

*“AGAIN, THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN IS LIKE A MERCHANT IN SEARCH OF FINE PEARLS,
46 AND UPON FINDING A SINGLE PEARL OF GREAT VALUE,
HE WENT AND SOLD ALL THAT HE HAD AND BOUGHT IT.
MATTHEW 13:45*

26th March 2022

23rd Adar II 5782

Shemini — ‘Eighth’ Leviticus 9:1-11:47

Ezekial 36:16-38 , Jn 11:47-56

In last week's Parsha, we saw how the fire upon the altar of sacrifice had to be kept burning, perpetually. We drew from the image of the Mishkan and the priestly garments how they symbolised a pattern, and in some way served as a replacement process, showing how YHVH was going to restore the Edenic setting of creation.

The fire, showed us the consuming fire of God and that the sacrifices represent our works and the lives which we offer up to God through the refining work of the Holy Spirit, as a perpetual offering. The fire may also symbolise the glory in which we were clothed in in our original state.

We also saw how the priests had to go through a seven day process of consecration before they could be set apart for their service in the Mishkan.

Parsha Shemin begins:

In this parsha, we read how on the eighth day, the offerings are to be presented to the Lord.

9 On the eighth day, Moshe called Aharon, his sons and the leaders of Isra’el, **2** and said to Aharon, “Take a male calf for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, both without defect, and offer them before *Adonai*. **3** Then tell the people of Isra’el, ‘Take a male goat for a sin offering and a calf and a lamb, both a year old and without defect, for a burnt offering, **4** and an ox and a ram for peace offerings, to sacrifice before *Adonai*; also a

grain offering mixed with olive oil — because today *Adonai* is going to appear to you.”

5 They brought what Moshe had ordered before the tent of meeting, and the whole community approached and stood before *Adonai*. CJB

Parsha ‘Shemini’ brings us now into the eighth day, the day after the consecration process. This eighth day is symbolic of the day after the thousand year period designated to the millennial reign.

Remember, a thousand years is as a day to the Lord, and so we can see that in the restoration pattern of things, the pattern of days of creation is being restored; the cosmos is going through another period of six days or six thousand years in order to be restored to its original design.

In the pattern of the seven day period of creation, we see that human beings were made on the sixth day and that on the seventh day YHVH rested from His works. After the sixth day of the restoration process, YHVH will once again be with man. His works will be gathered to Him, as the house of Jacob will have been restored. The sixth day will bring about incredible turmoil and perilous times upon the earth as Jacob is regathered, However, we must understand that the restoration process includes the whole of creation and not us only. Balance and the peace that ensues is the peace that we cannot understand, yet. This peace that the whole of creation will be drawn into, will be the harmony that comes from the joy of the Lord as He sees that all things have been made new. Our works with Him will culminate in this way.

When we look at the consuming fire, we see that the fire leaves something behind. It is the ashes. In the order of the process in keeping the fire going, the rota change requires that the previous nights ashe’s be removed before rekindling. The ashes are to be piled up and then removed. We read how the priest must then change his clothing to remove the ashes and take them and deposit them outside the camp. The period between the removal of the ashes and the newly kindled fire is crucial, as any time wasted in the process may result in the fire going out. The removal of the ashes requires a change in garments as the process is considered less sacred. You can see that rather a lot of time is spent in changing one’s clothing. The place for the ashes is designated a clean space and not a rubbish tip. Because the priest is entering a space outside of the camp, he must prevent himself from becoming defiled.

The Hebrew term for the burnt sacrifice is ‘ qorban olah’. It is from this word that we get the translation ‘holocaust’ - burnt offering.

Before we move on, let us for a moment ponder the significance of the ashes. The ashes were the remnants of something perfect and acceptable being separated and sacrificed to God as an offering. The animal is consumed only when God finds the sacrifice acceptable. The ashes are not, therefore, something that is defiled in that sense. Being piled up in a mound outside the camp, may serve to remind the people of those sacrifices offered up to God for all the different reasons. Remember, the sacrifices serve to maintain a relationship with God — and God in the camp.

You can imagine a significant pile of ashes would have been built up over the duration of the stay of the people.

Chapter 10, tells us the account of the strange fire from the two of the sons of Aaron brought before the Lord. We cannot show presumption in how we are to express our worship to YHVH. 'Keep from presumptuous sin' David asks of the Lord in psalm 19:13

The protocols of *all* the building of the Mishkan, including the offerings and the priestly observances must be done as ordained.

v10: And Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, each took his pan, put fire in them, and placed incense upon it, and they brought before the L-rd foreign fire, which He had not commanded them. And fire went forth from before the L-rd and consumed them, and they died before the L-rd.

Let us look at this passage.. Aaron has just seen his two sons killed by God. On the day of Aaron's inauguration as High Priest, Moses commands him to step up to the plate.

You can imagine that this would have been a time of mixed emotions. However, what is highlighted to him is that the time, spent in consecration, has brought about the joy of the Lord, for He has consumed the sacrifice. This is the Lord's day and it should be a time for celebration and not for mourning. This is a hard moment for Aaron; he has to put his own feelings aside so that they do not interrupt the focus upon the Lord.

On a personal note, I have experienced many times of trial prior to going to minister before the Lord. Personal events, have tried to disrupt my spirit and attention to the offering I am about to present. I have found that the enemy of our souls, does not wish us to present such offerings to the Lord and will try anything to bring about its failure. In these times, I have repented, and declared to the Lord that nothing will prevent me from worshipping Him and that the joy of my desire shall not be stolen. I know that when I sincerely repent before Him, He has forgiven me and thus I have made restitution with my Lord.

Moses, at first seems unsympathetic toward Aaron's loss of his sons; matters pertaining to the Lord must come first.

Aaron and his remaining sons Itamar and Elazar are to refrain from mourning and present the sacrifice, not observing the rule for the priests in eating the remaining portions.

10:16 Moses diligently sought the goat of the sin offering, and behold it was burnt; and he was angry with Elazar and Itamar, the sons of Aaron that were left alive, saying:

"Why have you not eaten the sin offering in the holy place, seeing that it is most holy . . . ? You should indeed have eaten it in the holy place, as I commanded."

Aaron replied to Moses: "Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their ascending offering before G-d, and such things have befallen me.

If I had eaten the sin offering today, would it have been accepted in the sight of G-d?"

Moses heard this, and it was favourable in his eyes.

Let us break this down a little. Moses and Aaron had inaugurated the priesthood and two of their family had perished by a presumptive action. Things had to be done correctly

before the Lord. It was a high price to pay. Already two priests had felt the anger and judgement of God upon them. The event can't happen again. Moses' command to Aaron to follow the protocols of the offerings had not been adhered to. Yes, the sin and burnt offerings were offered but Aaron's heart was simply not on the task. How would God accept such an offering?

Isaiah 29:13 and Matt 15:8 says this**'they worship me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me'**.

I believe that Aaron's argument was valid. I would say that most of us want to give our offering to God with a cheerful heart. Our praise is a time of jubilee, when songs, and sacrifices of our lives are given jubilantly to God. How do you think the Lord would feel if he saw how sad and cheerless we are. T'is better to refrain and wait until the our sadness of heart dissipates.

2 Corinthians 9:6-8. **7** Each should give according to what he has decided in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for **God loves a cheerful giver**.

We are taught as we grow in our faith that there is nothing more important than serving the Lord. I agree with all my heart. However, what we see in Aaron's response, is ultimately not a disobedient one, but perhaps one of a mature weighing up.

The sacrifices were, after all, offered up. What would have been achieved by partaking of a meal, when he couldn't mourn for his sons? These things, as he said, *'had happened to him'*.

Aaron replied to Moses: "Behold, this day have they offered their sin offering and their ascending offering before G-d, **and such things have befallen me.**

What we learn from this episode is that we as priests before the Lord should remain holy, and be holy as He is holy. Our lives, as long as we are on earth, will suffer events, both of the solemn and the jubilant kind.

The Lord knows how we feel in both. Times of mourning are set for us and we can observe them. However, we can be assured that the tears of mourning that come in the evening will be replaced in the morning by joy.

Psalms 30:4-6

4 *Adonai*, you lifted me up from Sh'ol;
you kept me alive when I was sinking into a pit.

5 Sing praise to *Adonai*, you faithful of His;
and give thanks on recalling His holiness.

6 For His anger is momentary,
but His favour lasts a lifetime.
Tears may linger for the night,
but with dawn come cries of joy. CJB

Psalms 30 tells us that sometimes weeping may occur through events or by God's discipline and anger, but He wants us to learn from His discipline, grow up and move on. Such times strengthen us and we can rejoice that the Lord will be pleased with us as we pursue Him and His ways with a repentant and learning heart.

Friends, you know, we must accept that we are not perfect people. All have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. God's grace is more than sufficient for us. He has given us that, and we continue to press forward in our quest to fulfil His plans for creation.

Yeshua has given Himself to us, and He stands as our High Priest before God. Our sacrifice has already been offered to the Father, our Shaddai and Sovereign God.

We have no excuse but to learn from our Master's teachings. He has shown us the way. He says, 'look what I have done':

Yeshua became the:

'Sin Offering' - 2 Corinthians 5: 18 - 21

18 And it is all from God, who through the Messiah has reconciled us to himself and has given us the work of that reconciliation, **19** which is that God in the Messiah was reconciling mankind to Himself, not counting their sins against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. **20** Therefore we are ambassadors of the Messiah; in effect, God is making His appeal through us. What we do is appeal on behalf of the Messiah, "Be reconciled to God! **21 God made this sinless man be a sin offering on our behalf, so that in union with Him we might fully share in God's righteousness."**

Guilt Offering - Isaiah 53:6

We all, like sheep, went astray;
we turned, each one, to his own way;
yet *Adonai* laid on Him
the guilt of all of us.

Peace (Shalom and Fellowship/Wellbeing Offering) - Isaiah 53:5

But He was wounded for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our wickedness [our sin, our injustice, our wrongdoing];
The punishment [required] for our **well-being** fell on Him,
And by His stripes (wounds) we are healed.

Purification Offering - Hebrews 9:14

14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal [Holy] Spirit *willingly* offered Himself unblemished [that is, without moral or spiritual imperfection as a sacrifice] to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works *and* lifeless observances to serve the ever living God?

Grain Offering (Fine flour) - John 12:24

24 I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone [just one grain, never more]. But if it dies, it produces much grain *and* yields a harvest.

Burnt Offering - Act 1:9 The Ascension

9 And after He said these things, He was caught up as they looked on, and a cloud took Him up out of their sight. **10** While they were looking intently into the sky as He was going, two men in white clothing suddenly stood beside them, **11** who said, "Men of

Galilee, why do you stand looking into the sky? This [same] Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will return in just the same way as you have watched Him go into heaven.”

Freewill or Incense offering - Ephesians 5:1-2

5 Therefore become imitators of God [copy Him and follow His example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]; **2** and walk *continually* in love [that is, value one another— practice empathy and compassion, unselfishly seeking the best for others], just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and sacrifice to God [slain for you, so that it became] a sweet - fragrance.

Hebrew 12: 1-2 Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [dedicating all of yourselves, set apart] as a living sacrifice, holy and well-pleasing to God, *which is* your rational (logical, intelligent) act of worship. **2** And do not be conformed to this world [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed *and* progressively changed [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you].

In this week’s Parsha I have tried to show that nothing that YHVH has ordained or prescribed by design or ritual is arbitrary or simply for design. Everything has a purpose and is symbolic of greater and deeper meanings. As Yeshua taught in parables, shadow pictures of the Kingdom, so YHVH has made for us a blueprint of what He is doing for the process of the restoration of all things through redemption and repentance. The price to see His family and kingdom restored is beyond measure. He has done all this so that we may enter His rest and know His peace.

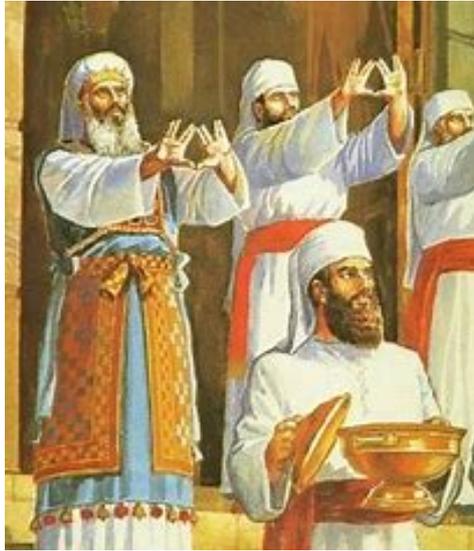
May the peace of the Shabbat, a shadow picture itself, bless you in the coming week.

May YHVH bless and keep you.

Shabbat Shalom

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Numbers 6:

24 'Y'varekh'kha Adonai v'yishmerekha.

[May Adonai bless you and keep you.]

25 Ya'er Adonai panav eleikha vichunekka.

[May Adonai make his face shine on you and show you his favour.]

26 Yissa Adonai panav eleikha v'yasem l'kha shalom

[May Adonai lift up his face toward you and give you peace.]

Glossary

Midrash: In Judaism, the **Midrash** is the genre of rabbinic literature which contains early interpretations and commentaries on the Written Torah and Oral Torah (spoken law and sermons), as well as non-legalistic rabbinic literature (*Aggadah*) and occasionally the Jewish religious laws (*halakha*), which usually form a running commentary on specific passages in the Hebrew Scripture (*Tanakh*)

Targum: **Targum Onkelos** (or **Onqelos**), is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum (Aramaic translation) to the Torah. However, its early origins may have been western, in Israel. Its authorship is attributed to Onkelos, a famous convert to Judaism in Tannaic times (c. 35–120 CE)

Targum Jonathan: **Targum Jonathan**), otherwise referred to as **Targum Yonasan/Yonatan**, is the official eastern (Babylonian) Targum to the Nevi'im/Prophets. Its early origins, however, are western (i.e. from the Land of Israel), and the Talmudic tradition attributes its authorship to Jonathan ben Uzziel of Jerusalem in the time of King Herod

Tannaim: Tannaim were the Rabbinic sages whose views are recorded in the Mishnah, from approximately 10-220 CE. The period of the Tannaim, also referred to as the Mishnaic period, lasted about 210 years.

Talmud: The **Talmud** means "instruction, learning", "teach, study") is a central text of Rabbinic Judaism. The term "Talmud" normally refers to the collection of writings named specifically the **Babylonian Talmud** (*Talmud Bavli*), although there is also an earlier collection known as the Jerusalem Talmud (*Talmud Yerushalmi*) or Palestinian

The Talmud has two components:

1. The Mishnah (c. 200 CE), the first written compendium of Judaism's Oral Law;

2. The Gemara (c. 500 CE), an elucidation of the Mishnah and related Tannaitic writings that often ventures onto other subjects and expounds broadly on the Hebrew Bible

Jubilees: The Book of Jubilees claims to present "the history of the division of the days of the Law, of the events of the years, the year-weeks, and the jubilees of the world" as revealed to Moses (in addition to the Torah or "Instruction") by angels while he was on Mount Sinai for forty days and forty nights. The chronology given in Jubilees is based on multiples of seven; the jubilees are periods of 49 years, seven "year-weeks", into which all of time has been divided

Vulgate: This is the Latin Bible. Translated from the Hebrew and Aramaic by Jerome between 382 and 405 CE, this text became known as the 'versio vulgata', which means 'common translation'.

Rashi, whose real name is Shlomo Yitzchaki was born in France in the 11th century. Rashi wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Hebrew Bible.

Moses ben Maimon, also known as Maimonides became better known by the acronym Rambam. He was born in 1138 in Cordoba, Spain. He was a Sephardic Jew and influential philosopher. He is considered to be among the greatest of Torah Scholars.

Nachmanides- 13th century French Jewish Philosopher, commonly known by the acronym; Rambam.