, but we can gather electronically until we can once again gather physically. But, I strongly urge you all to take some time to examine your life and if you find any idols there, throw them down and sell out completely to Yeshua!

The parallel continues with the visions which ADONAI gave to Ezekiel in Babylon, visions of Jerusalem and Judah and those who remained there. In the vision, Ezekiel is himself, in Jerusalem: 4 *Adonai said to him, "Go throughout the city, through the midst of Jerusalem. Make a mark on the foreheads of the people who sigh and moan over all the abominations that are committed in it."* 5 *To the others He said in my hearing: "Go through the city after him and strike. Show no pity or compassion; 6 kill off old men, young men and girls, little children and women. But touch no one who has the mark. Begin at My Sanctuary."* Then they began with the elders who were before the House (Ezekiel 9:4-6 TLV). Those who received the mark were a remnant of the righteous who remained in Jerusalem. The parallel is that every one of us who has truly trusted Yeshua has His mark on our life. To have it, we must get right with G-d. We must turn it all over to Him and completely serve Yeshua! This pandemic has brought us to this place. Turn away from things that don't matter and be Yeshua's committed disciple!

14 *Therefore, since we have a great Kohen Gadol who has passed through the heavens, Yeshua Ben-Elohim, let us hold firmly to our confessed allegiance. 15 For we do not have a kohen gadol who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all the same ways—yet without sin. 16 Therefore let us draw near to the throne of*

grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace for help in time of need (Hebrews 4:14-16 TLV). Don't succumb to fear, but cast all your cares on Him, for He cares for You. *Shabbat shalom!*

Addendum 1:

Leviticus chapter one is about the burnt offering, the *olah*, עֹלָה. This was a freewill offering that was completely burned on the altar. This type of offering represented complete submission to ADONAI's will and the entire offering was given to Him. Presenting this offering expressed a desire by the person offering to commune with ADONAI.

Leviticus chapter two is about the *mincha*, the meal offering, מִנְחָה. This type of offering was also a freewill offering. It was of flour mixed with olive oil and frankincense. Part was burned on the altar and part was eaten by the *kohanim*, the priests. *Mincha* does not mean meal offering, but means gift. The part eaten was salted and quickly baked to prevent the dough from rising. This offering represented the dedication of the fruits of man's work to ADONAI because it was not a natural product, but something created through an individual's effort.

Leviticus chapter three describes the *sh'lamim*, the peace offering, שְׁלָמִים. This was also a freewill offering, but it was eaten by the one giving it as a way of expressing thanks to ADONAI. It was also a way to fellowship with ADONAI when a person attended one of ADONAI's festivals or on just any day. A portion was first burnt on the altar, a portion given to the priest and the remainder was eaten by the one making the peace offering and his family.

Leviticus chapter four is about the *chatat* or sin offering, חֲטָאת. This was an offering required to make atonement for certain sins which were committed unintentionally. The sacrifice was an expression of sorrow for the error and a desire to be reconciled with ADONAI. The size of the offering varied according to the nature of the sin and the financial means of the sinner. In most cases the *chatat* offering was eaten by the *Kohanim* and was a part of their support.

Leviticus chapter five describes the fifth offering described in this *parasha*. It is the *asham* offering, the guilt (sometimes called trespass offering) offering, אֲשָׁם. A guilt offering was to atone for a breach of trust, stealing from the altar or if a person did something marginal but was not certain that a sin was committed. When there was doubt as to whether a person committed a sin, the person would make an *asham*, a guilt offering rather than a *chatat*, a sin offering. The *asham* offering was also eaten by the *kohenim*.

Addendum 2:

Twenty of the Worst Epidemics and Pandemics in History

<https://www.livescience.com/worst-epidemics-and-pandemics-in-history.html>