

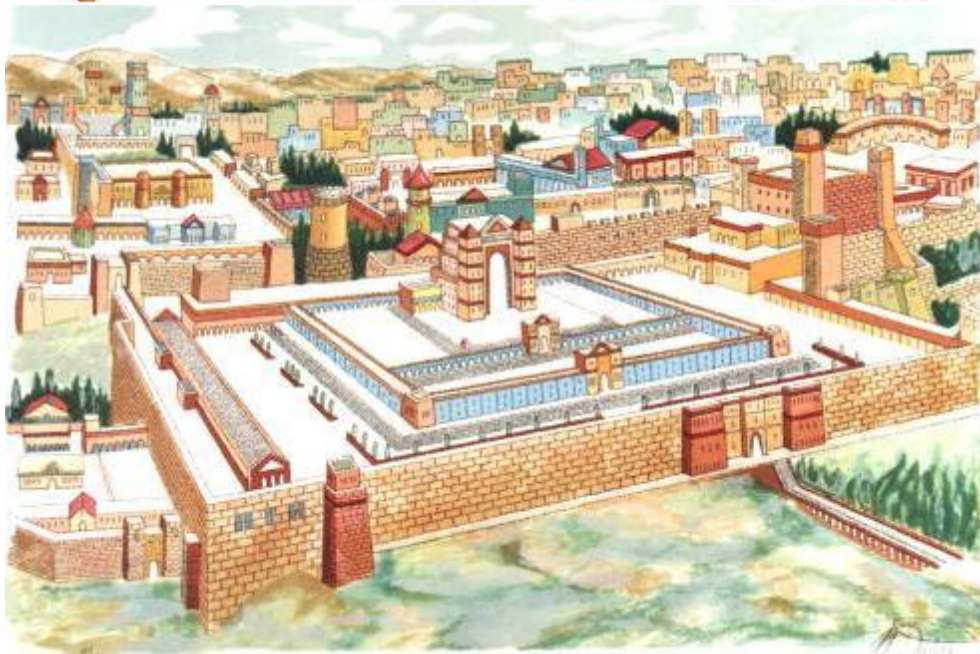
Beth Tephila Messianic Jewish Congregation
(Under same management for over 5785 years)

SHABBAT SERVICE

April 5th 10:30 AM Lolo Community "Synagogue"
12:30 PM Oneg Shabbat & Interactive Torah Discussion

"Blessed are those whose way of life is blameless; who live by the Torah of Adonai.
Blessed are those who observe His instruction; who seek Him with all their heart." Psalm 119

Passover Seder April 12th, 6:30 PM
Reservations Closed



Leviticus: God's Ministry of Sacrifice



VaYikra - Leviticus 1 - 6:7

וַיִּקְרָא אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֵלָיו מֵאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר:

Va Yikra el-Moshe va-y'daber Adonai elav me-ohel mo'ed lemor

Adonai called to Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting saying,

דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אָדָם כִּי־יַקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֹרְבָן לַיהוָה

Daber el-benei Yisra'el ve'amarta alehem adam ki-yakriv mikem korban l'Adonai

"Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, 'When any man brings an offering to the Lord,

מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה מִן־הַבָּקָר וּמִן־הַצֹּאן תִּקְרִיבוּ אֶת־קֹרְבָנְכֶם:

min-habehemah min-habakar umin-hatson takrivu et-korbanchem.

you shall bring your offering of animals from the herd (cattle) or the flock."

אִם־עֹלָה קֹרְבָנוֹ מִן־הַבָּקָר זָכָר תָּמִים

Im-olah korbano min-habakar zachar tamim

If the sacrifice is a burnt offering taken from the herd (cattle), it must be an unblemished male.

יִקְרִיבוּ אֶל־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד יִקְרִיב אוֹתוֹ לְרֹצְנוֹ לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:

yakrivenu el-petach Ohel Mo'ed yakriv oto lirtsono lifney Adonai.

He shall offer it at the doorway of the Tent of Meeting that it may be accepted for him before God.

Haftarah

Isaiah 43:25; 44:21-23

"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, and I will not remember your sins." "Remember these things, O Jacob, and Israel, for you are My servant. I have formed you. You are My servant. O Israel, you will not be gotten by Me. I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you. Shout for joy, O heavens, for the Lord has done it! Shout joyfully, you lower parts of the earth. Break forth into a shout of joy, you mountains; O forest and every tree in it. For the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and in Israel He shows forth His glory."

Psalms 50:1-2

Be gracious to me, O God, according to the greatness of Thy compassion, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

B'rit Hadashah

Hebrews 10:12,14

..."He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God... For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified."

From Exodus into Leviticus



Last week we finished the book of Exodus, which illustrated for us God's plan of redemption for His people, Israel, and those Gentiles, who joined themselves to the God of Israel. God's plan of redemption in Exodus also was forward-looking to include all people both Jew and Gentile in the redemptive, sacrificial work of Messiah, Yeshua. We saw how Almighty God directly intervened in the lives of His people to accomplish His purposes for them. God intervened to free His people from Egyptian slavery and to show Himself supreme over Egyptian gods, Pharaoh, and the mightiest army in the world. However, God's intervention was part of an exclusive, covenantal relationship God desired to have with His people, where He would be their God, and they would be His people. Therefore, while God's part of this covenant was His direct intervention to free His people, the obligation of His people was obedience and worship. At **Passover**, God's people obeyed His command to seclude themselves in homes, slay a lamb, and apply the blood to the doorposts and lintels of their homes. They were to **eat lamb roasted by fire with bitter herbs and unleavened bread.** Thus, God's people personally entered into His plan for their redemption; a plan by which He would come to live among them and be their God. God showed Moses the heavenly tabernacle and instructed Moses to have the people build a tabernacle exactly like it, where the visible Glory of God would dwell among His people. The structure of the tabernacle with its screens across access points & its separate compartments only for particular individuals, illustrated the limited access of a sinful people into the presence of our Holy God. Therefore, part of God's redemption of men included the mechanism first established as a command for the nation at Passover by which the sins of men were "covered by the blood of the lamb." Covering the sins of the people was the **only way** for God's sinful people to enter into worship with Him! **Our tradition of keeping the Passover enables us to experience first-hand God's redemptive process that foreshadowed the sacrificial work of Messiah, Yeshua.** He also kept the Passover and said concerning the Passover wine, "....this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins" (**Matthew 26:28**). Thus God's redemption for men continues from the time of Exodus until today!



The Constancy of Sin The Holiness of God **A Manual for Priests A Code for Daily Living**

Berel Wein, a well-known Israeli Rabbi, writes about Leviticus, “Though this **parsha**, like much of the rest of the book of **Vayikra**, is replete with difficult detail regarding very esoteric, spiritual, and even mystical topics of Temple service and animal sacrifices, there is a basic and important message that the Torah wishes to communicate to us amidst this welter of detail. And I feel that this message is the recognition that **sin is a constant part of human life**. The Torah in this week's **parsha** takes it as a given that people will sin... and do so pretty regularly. Therefore, **an antidote to sin must be created** so that people will eventually improve and **find forgiveness for their sins from a benevolent Creator**. Deep down within us we are all aware that as human beings, not only are we prone to sin but, again **in the words of the Torah: “Sin crouches at our doorstep.”** The Temple building itself, the priesthood, and the Temple service of animal sacrifices, all combine to make the realization of sin a constant factor in Jewish life. I think that the entire Temple service as described for us in the book of **Vayikra** is meant to emphasize to human beings our innate weakness and to the omnipresence of sin in our lives. **Knowing that we have sinned is the beginning of redemption and holiness.**”

Leviticus was written by Moses about 1450 B.C. Leviticus was written in the month between the erection of the Tabernacle (**Exodus 40:17**) and the beginning of the journey to the "promised land" (**Numbers 10:11**), while God's people were still camped at Mount Sinai. A thematic verse for Leviticus might be **Leviticus 11:44**, "**For I am the Lord your God. Consecrate yourselves therefore and be holy; for I am holy.**" This thematic verse was **used by Peter** to illustrate the necessity of holy living by God's people in **1 Peter 1:16**, “As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lust which were yours in your ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior because it is written, ‘**You shall be Holy, for I am Holy.**’” Because Leviticus is considered even today as a book expressing God's holiness, it is traditionally the first book given to children to begin their Torah learning. **Even today, Leviticus urges**

God's people to maintain God's standard of holy living! As we begin the book of Leviticus, the emphasis is on the holiness of God; the inapproachability to our holy God, except through the Levitical, sacrificial system, through which blood was applied for the remission of sins. [Note: if one has a cancer diagnosis and through treatment the cancer is in remission, is the cancer removed?] The Levitical system foreshadows the coming of Messiah, whose shed blood would be applied "once for all" for the removal of the sins of those who repent from their sins, believe in the atonement God supplied (Messiah, Yeshua), and symbolically "apply to themselves" His sacrificial atonement for the removal of their sins that separated them from God. The Levitical, sacrificial system is consistent with the **B'rit Hadashah**. **Hebrews 9:22** states, "And according to the Law, one may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and **without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.**" **1Peter 1:18,19** tells us that **we were redeemed...."with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Messiah."**



The book of Leviticus could be considered a **manual for the priests** for their service in the tabernacle. The tabernacle has been finished, inspected, and erected. The priests, Aaron and his sons, had been chosen. The priestly garments had been made. The tabernacle, its furniture, and the priests had been anointed and were ready to begin their function. So it naturally follows that Moses would write a book of protocols for the priests and the service of the tabernacle. Leviticus detailed the routine participation of the priests in the sacrificial system, certain "appointed times," as well as their direction and teaching in the daily lives of the people. Leviticus greatly expanded the number of ceremonial laws from those found in Exodus, setting standards for worship, penalties for breaking the law, and provided a mechanism for the peoples' restoration. As was mentioned last week, entering into the camp of God where the visible presence of God dwelt was a privilege only for God's people. **Sinfulness was not allowed within God's camp.** **The holiness of God** within the camp **required the people to become holy before entering into fellowship with God.** Therefore, a number of ceremonial laws were enacted and supervised by the priests, so that the people, their clothing, their homes, etc. would be "clean." God's people were also required to be "ethically clean." Part of their distinctiveness as God's chosen people was that they obeyed a moral code of ethics in their dealings with each other and also with other people groups. This was part of God's "gospel witness" to the world!

Theological Issues

As we go through the book of Leviticus, there will be a number of theological issues we will discuss. For example: 1) how was "justification" accomplished? Justification is being declared "not guilty" (righteous) in God's sight. Was the mechanism of justification the same in those days as it is today? 2) Was there complete justification or only partial justification, awaiting fulfillment with the sacrifice of Messiah? 3) Were sins "smeared," "removed," or "covered?" 4) On what basis was atonement accomplished? Atonement literally means "to cover" or "to wipe away;" to expiate sin in order to initiate or to restore a relationship with God. 5) Were the elements of faith, belief, and repentance required, and if so where in the sacrificial process did they occur? 6) Was the sacrificial system established by God only sufficient to allow fellowship with Him but not sufficient to provide eternal life? 7) Was the "guilt of sin" (that "still, small, voice" from God, I Kings 19:12) also removed or covered through the Levitical sacrificial system? We will analyze and integrate scripture from the **B'rit Hadashah** (Renewed Covenant), such as the following from Hebrews Chapter 10:1,4, "For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near." "For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (**Hebrews:10:4**). As we look at individual theological issues raised by the ceremonial laws found in Leviticus, we must remember that our God, who caused these laws to be written, is both holy and righteous. His character, and therefore His instructional relationship with us, never changes. God was, is, and always will be perfectly consistent!

The Burnt Offering

In **Chapter 1**, God called Moses from the erected Tabernacle, the "tent of meeting" (**Ohel Mo'ed**) and gave him general instructions for bringing offerings and specific instructions for the burnt offering. The word "offering" (sacrifice) is translated from the Hebrew word "**korban**," meaning "to draw near to God." An offering was the means by which sinful man could approach God in worship. The burnt offering is an "assent" offering translated from the Hebrew word "**olah**," meaning "to go up" because the offering will literally go up in smoke on the altar. This was the oldest of offerings, seen in **Genesis 8:20**, where the whole animal was sacrificed. The animal to be offered might come from the herd, the flock, or be a bird, depending on the seriousness of the sin or the economic status of the participant. Implicit was the understanding that breaking God's law broke covenantal fellowship with God and was called "sin." However, God provided a process for the atonement (covering) of sin, so that His wrath could be propitiated (satisfied) and fellowship with Him could be restored. The literal meaning of "atonement" could mean "to cover" (the sin), to "wipe off" or "blot out" (the sin), or to "smear" (the sin), as the animal's blood might be "smeared" upon the horns of the altar (**Leviticus.16:18**).



The participant **personally** brought his offering, a "ceremonially clean" male yearling (usually), to the priest and "pressed" his hands (**symbolically, the weight of his sin**) upon the head of the animal, transferring his sin to the animal (substitutionary atonement). The animal was then ritually slaughtered (**Sh'chita**) on the North side of the altar of sacrifice by the participant. The priests were in charge of the altar of sacrifice. They prepared the wood for the fire, collected some of its blood, and sprinkled or dashed the blood upon all sides of the altar. The burnt offering was skinned and then cut into pieces by the participant (except that the priest killed and prepared a bird). The entrails were washed, and all the pieces were placed upon the altar by the priest. The whole animal (except for the skin of a bull - a gift to the priests and the crop and feathers of a bird) went up in smoke as a "**soothing aroma**." Literally from Hebrew, the offering was a "**smelling of rest or satisfaction**." God was "pleased" or "satisfied" with the faith and obedience of the participant, who presented an acceptable sacrifice, and God restored fellowship. Notice, **it was the heart-felt obedience of the participant turning from sin, turning towards atonement that was efficacious, rather than just the offering**. As mentioned above, **Hebrews 10:4** states "it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins." **It was the love of God and the desire of the participant to repent and to be obedient to God that was pleasing to God.** **Mark 12:28-34** quotes **Deuteronomy 6**, saying that it is more pleasing to God for His people to love Him with all their hearts, souls, minds, and strength and to love their neighbors as themselves, than all the burnt offerings and other sacrifices they might make.

In the **Brit Hadasha** (Newer Testament), a burnt offering is mentioned in **Mark 12:33** and **Hebrews 10:6-8** and practiced in **Luke 2:23-24** (the offering after childbirth) and **Luke 17:14** (the offering of a healed leper). The burnt offering was usually preceded by a sin or trespass offering.



The Grain (Meal) Offering

Chapter 2 describes the grain (meal) offering, the "mincha." "Meal offering" is "korban mincha." The grain offering usually followed a burnt offering or another offering, which included blood along with it. So, although the grain offering was a bloodless offering itself, it was in practice offered in conjunction with a blood offering (**Joshua 22:23,29; Leviticus 23:9-14**). The grain used was either wheat or barley made into a "fine flour" (solet), the finest and purest flour, usually made of wheat. The "anyone" (verse 1) bringing a grain offering would better be translated any "soul" (nefesh). It was brought to the priest, and a handful (traditionally - three fingers) was offered to God on the altar. All offerings were offered with salt, a symbol of preservation and perpetuity, mentioned in **Mark 9:49-50** as preserving the covenantal relationship of believers with God as servant sacrifices. No meal offering was offered with leaven, a fermenting symbol of sin. The uncooked fine flour cakes would have easily gone up in smoke. All the rest was eaten by the priests ministering in the Tabernacle, showing God's provision for His ministers. Since some was offered on the altar, it was considered "most holy." Therefore, the priests' portion had to be consumed only by them and only within the Tabernacle area. The cooked grain offerings were mixed with oil and frankincense. They could be oven-baked (ma'afeh tanur), unleavened loaves (chalot matsot), pan-fried (al-hamachavat) on a griddle like pancakes, deep-fried (marcheshet) in a pan with oil, or if it was an offering of early-ripened grain (minchat bikurim), it could be oven-roasted in a perforated pan.

Peace Offerings

Chapter 3 talks about peace offerings. Peace offerings, given as thanksgiving offerings as acknowledgment of God's deliverance or as free-will offerings, were referred to as "z'vach sh'lamin." (Literally, "sacrifices of pieces"), symbolizing complete well-being and harmony. Portions (the fat - the best part and the kidneys --considered like the heart – the seat of emotions) are offered up on the altar. Parts given to the priests, while other portions were shared as a festive meal with the participant and his family. An offering of the herd or flock could be either a male or female. The procedure of sacrifice is mostly the same as with the burnt offering. Lastly, there is a prohibition against eating fat or blood. Some translate "chukat olam" as an "eternal statute," while others translate it as a "statute up to the end of an age or period of time." The significance of the latter translation was that the prohibition would be in effect only up to the end of the Mosaic law. Therefore with the introduction of the Law of Messiah, this prohibition would no longer be in effect.



The Unintentional Sin Offering

Chapter 4 details the "chatat olam," the "sin offering", defining sin as "missing the mark." Much as an archer sees the target and aims for it. "Missing the mark, as an example of the definition of sin, says that the archer **intentionally** turned from the target and fired his arrow in another direction. Notice that the offerings for sin are for **unintentional sin (4:2)**. What is the penalty for sin done **intentionally** "with a high hand," "presumptuously," or with calculated defiance? See **Numbers 15:27-31**. The "chatat olam" is to purify the participant and expiate the guilt of sin.

If the anointed high priest (hakohen hamashiach) sins in his official capacity and therefore brings guilt upon the people, the priest must bring a bull as his sacrifice. A bull is the most expensive sacrifice due to the status of the high priest. The protocol for the sacrifice is almost the same as seen previously, except that the blood is brought into the holy place and sprinkled in front of the veil that separated the holy place from the holy of holies (symbolizing blood on the mercy seat before God) and on the altar of incense (symbolizing the restoration of the high priest's communion with God). The bull of **the sin offering was burned outside the camp**.

If the nation of Israel sins collectively due to the sin of their elders, perhaps not adequately informing them of God's laws, and they become aware of the violation, the elders offer a bull to the Lord. The blood of the bull is sprinkled in front of the veil "before the Lord." The bull is also **burned outside the camp as a sin offering** for the whole assembly.

If a tribal leader, "nasi" sins and then becomes aware of his sin, he must bring a male goat for his offering and offer it on the altar of sacrifice. Since his sacrifice did not come into contact with the holy of holies, it is not burned outside the camp.

If any individual sins unintentionally and becomes aware of his sin, he must bring a female goat or lamb for his offering. He kills the sacrifice at the altar of sacrifice. Some of its blood is also put on the horns of the altar.

Sins Requiring a Sin Offering

Chapter 5 speaks to various "sins," such as not testifying to the truth as a witness; being defiled by touching something unclean; swearing thoughtlessly. When the person becomes aware of his sin, **he must confess his sin** through the protocol of laying his hands on the head of the animal and presenting a guilt (sin) offering to the Lord. The required animal can be either a female lamb or goat. If he is poor, he can substitute either two turtle doves or two pigeons (one for the sin offering and one for the burnt offering). If he is too poor to bring birds, he can substitute flour. This shows that **God provided substitutionary atonement** for **everyone**, no matter how powerful or poor. Although a bloodless offering for sin, a memorial portion of flour is presented along with a bloody offering on the altar of sacrifice (vs12).

The Trespass (Guilt) Offering

The trespass offering (**asham**) is explained as someone unintentionally failing to pay his tithe, redeem their firstborn, eating a portion of a sacrifice reserved for the priests, failing to bring his first fruits, etc. The trespass was a "**maal**," a violation. The person unwittingly misappropriated for his personal use something rightfully belonging to God. **Restoration involved a confession, a penalty (restitution), plus the sacrifice** of a ram, a costly sacrificial animal. The principle of the trespass offering is found in verse 17. "If a person sins and does any of the things which the lord has commanded not to be done, though he was unaware, still he is guilty, and shall bear his punishment." In other words, **there is no excuse for sin!**

Chapter 6 involves the person committing a deception... a robbery or an extortion or swearing falsely. He must restore what he took and also pay a penalty, plus bringing a "guilt" offering, a costly ram. The sacrifice can only be brought **after** the person has made restitution and paid a penalty. In **Matthew 5:22-23**, Yeshua teaches the same principle. "If therefore you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that you brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way; **first be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and present your offering." Let us also remember Messiah as our guilt offering: "But the Lord was pleased to crush Him, putting Him to grief.....as a guilt offering....."

Isaiah 53:10.

SHABBAT SHALOM

Passover Seder April 12th, 6:30 PM

(Please arrive no later than 6:15 PM)

Dry Bones Passover on the Horizon

