



Parasha Vayikra

March 12, 2022

Torah: Leviticus 1:1-5:26

Haftarah: Isaiah 43:21-44:23

Ketuvim Shlichim: Luke 22:7-13

“Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah, Part 8”

We continue today with “Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah, Part 8. But first, a bit about our *parasha*. *Vayikra* means “And He, that is, ADONAI, Called.” ADONAI spoke to Moses from within the *Ohel Moed*, the Tent of Meeting, the Tabernacle, and gave him the rules for presenting the *korbanot*, the sacrifices and offerings. There are five general types of offerings.

The *olah*, the “burnt offering,” was completely burned up on the altar. *Olah* means “to ascend,” a reference to the smoke rising to ADONAI. It was a voluntary offering brought by one who wished to draw near and express his worship to ADONAI. The *minchah* was a meal or grain offering offered in the same sense as the *olah*, to draw near and worship ADONAI. The *shl'mim*, the “peace offering,” sometimes called “a thank offering,” was offered to ADONAI but eaten. Its blood was sprinkled on the altar to ADONAI and the meat shared between the offeror and the priests and eaten in the Tabernacle court. It could be brought as thanks for a positive change in a person’s circumstances or just as a spontaneous “free will” offering. The *chatat*, the “sin offering,” was an offering made to atone for unintentional sins. This offering prescribed very specific types of sacrifices depending upon who the person was, the High Priest, the whole community, an ordinary individual or a very poor individual. The *asham*, the “guilt offering,” also called “trespass offering” was an offering brought by someone to atone for sins against ADONAI’s holy things, things like neglecting to pay the tithe, or failing to redeem the first-born son. The *asham* also atoned for sins involving breach of trust against man, such as fraud and theft. The guilty person was required to make restitution of the loss plus an additional one-fifth. This offering could also be voluntarily made if the person believed he may have committed an unknown sin, and in that case, no restitution was required.

As we begin Part 8 of “Yeshua, Our Jewish Messiah,” we don’t have to look very far for the basis of our first point, a type of offering found in today’s *parasha*. It is the fifth offering, the *asham*, אֲשָׁמָה, the one usually translated as “guilt offering.” This offering was for a very serious sin and in some cases also required that the offender make restitution to the one damaged for the value of the animal or whatever item was affected. They would pay full value plus one-fifth. This offering was brought by someone to atone for sins against ADONAI’s holy things, things like neglecting to pay the tithe, depriving the priests of their rightful part of a sacrifice or failing to redeem the first-born son. It also atoned for sins involving breach of trust against man, such as fraud and theft. Also, when there was doubt as to whether a person had committed a sin, the person would make an *asham*, a guilt offering, rather than a *chatat*, a sin offering. The *asham* offering was eaten by the *kohanim* as a part of their support. Isaiah attributes the *asham* to Yeshua by describing the “suffering servant” as this type of offering: 10 “Yet it pleased Adonai to bruise Him. He caused Him to suffer. If He makes

His soul a guilt offering (asham), He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the will of Adonai will succeed by His hand.” (Isaiah 53:10 TLV).

This is a complex subject, one which could take all of our time. Today we will get a general understanding of it and how it possibly fits into what Yeshua did for us by dying on the stake. As the other offerings were described, we read that regarding sin, it was only for unintentional sin. This brings up a question. If the sacrifices were only for unintentional sin, how can Yeshua’s death atone for all sin, even high-handed sins like murder? The short answer is that Yeshua’s death represented more than just this one type of sacrifice. Although the *asham* in Isaiah 53 is used in reference to Yeshua, it doesn’t completely describe what He did for us or mean that is the only way that we obtain our salvation through Him. It does, however atone for certain intentional sins. We won’t go into it today, but read it for yourself. Leviticus 5:21-24, referring to the *asham* offering, makes it clear that it can also be for intentional sin.

In actuality, all of the five sacrifices of Leviticus plus the Passover Lamb of Exodus relate in some way to what Yeshua did for us. But, His sacrifice which covers even most high-handed of sins, intentional sins, occurs on *Yom Kippur*, the Day of Atonement. Briefly, the sacrifices on that day occurred in this order. First, the High Priest would sacrifice a young bull for his own sins and those of his family and sprinkle its blood on the atonement cover of the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies. Next, he would choose by drawing lots which of two goats would be sacrificed for the sins of the people. 15 *“Then he is to slaughter the goat of the sin offering which is for the people, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with it as he did with the blood of the bull—sprinkle it upon the atonement cover, and before the atonement cover.”* (Leviticus 16:15 TLV). We are not told directly what type of offering this is, but the goat offering for the people’s sins on *Yom Kippur* was only for unintentional sins and is most closely related to the *chatat*, the sin offering.

What happens next is most important. The other goat, the scapegoat, *Azazel* in Hebrew, was brought forth. 21 *“Aaron should lay both his hands on the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities of Bnei-Yisrael and all their transgressions, all their sins. He should place them on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a man who is in readiness. 22 The goat will carry all their iniquities by itself into a solitary land and he is to leave the goat in the wilderness.”* (Leviticus 16:21-22 TLV). I have underlined a portion of this to emphasize that this included “all sins,” even the high-handed sins. “All” is the Hebrew *kol* meaning “all or whole.” It is stated again: 30 *“For on this day atonement will be made for you, to cleanse you. From all your sins you will be clean before Adonai.”* (Leviticus 16:30 TLV). The word here is *mikol*, meaning “from all.” Yeshua, pictured in the Scapegoat, died in the wilderness, outside of the camp. 12 *“Therefore, to make the people holy through His own blood, Yeshua also suffered outside the gate.”* (Hebrews 13:12 TLV).

Of course, we know that *Yom Kippur* provided only limited atonement, a covering of sins for one year. But, Yeshua’s sacrifice is different. It is an eternal sacrifice based on better promises, promises able to be carried out by ADONAI’s Son and not a human High Priest. Yeshua’s sacrifice is pictured in *Azazel*, the Scapegoat. The goat died in the wilderness carrying all of the sins of Israel. Yeshua paid for our intentional sins as well as our unintentional sins and is pictured in each of the five types of offering made in the Tabernacle in some way. He is also the Lamb of G-d whose blood on the doorposts of our hearts causes

the death angel to pass over us. Could our Messiah be any more Jewish? Born a Jew, died a Jew, in accordance with Jewish Law, *Torah*.

What was the most Jewish thing that Yeshua did? In my opinion, it is that He died as the Passover Lamb for the sins of Israel. I say, most Jewish, because Passover occurred in Egypt before *Torah* and the sacrifice laws were given. Passover was and is the original remembrance. Each year, Israel remembers Egypt and ADONAI's act of mercy and grace performed there.

Yeshua celebrated Passover the night before He died on the stake for our sins. We don't have all the answers about that night. We don't know how His *seder* on the evening of the 14th of Nisan was an actual Passover *seder* when it is also depicted in Scripture the next night, the 15th of Nisan. But, this is clear: *7 Then came the day of matzah when the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. 8 Now Yeshua sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, so we may eat."* (Luke 22:7-8 TLV). The Greek word underlying *matzah* is *azumos* (ad'-zoo-mos) meaning "unleavened." It is translated as "Unleavened bread" in some Bibles with the word bread added. The Greek word translated Passover here is *pascha* and according to Strong's means the Passover, the Passover supper or lamb. It couldn't be much clearer than that. Yeshua essentially said: "Go and have a lamb slaughtered at the Temple by the priests and then go and prepare where we will eat the Passover tonight." *14 When the hour came, Yeshua reclined at table, and the emissaries with Him. 15 And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer."* (Luke 22:14-15 TLV). Not a last supper, but an actual Passover, a *pascha*. Why did Yeshua do this? He did it to demonstrate that His body and His blood (Luke 22:19-20) would be used to cut the covenant, the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31 which ADONAI had promised would come to Israel. The blood of the innocent lamb shed on the cross was the blood of the New Covenant cut for the Jewish people and for anyone else who trusts in Yeshua. When a Gentile trusts in Yeshua, he becomes a part of the Commonwealth of Israel. *Sha'ul* taught us: *11 "Therefore, keep in mind that once you—Gentiles in the flesh—were called "uncircumcision" by those called "circumcision" (which is performed on flesh by hand). 12 At that time you were separate from Messiah, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Messiah Yeshua, you who once were far off have been brought near (to the commonwealth of Israel) by the blood of the Messiah."* (Ephesians 2:11-13 TLV). This is the mystery of the Gospel, Jew and Gentile, one in Messiah! Yeshua, a sacrifice for Israel's sins, is also a sacrifice for the people of the nations, the Gentiles. Yeshua's last Passover described the ultimate act of love which ADONAI, our Father, did for us. He sent His only begotten Son to die for our sins, sins for which we would die without Him.

The upcoming *Torah* portions of *Tazria* and *Metzora* are about ADONAI's *Torah* for something difficult to understand, *tzara'at*, leprosy in English. We don't exactly know what it was. It was not the leprosy of today's Hansen's Disease caused by a bacteria which disfigures and causes the loss of body parts. Whatever it was, ADONAI considered it necessary to prescribe regulations to deal with it. Whatever it was, it was a real, physical condition.

Interestingly, the *Talmud* speaks of an individual called the Leper Scholar. "His name is 'the leper scholar,' as it is written, *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him a leper, smitten of God, and afflicted.*..." "When will the Messiah come?" — 'Go and ask him himself,' was his reply. 'Where is he sitting?' — 'At the entrance.' And by

what sign may I recognize him?’ — ‘He is sitting among the poor lepers...’ (Sanhedrin 98a and 98b). The ancient rabbis recognized this passage from Isaiah 53 as referring to Messiah. Compare what I have underlined there to this verse and specifically the underlined word: 4 *“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our pains. Yet we esteemed Him stricken, struck by God, and afflicted.”* (Isaiah 53:4 TLV). The rabbis interpreted *nā·gū·a’*, which means stricken or plagued to mean stricken with leprosy. How close to the truth they were. Yeshua bore all these diseases for us as the “suffering Servant Messiah:” 5 *“But He was pierced because of our transgressions, crushed because of our iniquities. The chastisement for our shalom was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”* (Isaiah 53:5 TLV). It was Yeshua of whom Isaiah spoke when he said in his introduction to chapter 53: 13 *“Behold, My servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted. 14 Just as many were appalled at You— His appearance was disfigured more than any man, His form more than the sons of men.”* (Isaiah 52:13-14 TLV). The people of Israel, the Jews, did not fulfill these passages as some say. Yes, they have suffered, more than any other ethnic group. But their suffering does not provide an *asham*, a guilt offering for sin. Only Yeshua fulfills Isaiah 53.

Yeshua healed lepers of their disease and in doing so, upheld the *Torah* for *tzara’at*. There are three accounts of His healing of lepers, once in Mathew and twice in Luke. After healing one leper, Yeshua said: 4 ..., *“See that you tell no one; but go show yourself to the kohen and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”* (Matthew 8:4b TLV). After healing another, He said: 14 ..., *“Go and show yourself to the kohen. Then bring an offering for your cleansing, just as Moses commanded, as a testimony to them.”* (Luke 5:14b TLV). Also in Luke, Yeshua healed a group of ten lepers. 12 *As He entered a certain village, ten men with *tza’arat* came toward Him. They stood some distance away 13 and raised their voices, saying, “Yeshua, Master, have mercy on us!” 14 When He saw them, He said to them, “Go and show yourselves to the kohanim.” And as they went, they were cleansed.* (Luke 17:12-14 TLV). In each case, Yeshua, the author of *Torah* upheld *Torah*. He sent them for a completion of their cleansing to the *kohanim* who would have carried out the instructions of Leviticus for the cleansing of one with *tzara’at*. Upon pronouncement by a priest, these men would be allowed back into society and Temple worship.

The reality of demon spirits in our modern society is ridiculed by many today. But, those of us who have experienced their presence know different. The Gospel accounts of demons being cast out do not refer to the healing of epilepsy or mental disease, but the actual removal of an unclean spirit from a person. The proof that we have for their existence is that Yeshua believed they were real spirits. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the story of the casting out of a “legion” of demons from the man from Gadara. Yeshua spoke directly to the spirit: 29 *For Yeshua commanded the defiling spirit to come out of the man.* (Luke 8:29 TLV). Defiling is from *akathartōs* meaning unclean or impure and spirit is from *pneuma* meaning spirit or wind. As the conversation continued, the legion, the numerous demons pleaded with Yeshua not to send them into the abyss, a prison where evil spirits are imprisoned. Yeshua did not send them there, but sent them into a herd of pigs which all drowned. We don’t know why He did this. Possibly, it was to show that He had the power to do what the spirits requested. But, it is clear from Yeshua’s conversation with the demons that He knew they were real. After this encounter with demons, He also gave His disciples the power to cast them out: 7 *Yeshua summoned the Twelve, and He began to send them out two by two. And He gave them authority over the unclean spirits.* (Mark 6:7 TLV). Even a group of Pharisees believed in demon spirits. They saw Yeshua cast one out, but chose to believe that He did it through the power of *HaSatan* (Matthew 12, Luke 11, Mark 3). You have to have a

childlike belief in order to believe that demons are real and under the control of *HaSatan*, the adversary of Israel. Yeshua said: 3 ..., “Amen, I tell you, unless you turn and become like children, you shall never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3 TLV). And, just before He ascended to the Father, He said: 17 “These signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will drive out demons;” (Mark 16:17a TLV).

Why is the Book of Daniel not listed with the Prophets but with the Writings in the *Tanakh*? No one really knows, but it is possible that it was excluded because early followers of Yeshua used it to point to Him. That is very likely because the canon of the Hebrew Bible, that is, what was in each section, the *Torah*, the *Nevi'im*, and the *Ketuvim* (Law, Prophets and Writings), was not fixed until the 2nd century CE or later. But interestingly, the Septuagint, the Greek language version of the Hebrew *Tanakh* written in the 3rd century BCE, some four hundred plus years before the canon was completed for the Hebrew *Tanakh*, does place Daniel in the major prophets (there are four sections in the LXX, Law, History, Poetry and Prophets). Before Yeshua came the Book of Daniel was placed in the Prophets, but after He came, Daniel was placed in the Writings. Why? Possibly to take some of its authority away.

Yeshua referred to the Book of Daniel many times. Each time that He referred to Himself as the Son of Man, He was making a specific claim about Himself. When He referred to Himself as Son of Man, He used the Hebrew method of interpretation called *remez*, meaning hint and hinted back at Daniel chapter 7: 1 *In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream, and visions passed through his mind as he was on his bed. He wrote down a summary of the dream.* (Daniel 7:1 TLV). Daniel had several different visions in this dream. This is one of them. 9 “*While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His garment was as white as snow, and the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, its wheels a burning fire. 10 A river of fire was flowing and coming out from before Him. Thousands of thousands attended Him and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.*” (Daniel 7:9-10 TLV). An awesome sight for Daniel to behold. He continued: 13 “*I was watching in the night visions. Behold, One like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days, and was brought into His presence. 14 Dominion, glory and sovereignty were given to Him that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will never pass away, and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.*” (Daniel 7:13-14 TLV). Yeshua said: 45 “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.*” (Mark 10:45 TLV). The Ancient of Days, ADONAI, gave the Son of Man everlasting dominion, glory and sovereignty over all peoples, an eternal Kingship. The clouds are important. After His resurrection from the dead, Yeshua ascended to His Father on the clouds of heaven: 9 *After saying all this—while they were watching—He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.* (Acts 1:9 TLV). He will come back for us in the clouds: 17 “*Then we who are alive, who are left behind, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air—and so we shall always be with the Lord.*” (1Thessalonians 4:17 TLV). As we just read in Daniel: *Behold, One like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was brought into his presence.* (Daniel 7:13b TLV). Yeshua referred to Himself as the Son of Man 80 times in the Gospels. Every time that He said it He proclaimed that He was divine, the Son of G-d. He is still proclaiming it today in His Word for those who will read and believe: Yeshua, a man born as a Jew in the 1st century is a divine figure of old, even from before the creation of the earth. He is the One who has everlasting dominion over the earth.

Liturgy is something which people either love or hate. There seems to be no middle ground. Within churches, the liturgical churches, today especially, the Anglican form is popular. But, the free form of worship found in most non-denominational churches is also very popular. Traditional Judaism has an ancient liturgical form of worship from which church liturgy is possibly derived, at least the custom of it.

Christians tend to think of what was done in Yeshua's day as being similar to what is done among His followers today. Regarding prayer, most think of it as a free form of prayer rather than liturgical prayer. Free prayer was certainly present. They would have followed Yeshua's example when He prayed for them as He did in His high-Priestly prayer in John 17. But, there was also liturgical prayer. The prayer called "The Disciple's Prayer" in Matthew chapter 6 is an example of liturgy prayed even today in the non-liturgical churches.

But, there is more which is not immediately evident. In Acts 1, Yeshua ascended to heaven and the disciples returned to Jerusalem. *12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives (which is near Jerusalem, a Shabbat day's journey). 13 When they had entered, they went up to the upper room where they were staying—Peter and John and Jacob and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; Jacob son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judah son of Jacob. 14 All these with one mind were continuing together in prayer—along with the women and Miriam, Yeshua's mother, and His brothers.* (Acts 1:1-3 TLV). Reading verse 14 in any Bible would give the impression that their prayer was free prayer, not liturgical. But, has the Greek been correctly represented? The Greek reads: *tē proseuchē* (pros-yoo-khay'), the prayer. There is no word "in," it has been added. The word *tē* is ignored and left untranslated. *Tē* is the definite article, the, which refers to *proseuchē*, prayer. What is "the prayer?" "The Prayer" is the Amidah, The Standing Prayer and its eighteen benedictions. It is from more than a generation before Yeshua.

After the Holy Spirit fell on *Shavuot*, Pentecost, when 3000 were saved, Yeshua's followers began meeting together. *42 They were devoting themselves to the teaching of the emissaries and to fellowship, to breaking bread and to prayers.* (Acts 2:42 TLV). The Greek reads: *kai tais proseuchais* (kahee thice pros-yoo-khay-ese), "and the prayers," not "to prayers."

What are "the prayers?" They are the liturgy of Judaism, which likely grew out of the synagogue after the return from Babylon and were carried over into the Temple. What the disciples were doing in an upper room in Jerusalem was a sort of a home group synagogue. There, they would have prayed the *Shema* and *Ve'ahavta*, as well as the eighteen benedictions of the *Amidah* and maybe even the *Aleinu*. The *Shema* was ancient and we also know that the *Amidah* came from at least a generation before Yeshua. These are the prayers.

Is there symbolism found in what Yeshua's disciples did which might apply to us today? Possibly. We know that after Yeshua ascended, His disciples gathered together and prayed the prayers during the next ten days before *Shavuot*. After *Shavuot*, the disciples along with all of the followers also continued with the prayers. We here in Beit Shalom have been praying "the prayers" for more than twenty years. Whether or not it is a witness to Jews or anyone else is unknown. What is known is that it is what ADONAI showed us, a Gentile led congregation, to do. Perhaps we are in some way like the 1st century disciples, waiting for G-d's move.

But, we also have the best expression of two worlds. We have liturgy and we have free worship and prayer. There is meaning in all of it. What Acts 1 really shows us is how we are

to do whatever we do. It says: *All of these with one mind..* Whether you like liturgy or not, it is necessary just as are free worship and prayer. We are to be of one mind in everything that we do. *Sha'ul* said: *1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Messiah, if there is any comfort of love, if there is any fellowship of the Ruach, if there is any mercy and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being of the same mind, having the same love, united in spirit, with one purpose.* (Philippians 2:1-2 TLV).

If we are going to be victorious, we must be united in spirit with one purpose, most especially in these last days which we now see unfolding. We don't know if Yeshua's return is one year away or ten or more, but we know that it is near. The prophecy of Joel (3:1-4) that ADONAI will pour out His Spirit on all flesh may happen at any time. It would be good if we had some *Ruach* in us even before that happens. Whether we do or not is our choice.

What is most important now is that those of us who have trusted Yeshua be serious about following Him and not be lukewarm. This is my prayer for the whole body. The body of Messiah needs to know that He, Yeshua, is their "Jewish Messiah," and to clearly see Him in that way. The body of Messiah needs to know that everything about the Bible is Jewish and in order to understand it, we have to see through "Jewish eyes." When we look through a Jewish lens, we can see clearly how ADONAI has used the Jewish people as a vehicle to not only provide the Scriptures and teach the people of the nations, but also to be the primary witnesses of who G-d is. The body of Messiah needs to know the whole truth, what the Bible really says, and not what some people say it says. And, the body of Messiah needs to physically connect with their fellow commonwealth of Israel members, the Jews, in love and support.

The hour is late. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25), the Bridegroom came at midnight. How close are we to midnight and Yeshua's return? He is coming back as a Jew and doing Jewish things. We must refill our lamps with the oil of the Spirit. Now is the time for Yeshua's followers who have correctly discerned the "signs of the times" and know where we are in G-d's timetable, to become serious *talmidim*, serious and committed disciples of Yeshua. *Shabbat shalom!*