

Shiur L'Yom Shishi¹

[Friday's Study]

READINGS: ***Torah Vayikra:*** **Leviticus 5:1-26²**
 Haftarah: **Isaiah 44:24-26**
 B'rit Chadasha: **Hebrews 10:15-23**

He is to make full restitution, adding one-fifth to it; then he is to give it to the priest.
[Leviticus 5:16]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 115:1-11;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is the *Gevurot*, the Prayer of His Powers, Part II

V'nefesh ki-teicheta v'shame'ah – And a soul, if his misconduct arises from taking an oath ... *kol alah v'hu ed o ra'ah o yada* - and though a witness to a thing or knows about it ... *im-lo yagid* – yet does not tell it Leviticus 5:1a.

The subject the Holy One wants to address today is fallen humanity's inclination toward narcissistic – *i.e.* self-absorbed, self-defensive, self-promoting, and self-justifying – thought, speech, and behavior. The Holy One knows that generations of being force-fed the fruit of the tree of 'knowledge' has poisoned every human being to the core. He knows that not only is no human being 'righteous' – none are even capable of gauging their own or anyone else's, worth – much less judging anyone else's 'sin'. He knows that all human beings are caught up in a great 'pride/shame' continuum – sometimes thinking of themselves higher than they ought [meaning assuming they are worthy of judging others and of withholding forgiveness, mercy, grace, and compassion from them] and other times wallowing in self-hatred, convinced they are at least worthless if not totally and unredeemably wicked. He, on the other hand, sees no human being as either worthy of anything whatever or as worthless. He knows that every human being – whatever that person's age, gender, ethnicity, class, national origin, cultural affiliation, education level, ideological leaning, or economic class - is deeply flawed and fragmented ... yet eminently FIXABLE if, when, and to the extent they come to Him humbly and submit to His 'tikkun' protocols. He is not taken in by any of our paper-thin veneers of civility, illusions of social consciousness, protestations of intelligence, or delusions of morality. Nor is He the least bit impressed by – or fooled by - our self-serving ivory tower musings about philosophy, ideology, social justice activism, or religion. He knows we need desperately to be healed from the toxic state such things have left us in – and transformed into healers of other people who

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² The citations are from the Hebrew text. In English-language transmutations such as KJV and NIV the concluding verse is listed as Leviticus 6:7.

suffer from the same malady.

The Great Folly of Judging and ‘ist’- Labeling

The Holy One knows that fallen humans love – and will defend to the death – their ‘right’ (in actually meaning ‘worthiness’ in his or her own eyes) to judge others. He knows that this prideful and perverse insistence on personal worthiness – which must be sustained by throwing all kinds of shade, blame, and loud condemnation on other people – is the reason that labeling people with intentionally vague but clearly derogatory ‘ist’ labels (like ‘narcissist’, ‘racist, fascist, misogynist, feminist/anti-feminist, egotist, elitist, globalist/nationalist, fundamentalist, and so on) is all the rage. He also knows that ‘ist-labeling – as well as every other form of judgmentalism - is a sure-fire sign that toxic levels of highly narcissistic thought patterns are in operation in everyone who engages in ‘ist-labeling’. Narcissistic thought, you see, always projects itself onto and loudly condemns itself in others. It judges others while excusing itself. It blames others while pretending to be as pure as the driven snow. It exposes others’ flaws, mistakes, misdeeds while erecting vast strongholds of deception, disinformation, and misdirection to cover up its own. It mocks and ridicules others’ beliefs. It discounts others’ trials, struggles, and accomplishments. It virtue-signals though itself doing nothing virtuous. It morality-shames though the artifice of redefining morality to mean whatever it delights in doing, and redefining immorality to anything that might stand in the way of unbridled pursuit of whatever that might be. It culture-cancels, despite considering itself above every other culture. It peddles in the currency of offense, outrage, guilt, and shame. It declares “I (and/or people like me) matter – and YOU DO NOT!”

With this in mind, the Holy One is intent on breaking us free from the pride-shame continuum. He knows that we were created to operate in humility, in patience, in gentleness, in meekness, in abiding trust/faith in His ability and commitment to redeem, and in resulting self-control. He therefore kicks off this day’s ‘Korbanot Discourse’ download by laying out three hypothetical situations in which intense feelings of either pride or shame – or anything but humility, patience, gentleness, trusting faith, and self-control - might arise.

1st Hypothetical: the case of *the ‘reluctant witness’* – a person with important personal knowledge, information, or revelation [not including opinion, theory, ideology, philosophy, indoctrination, or hearsay] who refuses to testify about it – *i.e.* “I SHOULD HAVE SAID SOMETHING/TOLD SOMEBODY” GUILT/SHAME – which in reality is ‘I AM SO IMPORTANT AND UNDENIABLY BELIEVABLE THAT I COULD HAVE FIXED EVERYTHING BY SAYING SOMETHING’ PRIDE [See Leviticus 5:1];

2nd Hypothetical: the case of *the ‘wholeness pretender’* – a person who has

become Biblically unclean [Hebrew tamei – distracted, fragmented, conflicted, torn in regard to priority] but either does not take Torah’s instructions about ‘uncleanness’ seriously when they apply to him/her or doesn’t want to interrupt his/her normal activities/daily routine, so he/she refuses to participate in the announcement, disengagement, and cleansing protocols the Holy One has prescribed – *i.e.* “HYPOCRITE/DOUBLE STANDARD” GUILT – which in reality is I AM SO IMPORTANT – AND THE WORK I DO SO NEEDED – THAT I JUST DON’T HAVE TIME FOR ANY OF THE ‘TIME OUTS’ CALLED FOR IN TORAH [see Leviticus 5:2-3]; and

3rd Hypothetical: the case of *the ‘remorseful promisor’* – a person who takes an oath/makes a vow, commitment, or promise rashly and then, when the time comes to make good on it, cannot or doesn’t want to do what he/she said he/she would do - *i.e.* “LIAR! LIAR! WHY CAN’T I KEEP MY BIG MOUTH SHUT” GUILT – which in reality is ‘I KNEW WHAT NEEDED TO BE DONE, AND WAS 100% RIGHT IN SAYING IT; AND I WOULD HAVE DONE WHAT I SAID AND MORE, BUT SOMETHING SOMEBODY ELSE DID, OR SOMETHING GOD ALLOWED, MESSED EVERYTHING UP AND MADE ME LOOK BAD’ PRIDE [see Leviticus 5:4].

These three poignant hypotheticals are not meant to be all-inclusive - but I am sure you get the picture. None of us need to be reminded what failure feels like. We all know very well from personal experience *how the narcissistic vortex of pride and shame works and what havoc the pride, shame, guilt, offense, blame, and outrage narcissism generates do to a person and everyone within his/her sphere of influence.*

But ... What Does the Holy One Want us to Do About This Mess?

Guilt, shame, anger, offense, outrage and pride – which are all summed up in the Hebrew noun *asham* - is that sickening, self-condemning flood of toxic emotion we feel when we know we realize – or are told – that we have thought, believed, said, or done something vain, selfish, foolish, irresponsible, petty, perverse, occult, relationship-damaging, or testimony-toxic. We immediately embark on – or someone sends us on – either self-justification, excuse, projection, blame-throwing, or *guilt trip*. Our *asham* becomes a dark voice in our head. Like hydrochloric acid it begins immediately to eat away at and corrupt everything it touches. Asham presents as a nakedness that fig leaves cannot cover, a serpent bite taken out of our heart, a scarlet letter on our or someone else’s soul, a curse on our or someone else’s bloodline, or a stubborn Macbethian bloodstain on our or someone else’s hands. But what *asham* really consists of is merely one more manifestation of humanity’s age-old post-Edenic state of self-obsession - *i.e.* of assigning far too much importance to ourselves. Asham – whatever its manifestation in a given

instance - results from placing too much value on our own thoughts, words, emotions, and morals – and too little value on the Holy One, His Will, His Ways, His Words, and His Grand Redemptive and Restorative Plan. We have declared ourselves or someone else to be so bad – and have messed things up so horribly – that the Holy One cannot fix either the person or the situation. We have, thus declared that He is not – cannot be - God ... because WE are. We act out. We mess up. We hurt someone. We do – or fail to do – something that has very serious real or imagined ramifications. We fail to measure up to our own – or someone else’s – ideal. And asham comes in and wreaks havoc. Why? How did we get to this stage?

When we take our eyes and meditations off of the Holy One, we immediately start to think too much about and either too highly or too lowly of ourselves. We begin to construct an ‘image’ of ourselves that is almost god-like – no in holiness or wisdom, of course, but in *importance*. Our attitudes, our moods, our feelings, our opinions, our offenses, our beliefs, our likes and dislikes, our delights and revulsions, etc. suddenly become all we can think about, talk about, and behave, interact, and react according to. We like to admiringly call the idol we thereby create our *self-image*. But others, who see it more accurately, call it what it is - our *ego*, our *pride*, our pseudo-intellectual Anti-Messiah spirit, and our *ivory tower horror-chamber of self-deception*. Falling in line personally with the lies of the serpent, and adding to those lies a matrix of self-expectations, formed over time, which we subconsciously absorb from: [1] the unredeemed cross-generational toxicity inherited through our bloodline; [2] our race and/or ethnicity; [3] the dark side of the spiritual atmosphere in the geographical region and/or nation in which we abide and/or think of as home; [3] the serpentine-infested snobbery of the educators, entertainers, exalted role models, sports heroes, cult icons, and information sources of the culture in which we live; [4] the ideology(ies), philosophy(ies), and political theory(ies) of life with which we resonate and self-identify, and [5] the clichés, focuses, practices, and ideals of institutional religion or other -ism or -ology we either consciously espouse or subconsciously embrace. We are brainwashed from the crib, from the *brit milah*, and from the baptism. We are brainwashed in the highchair, in the classroom, and in the pew. We are brainwashed in the libraries, in the social media platforms and in the search engines. We are brainwashed in our peer groups, our doctors’ offices, our marketplaces, and our institutions. And every morsel of brainwashing – every message of virtue-signaling – becomes a subconscious trigger for guilt. All it takes is the slightest deviation on our part from the ‘self-image’ house of cards that our brainwashed minds have created – and the guilt monster squawk box is activated. Like a motion-activated toy, it parrots the same old pre-recorded message: *You are a mess! You are a failure! NO ONE COULD POSSIBLY LOVE YOU!*

Ah, Beloved - the adversary has done a really good job in disguising himself as trusted shepherds, and leading us to the Dead Sea of bitter waters; but we are the ones who have lowered our heads, opened our mouths, and drank the poison into our system. So – is there a cure? Is there a ‘fix’? Is there a pathway that leads out of this brainwashing mess and into redemption and restoration? You bet there is. The wisdom of our Creator and the grace of our Covenant Partner has provided it. It is an approach protocol, described in vivid imagery and idiomatic form in the fifth chapter of Leviticus. We need to know this protocol, and be able to access its idiomatic essence – at least in the realm of meditation, personal devotion, and prayer – for our own spiritual health and for the spiritual well-being of others. Welcome to the healing balm application instructions the Torah calls *korban asham*.

Step V on the Pathway to Intimacy with the Creator; The Korban Asham Protocol

The Creator of the Universe does not hunger for the blood or the flesh of animals or for grain. What He wants ... what DOES move Him with great emotion ... is *us*. He wants our consciences to be clear as we approach Him. He wants no walls or barriers between us. Hence we read in today’s aliyah:

Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe l'emor

the Holy One spoke to Moshe saying:

Nefesh ki-tim'ol ma'al v'chat'ah

A soul who strays off Covenant trajectory/misses the Covenant mark inadvertently ...

v'hevi et-ashamo l'Adonai

he is to approach to the Holy One concerning his guilt/shame/feelings of unworthiness

ayil tamim min ha-tzon b'eirkeicha kesef-sh'kalim

with an unblemished ram with a prescribed value of [at least two] shekels

b'shekel ha-kodesh l'asham

according to the standard of holy things. It shall be for his guilt/shame/sense of unworthiness

[Leviticus 5:14-15]

The Hebrew word our English Bibles translate as guilt or shame [KJV ‘trespass’] is *asham*³. This masculine Hebrew noun is transliterated as *asham*, and pronounced *aw-shawm*. Its verb root means *to offend, be guilty, to trespass, to do wrong, to do injury, to acknowledge offense*. The *korban asham* protocol is the way the Holy One has graciously provided for us who wish to approach and commune with Him to deal with the wall of separation that comes up on our side when we *feel guilty*

³ *Asham* is spelled *alef, shin, mem sofit*. Strong’s Hebrew word #817, the verb means to acquire guilt, shame, dishonor, or approbation. The first usage is in Genesis 26:10, where Avimelech chastises Yitzchak for putting his people in a position to acquire *asham* in relation to Rivkah, whom he introduced as his sister instead of his wife.

and/or *ashamed*, and therefore *unworthy to be treated as a covenant partner any more*.

To understand how this *asham* protocol works, think of Yeshua's story of the prodigal son. Do you remember how the Master described the prodigal son's thoughts upon realizing how desperate he had become and how foolish he had been to leave his father's house? As he began to allow himself to think about disentangling from his prodigal lifestyle and its associated uncleanness and going back home, he said: ***I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants"***. Luke 15:18-19. He felt unworthy. He was riddled with guilt and shame. But of course the Father – who in the parable symbolizes the Holy One – would have nothing to do with the guilt-ridden prodigal's proposal to be relegated to a lower estate on account of his sin. He called for the robe, the ring and the sandals - i.e. covered his nakedness and shame – called for a public celebration, and publicly declared: ***this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!***"

Another Practical Example

Now let me give you a practical example from the modern world: If a man hurts his wife's feelings, even unintentionally, emotional "scar tissue" forms around the heart of both husband and wife. The relationship undergoes a test. Trust issues arise. Conversations become tense. How can the "scar tissue" be *healed*? How can the relationship become *better than ever* because the parties grew closer in the course of working through the emotions? Is the relationship doomed to grow *more and more distant*, unsatisfying, and disappointing? Will the husband give safe harbor to *feelings of condemnation, guilt, shame, unworthiness and self-hatred* due to his failure to live up to his wife's expectations? Will the wife give safe harbor to *feelings of betrayal*, victimization, or *being unappreciated, misunderstood*, or even *unloved*? These are *real* issues that arise every year in *real* relationships. And the same kind of issues can arise in and threaten our relationship with the Holy One. After 'missing the mark' of the Holy One's stated expectations – intentionally or unintentionally - we can feel like a guilty husband, who is not quite sure where he stands with his wife – or himself - *emotionally* even though he knows the marriage is *legally* secure and binding. It can get really, really ugly. And that's why the Holy One prescribes the *korban asham* protocol – and introduces into Covenant consciousness two special 'healing methodologies': 1. CONFESSION [Hebrew *yadah* – i.e. acknowledgement; mental recognition given verbal expression], and 2. RESTITUTION [Hebrew *shalam* – i.e. make whole or make right; compensate]

Now, Back to the Holy One 's 'Guilt-Crisis' Hypotheticals

As discussed at the beginning of this shiur, the Holy One provides three examples

of the myriads of situations which could lead to the production of such scar tissue. Each illustrative example deals with a particular aspect of our relationship with the Holy One. They are illustrative examples only – not meant to be exclusive.

Hypothetical No. 1: The Asham Crisis of the Reluctant or Unfaithful Witness

The first example the Holy One gives us is the case of the witness who refuses to tell what he or she saw, heard, or experienced:.

V'nefesh ki-teicheta

A soul who has slipped/strayed/hesitated

v'shamei'ah kol alah

when hearing the declaration of an oath, covenant promise, vow, curse or threat

v'hu eid o ra'ah o yada

or having witnessed or observed it, or knowing about it,

im-lo yagid v'nasa avono

if he does not make it known, he bears/carries dishonor/guilt/shame.

[Leviticus 5:1 (Author's Translation)]

We are called to be an *edah* – i.e. a great throng of witnesses. We absolutely must be *faithful, trustworthy, ready, willing, and able witnesses* of the things affecting the Kingdom of our Bridegroom that we have personally and physically witnessed. Words of *alah* – i.e. declared oaths, covenant promises, vows, curses, and threats – are particularly important to the reputation for trustworthiness and the weight and quality of the influence a Redeemed Person who speaks them - and the Redeemed Community at large. Everyone who makes an oath, a vow, a covenant, a promise, a curse, or a threat – i.e. every redeemed soul who speaks with *kol alah* - not only takes upon himself or herself a heightened level of responsibility but actually invokes the honor of the Holy One. If he or she does not live up to this responsibility, maintaining a faithful witness, therefore incurs *guilt, dishonor, shame, and approbation*. Such faithlessness must be revealed, confessed, atoned for, and cleansed from the Community, or our intended level of influence in the world will be compromised.

In the aftermath, any one of us who does not tell what he or she has heard, seen, or knows about the *kol alah* when called upon to do so lets down both the person(s) who called upon us to tell what we knew about the matter at hand *and* the Redeemed Community at large, which after all depends upon the full truth and the willing participation of all its members for the administration of justice and the making of wise decisions in the areas of public safety and policy. Perhaps the unfaithful witness was shy, afraid, embarrassed, or intimidated. Perhaps he or she yielded to a bias, a prejudice, or an offense. Perhaps he or she succumbed to some other form of internal or external conflict of interest. Perhaps he or she was distracted by other priorities. Perhaps he or she was having a bad day. Perhaps he

or she was in the throes of apathy, mirth, folly, or depression. Whatever the reason, the responsibility of a witness is to speak that which one has personally and physically witnessed. And a person appointed and called to be a witness who does not testify bears dishonor and guilt as a result thereof. On account of his or her failure to speak when called upon to do so, a guilty party may go free, an innocent man may be condemned, a breach of covenant may go un-remedied, or a dangerous situation may go undetected. Please note, however, that the testimony of a faithful witness most definitely does *not* include either one's *opinion* or any *positive* or *negative attitude or emotion* one has about any matter, including what we have personally and physically witnessed. Our assigned task is to disclose the facts, and only the facts. All our fleshly opinions, attitudes, and emotions, as well as conclusions based upon hearsay, are the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Each of these things falls within the province of the Serpent and his dominions, not that of the Bridegroom-King and His Kingdom Representatives.

Hypothetical No. 2: The Guilt Crisis of the Secret Carrier of Uncleaness

The second example the Holy One gives us is the case of the man or woman who has, unknowingly, spread *tumah* (*i.e.* communicable uncleanness) in the Camp of the Redeemed. Such a person could have become *tamei* in any number of ways – *i.e.* by inadvertent contact with a creature from the *tamei* realm, by contact with the realm of death, by touching any *tamei* bodily discharge or any vessel, furnishing, or saddle that a person with a *tamei* bodily discharge has used or on which he or she has lain, sat, or ridden.

To the Western mind the whole distinction between the *tamei* and the *tahor* realms seems foolish – like some outdated form of superstitious nonsense. But it is not so at all with the Holy One. The Holy One created both the *tahor* and the *tamei* realms in the first place, and knows that the components of those realms are meant to [a] remain separate, and [b] serve different and oft-times conflicting purposes. His Redemptive Plan therefore provides His Bride to know, understand, recognize, and maintain the boundaries between these two vastly different realms of earthly life. We are a kingdom of priests, and as priests it is our responsibility to keep the *tahor* separate from and undefiled by the *tamei* every bit as much as we are to keep the *holy* separate from and undefiled by the *profane*. **Leviticus 10:10; and see Ezekiel 22:26 & 44:23.**

Why does it matter if a person touches the hide or ingests the flesh of a pig, touches a dead body, or brushes up against the hand or clothing of a woman in the throes of her monthly flow, or comes in close contact with any human being with an unnatural discharge of bodily fluids or with undisclosed sores of *tzara'at* [called leprosy by our English Bibles]? Why does a person in the Redeemed Community who encounters the *tamei* realm unknowingly and then subjects his family members,

friends, and coworkers to the risk of contracting *tumah*? Why would such a person, for that reason alone, feel a disconnection from the Holy One that needs closure? Because there is an assumption in the Community of the Redeemed that other members of the Community will follow the Torah, and will therefore pay close attention to their status vis-à-vis the realm of the *tamei*, and will be careful not place others at risk of the contagion of *tumah*. It is a matter of trust, among people whose chief priority is supposed to be pursuing intimate communion with the Bridegroom-King and being His Shadow, moving when He moves, and doing what He does. A person who carries and passes *tumah* around in the Redeemed Community has let down the members of everyone with whom he or she has come in contact. Because in the Redeemed Community any contact with the *tamei* realm meant both [1] going outside the camp until the *tumah* had run its course, and [2] being temporarily disqualified from entering the *Mish'kan* or participating in the community aspects of the *mo'edim* [i.e. the Divine Appointments of the Creator, frequently called 'Sabbaths', or 'feasts' or 'festivals'], to put someone else at risk of *tumah* without warning them was a serious breach of trust.

The Holy One wants those Who bear the label “His People” and Who therefore are supposed to represent Him, His Wholeness, and His Holiness to the world to learn to live a lifestyle of personal responsibility and accountability. He wants us to demonstrate to the world what it means to be diligent in maintaining a state of *shalom* and wholeness [i.e. a state of *tahorah*]. We are not only to do this for our own sakes [*tumah* that is not cleansed according to Divine Protocol turns inward, consuming us with anger, stress, critical judgment, lust, lovelessness, and lawlessness – see **Matthew 15:17-20**], but because of the serious effects the contagion of *tumah* can have on all the people around us.

Hypothetical No. 3: The Asham-Crisis of the Promise-Breacher/Liar

The third example the Holy One gives is the case of a man or woman who makes a *careless vow* or makes a *promise in the heat of a moment* or *the throes of passion that he or she winds up being incapable of keeping*. In the Community of the Redeemed *words are very, very important*. It is much more important what comes out of our mouths than what comes out of the mouths of those who walk outside the Covenants. While all human beings have been given the precious gift of speech, and will give account for every idle word [**Ecclesiastes 3:17, 11:9 & 12:14, and Matthew 12:36**], the issue of what words we utter and do not utter is even more critical in the case of us who been given the awesome honor, privilege, and responsibility of speaking on behalf of the Creator of the Universe. If we are to function effectively as the *kohanim* [priests, ambassadors, emissaries] of our Heavenly King, and fulfill our calling as a kingdom of priests, our words absolutely must be brought into alignment with the Holy One's Covenant-Faithfulness, Trustworthiness, Emotions, agenda, Will, and Ways. We must learn not to speak

everything that comes into our minds. We must not make covenants we cannot live up to or promises we cannot keep. We must not speak curses our calling is to speak blessings. We must not make threats out of anger. We must not incur debts we cannot pay. To use the precious gift and organs of speech in such ways is to bring dishonor, shame, and discredit not only to ourselves but to the Redeemed Community.

Getting Down to the Heart of the Matter

What is the point of these hypotheticals? The Holy One cares that we not only *be* forgiven for sins, but that we *feel* forgiven, cleansed, atoned for, and vindicated from the shame/guilt associated therewith. Yes, there will be relational repercussions. Yes, there will be societal consequences. But the Holy One wants us to understand that, with HIM, we do not have to start from a deficit, work our way out of a hole, and prove ourselves; instead through His atoning work on our behalf, we are, upon making confession [*yadah*] and restitution [*shalam*], afforded a new beginning and a clean slate. People, especially [1] those we have hurt, and [2] those who take great delight in sitting in the seat of the scornful, and spreading *lashon hara*, and generally wallowing in drama, may continue to judge, suspect, and look down on us; HE will not.

Our Covenant Partner in Heaven wants us to experience and be able to testify to the world concerning the wonderful cleansing and glorious restoration that comes to a person who, instead of running away, covering up, and employing defense mechanisms like denial and self-deprecation, expend the energy to work through their mistakes and misdeeds, and the consequences thereof, together with Him.

It is one thing to have received forgiveness. It is another thing to be cleansed of all unrighteousness, and get complete closure through returning to a place of faithfully *sh'ma*-ing and *asah*-ing His Words. See I John 1:9 – 2:5. If you are married, it is one thing to know your wife [or husband] will not divorce you despite a mistake you made; it is quite another to know you are closer to her [or him] than ever because of the process of working through the emotional aftermath of the mistake. The latter situation is what our Divine Bridegroom wants for us - and is therefore what He provides for us through the conceptual framework of the *korban asham*.

A 4th Hypothetical: Taking on Asham Toxicity *In Regard to 'Holy Things'*

Part of being the Holy One's kingdom of priest is to make *havdil* [separation/division] between things which are *chol* - often translated as 'profane', but meaning merely man-conceived, man-focused, and man-honoring - on the one hand, and those things which are *kadosh* - i.e. set apart to/for the Holy One, according to His Word,

to bring Him honor and glory - on the other hand. So ... what is 'holy'? First of all, our *Creator/Covenant Partner* is holy. That is why His Empowering Breath/life force is holy – i.e. is properly described as the 'Holy Spirit'. Second, His *Name* is Holy. Third, His *Words and His Ways* – and the scrolls on which they are recorded - are holy. Fourth, His *calendar* – starting with the *Shabbat* and other *appointed times* [the *mo'edim* of Leviticus 23] and continuing to every season or event He calls upon us to commemorate - is holy. Fifth, both *His earthly and Heavenly Mish'kan* – as well as *all the component parts and furnishings of and attendants in each*, as well as *the special formulations of oil and incense used therein* - are holy. Sixth, all His *korbanot* are holy. Seventh, *every single one of His people*, from the king, the prophet, and the priest to the lowliest of His subjects and servants, is holy – i.e. set apart unto Him, for His intimate fellowship, His counsel and direction, His Kingdom's Advancement, and His devoted service. Eighth, the *land of Israel* is holy.

What does it mean to us in 'real time' that the things listed above are all *Kadosh* – i.e. set apart to/for the Holy One according to His Word to bring Him honor and glory? It means that we are constantly keep those things in constant focus, and give them our highest levels of attention, energy, passion, and time. It means we are to *highly value, honor, seek out, embrace, identify with, and interact reverently with* all eight of those *kadosh* things. That means we are called to gradually disentangle as much as possible from everything that either distracts our attention from or dilutes our affection for these eight things. We are to be very careful what we allow ourselves to invest in emotionally. We are to break, renounce, and walk away from any soul-tie with anything that either distracts our attention from or dilutes our affection for these eight things. That is why Ya'akov [later given the name 'James' by translators] declared that *whoever wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of the Holy One*. **James 4:4.**

We have a *covenant partner Who meets and exceeds all our needs and expectations*. So we just do not have time to court or be courted by suitors who offer us at best an inferior set of pleasures, experiences, opportunities, and companionship. We have a *glorious mission* – i.e. His calling upon our lives to be a responsive bride-people, to be witnesses to the world of His wonderful works, and to serve as earthly ambassadors of His Kingdom in every sphere of influence He opens to us. We do not have time to wade off into the folly-land of human games, rhetoric, argumentation, ego-trips, power struggles, or tree-of-the-knowledge-of-good-and-evil inspired drama scenarios. We have a *full plate of life-instructions that require our full attention, energy, time, and passion*. Nothing good can come of diverting energy, passion, resources, or time to activities that are at essence man-conceived, man-focused, and man-honoring.

Some things are deceptively *chol*. Anything done by man to attract or emotionally manipulate a crowd, draw attention to himself or his cause, or to advance anyone's agenda beside the Holy One's is *chol*. Self-promotion – in whatever context – is *chol*. Flattery and gossip are *chol*. Man's creeds and theories regarding politics/political theory, philosophy, ideology, science, medicine, and religion are *chol*. All man's informational, educational, and entertainment media are *chol*. Organizations and institutions, programs and crusades are *chol*. Rhetoric, oratory, propaganda, and indoctrination are *chol*.

Sometimes our spiritual eyes get crossed. Sometimes we lose focus and clarity on the *kadosh* things. Sometimes the lines between what is *chol* and what is *kadosh* become blurred in our perception and we get caught up in the former quite by accident. Sometimes man's teachings, theologies, philosophies, doctrines, theories of morality, priority, and *halakah* speak so loudly and authoritatively that we mistake them for what is truly *kadosh*. Sometimes we are deluded into believing that buildings constructed of wood and stone – or of concrete and steel – are 'Temples' unto God. Sometimes programs and ministries conceived by and for man, and which draw attention to the work and talents of man, so blind us that we actually start to believe they are *kadosh*, and treat them as such. And sometimes – usually when we are deceived by the teachings of men promoting human institutions – even the most *kadosh* of all things, the Torah of the Holy One, seems to us not to be *kadosh*, but merely an ancient code of laws, written by a man named Moshe.

When the lines between what is *chol* and what is *kadosh* become blurred in our perception, it is inevitable that we will treat something *kadosh* as if it were *chol*, and that we will, likewise, treat something *chol* as if it were *kadosh*. The Holy One knew that, even in a redeemed community, this would occur. And He provided a remedy:

Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe l'emor

And the Holy One spoke to Moshe saying:

Nefesh ki-tim'ol ma'al v'chat'ah

If a person sins inadvertently

b'sh'gagah mikodshei Adonai

with regard to something that is kadosh of the Holy One

v'hevi et-ashamo l'Adonai ayil tamim min ha-tzon

he is to approach the Holy One with an unblemished ram as his ashram-surrogate

b'erkecha kesef-sh'kalim b'shekel ha-kodesh l'asham

worth two shekels according to the holy standard. It will be for guilt.

V'et asher chata min ha-kodesh yeshalem

For misappropriating something holy,

v'et-chamishito yosef alav v'natan oto l'kohen

he must make full restitution, adding one-fifth to it, and give it to the priest.

V'ha-kohen yechaper alav b'eyl ha-asham

The priest shall then atone for him with the ram for guilt,

v'nislach lo

and he will be forgiven.

Help For the Spiritually Hard of Hearing

The lifestyle of those the Creator of Heaven and Earth has redeemed is supposed to be what I call a *sh'ma* lifestyle. The Hebrew verb *sh'ma*, *shin*, *mem*, *ayin*, as we have discussed previously in these studies, in the context of Torah, means to *listen intently to*, to *pay attention to*, to *hear*, to *receive and accept*, to *meditate upon*, *speak about and teach to one's children*, and to *gradually be transformed by*, and *conformed to*, the Holy One's creative and prophetic Words. The moving force – the power – behind this process is not the will or the ability of the person *sh'ma*-ing – but the Words of the Holy One themselves. The Words of the Holy One are extremely *potent* and *powerful*. They are impregnated with the Holy One's *life force*. They have creative power, and prophetic impact – bringing to pass, by their own innate spiritual energy, whatever they say.

But some of us are *hard of hearing*. Spiritually, I mean. Some of us suffer from 'jammed frequencies' – having 'itching ears' that tune in to voices other than the Holy One's, and which, therefore, like a radio that is slightly off station, receive a garbled, often unintelligible message, instead of the clear signal the Holy One broadcasts. Those of us who are thus 'hard of hearing' spiritually sometimes simply *'know not what [we] do'*. Though the Holy One's Words are clear and His Message perfect, due to our problem with 'jammed frequencies' *we simply do not receive His Word as it was broadcast*. And so we wind up doing things that the Holy One's Word did not tell us to do, thinking all the while we are doing His Will. And we fail to do things His Word specifically tells us to do, believing all the while we are following His directions. Hence Yeshua spoke the famous prayer even as He was being tortured to death on the Roman execution stake: ***Father, forgive them – for they know not what they do!*** Luke 23:34.

This prayer constituted an approach of *asham*, presented by the High Priest of Heaven, on behalf of the people who had cried '*Crucify Him!*', who had accused Him of blasphemy and sedition, who had spat upon Him, who had mocked him, who had plucked out the hair of His beard, and who had placed on His head a

crown of thorns. He looked at them in compassion, and knew they were all just ‘hard of hearing’, spiritually. Their spiritual frequencies were simply clogged by too many years of listening to *other voices* – the voices of the leaders of the religious and political institutions of the time. Their ‘hard of hearing’ ears could not receive the Truth from the Holy One’s Word. They did not even realize they were doing something contrary to the Holy One’s instructions.

Yeshua was not, in speaking forgiveness for the sin of those who condemned Him to death, announcing either a new *standard* or a new *covenant*. He was just following Torah - making it full, meaningful, and of its intended effect. For, from the beginning, Torah provided a means by which those who ‘know not what they do’ were to be forgiven. Here is how our Divine Bridegroom stated it to Moshe:

v'im-nefesh ki teicheita v'asetah achat mikol-mitzvot Adoni

And when a person breaks covenant by doing something the Holy One has said not to do

asher lo te'aseinah v'lo-yada v'ashem v'nasa avono

Without being aware he is doing a forbidden thing, and he feels guilt/shame/unworthiness

v'hevi ayil tamim min ha-tzon b'eirkeicha l'asham el ha-kohen

He is to bring an unblemished ram of the prescribed value, to the priest for guilt

v'chiper alav ha-kohen

And covering will be made for him by the priest

al shigegato asher-shagag v'hu lo-yada

for the error committed without knowledge,

v'nislach lo

and he will be forgiven!

Asham hu ashom asham l'Adonai

It is an asham surrogate – to be brought for asham toward the Holy One.

[Leviticus 5:16-10]

The instrumentality of forgiveness was never the blood of the *ayil* [ram] slain on the brazen altar of the *mish'kan* or *mik'dash* [Temple]. That altar was merely a ‘shadow’, or replica, of the eternal one in Heaven. And the *ayil* [ram] slain there was merely a reminder – a shadow – of the ram supernaturally provided by the Holy One to Avraham on Mount Moriyah in Genesis 22 – and of the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

Korban Yachid vs. Korban Tzibbur

Now may be a good time to discuss the fact that each of the five types of *korbanot* about which we read and learn in parsha *Vayikra* is actually designed to function as a type of *korban yachid* – that is, a type of approach to the Holy One made *by an individual*, on his own behalf. What each has to do with is the individual worshipper’s *personal relationship* with the Holy One. There is, of course, another

type of surrogate presentation described in Torah – a *korban tzibbur*, or approach made *on behalf of the entire nation*. Examples of this latter type of *korban* are the *daily tamid* [presented morning and evening]⁴ and the special sin offering presented on *Yom Kippur* – the day of Atonement⁵.

If you understand this you can understand how the Holy One offers not only individualized and/or household-only ‘salvation’ [as He provided Noach and Avram] but also national ‘salvation’. Remember that the *mish’kan* was but a ‘scale model’ on earth, of the Throne Room in Heaven that the Holy One showed Moshe when Moshe communed with the Holy One on Mount Sinai. People like Noach, Avram, Moshe and David knew they had individual salvation, and personal covenant with the Holy One, because they knew a *korban yachid* had been provided in the Heavenly Throne Room of which the *mish’kan* was merely a ‘scale model’.

This also helps us understand how Shaul can declare so confidently in the Book of Romans that ‘*All Israel will be saved*’. It is because He knows that, because Torah speaks of the presentation of *korbanot tzibbur* in the *mish’kan*, a corresponding surrogate has been provided since before the foundation of the world in the Heavenly Throne Room of which the *mish’kan* was only a scale-model.

Questions For Today’s Study

1. Today’s assigned verses discuss the *korban asham* “*the approach of the ashamed*” [Hebrew *asham* = shame/guilt]. The Holy One recognizes that we all come under “guilt” and “condemnation”, sometimes by inaction or failing to act as we know we should, sometimes just by being in contact with things we know distract us from God and from our purpose, calling and destiny. He therefore prescribes *korban asham* protocols in order that we may be assured of forgiveness and atonement and be relieved of “guilt.”

[A] List the specific circumstances where one is to approach the Holy One through the surrogate of a *korban asham*.

[B] Write a list of the various animals that can be used as a surrogate to make *korban asham*;

[C] List the things the person bringing the *korban asham* is to do and not do;

[D] List the things the priest receiving the *korban asham* is to do.

2. Beginning with verse 15 of today’s aliyah of Torah the Holy One spells out to Moshe the Torah [instruction] concerning “making restitution”.

If anyone commits a trespass, and sins unwittingly, in the holy things of the Holy One; then he draw near to the Holy One through the surrogate of a korban asham,

⁴ See Exodus 29:41-42 [from parsha *Tetzaveh*].

⁵ See Leviticus 16 [from parsha *Acharei Mot*].

*a ram without blemish from the flock, according to your estimation in silver by shekels,
after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a korban asham.*

*He is to make restitution for that which he has done amiss in the holy thing,
and is to add a fifth part to it, and give it to the Kohen; and the Kohen is
to make atonement for him with the ram of the korban asham, and he will be forgiven.*

[Leviticus 5:15-16]

[A] In Strong's and Gesenius, look up the Hebrew word translated as "restitution" in verse 16 [in the KJV, the word is translated "amends"; in the Hebrew, it is *shalam*, Strong's Hebrew word # 7999]; write the Hebrew word in Hebrew letters, with vowel markings, then meditate on the first two or three usages in the Torah [the first is Genesis 44:4; see also Exodus 21:34], and Gesenius' exposition of the word; finally, describe the Hebraic word picture it reveals, explaining what it means, Hebraically, to "make restitution".

[B] Which is to occur first, *shalam* [restitution] - or the making of *korban asham*?

[C] What is to be added to the amount taken when making *shalam* [restitution]?

[D] In Gesenius' Lexicon, look up the Hebrew word translated as "forgiven" in verse 16 [in the KJV, the word is translated "amends"; in the Hebrew, it is *salach*, Strong's Hebrew word # 5545]; write the Hebrew word in Hebrew letters, with vowel markings, then meditate on the first two or three usages in the Torah [the first is in Exodus 34:9; see also Numbers 14:19, 20], and Gesenius' exposition of the word; finally, describe the Hebraic word picture it reveals, explaining what it means, Hebraically, to "make restitution".

3. The Haftarah reading I have suggested to complement today's Torah reading goes beyond the traditional Haftarah of parsha *Vayikra*. I have included it in the study because I see that in the verses in question the Holy One has graciously described Himself to us in a way that will help us to understand Him, properly relate to Him, trust in Him, and not feel condemned.

*Thus says the Holy One, your Redeemer, and he who formed you from the womb:
"I am the Holy One, who makes all things; Who stretches forth the heavens alone;
Who spreads abroad the eretz (who is with me?);
who frustrates the signs of the liars, and makes diviners mad;
Who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolish;
who confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messengers;
Who says of Y'rushalayim, 'She shall be inhabited';
and of the cities of Y'hudah, 'They shall be built, and I will raise up the waste places of it;*

[Isaiah 44:24-26]

[A] List the descriptions the Holy One gives of Himself in this passage.

[B] Beside each descriptive word written by the Holy One of Himself, write the Hebrew word that is so translated, and describe its Hebraic word picture.

- [C] List the actions the Holy One says He has performed in the past.
 [D] List the actions that the Holy One says He is continually doing at this time.
 [E] List the prophetic announcements the Holy One says He is making.
 [F] How does knowing these things about the Holy One affect your relationship with Him?

4. In today's suggested B'rit Chadasha reading, the writer of the Book of Hebrews (the Book of Messianic Jews) encourages us to throw off *asham* [guilt] and make our daily *korbanot* [approaches] to the Holy One joyfully and gratefully

The Ruach HaKodesh also testifies to us, for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them: 'After those days,' says the Holy One, 'I will put my torot on their heart, I will also write them on their mind;'" then he says, "I will remember their sins and their iniquities no more."

*Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering [i.e. approach] for sin. Having therefore, brothers, boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Yeshua, by the way which he dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having a great Kohen over the house of God, let us draw near [i.e. make **korban**] with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and having our body washed with pure water.*

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope unyieldingly. For He who promised is faithful.

[Hebrews 10:15-23]

- [A] What two promises of the prophets does the writer quote? [Give book, chapter, and verse]
 [B] What two things are promised in that quotation?
 [C] What "laws" does the quoted promise refer to?
 [D] There is now no earthly *Mish'kan* or Mikdash. By what *korban* protocol do we now approach the Holy One?
 [E] List the various ways the writer describes the attitude with which we are to make *korban* [approach] to the Heavenly throne room of which the *Mish'kan* and Mikdash were merely imperfect patterns.
 [F] What has the *korban maschiach* done to our heart?
 [G] What has the *korban maschiach* done to our faith?
 [H] What has the *korban maschiach* done to our conscience?
 [I] What, exactly, in your own words, is the "hope we profess" which the writer of Hebrews encourages us to "hold unswervingly" to.
 [J] In Richard's, Vine's, or in Strong's, look up the Greek and Hebrew words that our English Bibles translate as "hope". Write the Greek and Hebrew words and the definitions given for each.
 [K] Write a paragraph on how people who are in covenant with the Holy One in Messiah can have the assurance of the removal of the wall of guilt and shame that our sins create – i.e. *how followers of Messiah can make korban ashame*.

*May the Holy One bless you and keep you;
May He make His face shine upon you and be gracious unto you;
May He lift up His countenance upon you; and may He give you peace.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 115:1-11

*Not to us, O Holy One, not to us, But to your name give glory,
For your lovingkindness, and for your truth's sake.
Why should the nations say, "Where is their God, now?"
But our God is in the heavens. He does whatever he pleases.
Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands.
They have mouths, but they don't speak; They have eyes, but they don't see;
they have ears, but they don't hear; they have noses, but they don't smell;
they have hands, but they don't feel; they have feet, but they don't walk;
Neither do they speak through their throat.
Those who make them will be like them; yes, everyone who trusts in them.
Yisra'el, trust in the Holy One! Their help and their shield.
House of Aharon, trust in the Holy One!
He is their help and their shield.
You who fear the Holy One, trust in the Holy One!
He is their help and their shield.*