

Shiur L'Yom Sh'lishi¹

[Tuesday's Study]

READINGS: **Torah Tzav:** **Leviticus 6:14-30²**
 Haftarah: **Jeremiah 7:27-30**
 B'rit Chadasha: **Hebrews 8:3-6**

This is the torah of the minchah

[Leviticus 6:14a]

Today's Meditation is Psalm 115:14-18;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is the *Gevurot*, Part III

Vezot torat ha-minchah – *And this is the Torah of/teaching concerning the minchah ...* ***ha-k'rev otah B'nei-Aharon lifnei Adonai el-penei ha-mizbe'ach*** – *Aharon's sons are to approach to present it in the Presence of the Holy One at the front of the altar* **Leviticus 6:14** [in the Hebrew numbering, Leviticus 6:7].

The *Immanu-El Era* is officially 'on'. The Creator of the Universe has taken up a place of rest on the earth. His Manifest Presence, His Holiness, and His Majesty all dwell among us – and while we are undone, we are by no means destroyed. We are humbled – but we are invigorated. We are conscious of our uncleanness and unworthiness – but we are exhilarated by the prospect of becoming 'clean' again, taking on His kedusha, and being clothed in His worthiness. He is showing incredible *chen* – *i.e.* 'favor - to His Creation, starting with we who are most in need of it. He has invited us to come to His Chambers and spend time with Him. Lest we be injured, He has even given clear and specific directions to follow in order to commune with Him safely and meaningfully. Human beings need never feel alienated from our Heavenly Father again. His Tabernacle is the ultimate *fig leaf free zone*. *Selah*, and *Hallelu-Yah!*

Moshe has been commissioned to serve as our Personal Trainer in Royal Court Etiquette. He is helping us re-acclimate to the transformative *Kedusha* and *Kavod* energy that pulses powerfully from our Bridegroom-King's Presence – and to do so ever so slowly and methodically. The Holy One has a Brilliant Plan to make this work. But, as was the case at the Sea of Reeds, someone has to blaze the trail. Someone has to say, 'this is the way – walk in it'! At the Sea of Reeds, tradition says it was *Nachson* that took the risk of being the first to step into the space between the standing walls of water. At Sinai it is Moshe who is serving as our forerunner. The Holy One called; Moshe *sh'ma*-ed. His experiences in the Holy One's Presence were just the prototype. It is our turn now. The Holy One is giving

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² In Hebrew Bibles the numbering of verses is different, such that this section is Leviticus 6:7-23.

approach instructions for everyone who wishes to seek Him. He is setting down the protocols for future visits by every man, woman, and child. First it was Moshe who was invited; now it is B'nei Yisrael. Soon it will be all men, of all nations³.

Doing The Best We Can To Recapture

The Great Treasure That Has Been Lost in Translation Over the Years

The words we read in today's aliyah are words of love, from a Bridegroom-King Who longs to commune – safely, honestly, and meaningfully – addressed to a people that He deeply loves, whose lives He wants to make full, abundant, purposeful, fruitful, and joyful. When we rely upon an English translation of the Hebrew words the Holy One spoke to His Hebrew prophet Moshe, we just get rough approximations of what was actually said and heard - approximations heavily influenced by two separate paradigms of Western mindset. The first Western-mindset paradigm through which the words can be distorted is the Western mindset of the translators, all ultimately harking back to the time of King James I of England. The second Western-mindset paradigm of distortion through which we see the original words darkly is the Western-mindset in each of us, the readers. Thus, while reading these words in English is certainly better than not reading them at all – but it is not optimal. But if we can't both 1. *read Hebrew*, and 2. *look at and meditate upon the words through the lens of the Siniatic-era Hebrew mindset*, we just have to do the best we can. The suggestions made herein are designed to help us begin to dismantle the Western paradigm gauntlets, and get us more in touch with the words the Holy One actually spoke in the cultural and spiritual context in which He spoke them.

That being said, while the King James translation of the subject matter the Holy One is about to discuss is 'sin offering', I translate it differently. I translate it *'attitude adjustment, course-correction, brainwashing-reversal, and behavior modification*. Don't stone me quite yet. It is the things I have described – not an offering designed to talk the Holy One into overlooking, forgiving, or even wiping away your sin - that the *korban chatat* protocols are about. I know, that may sound a little crazy - perhaps even blasphemous - to you. You've probably heard a lot of preachers say – and probably accepted, without taking time to check it out for yourselves – that what Torah is talking about is *just an obsolete, 'Old Testament' method through which people sought forgiveness of sin before a man named 'Jesus' came and* – as they put it – *'did away with the law'*. They no concept of covenant. They have no understanding of life purpose – of mission, or destiny.

³ The Tabernacle had no 'court of the gentiles', or line beyond which gentiles (if Torah observant) were not allowed. Nor did the Tabernacle have a 'court of the women', setting limits on the approaches of females or children. These adaptations came about only at the gaudy Romanesque Temple that Herold built for his own glory. In the Tabernacle.

They see only one issue – Heaven (as their denomination tends to think of it), and Hell (as their denomination tends to think of that). What *korban chatat* is really about is far beyond either ‘forgiveness of sins’ or ‘going to Heaven when you die’. *Korban chatat* is about coming to one’s senses and committing to return to the life, health and peace pathway of Torah, to make restitution for damages done while AWOL from that pathway, and re-surrendering all one’s energies and loyalties to the Holy One’s service. It is about someone who has, for whatever reason, taken off his or her Kingdom uniform, and gone off on a frolic of his/her own, returning to his commanding officer and putting that uniform back on. It is about someone who has abandoned his Kingdom post returning to and resuming the duties of that post. It is about someone who has careened off mission returning to his assigned role in the Creator’s Grand Plan for the Redemption of Mankind, bloodline by bloodline, and for the Restoration of Creation, geographical coordinate by geographical coordinate, to its original Edenic state of beauty, fruitfulness, and *shalom*.

The Restoration Process

A person cannot make all the consequences of dereliction of Covenant responsibility go away by shedding a few tears, saying he is sorry, and promising to be a good boy or girl going forward. *Chatat* is more serious – and affects more people and territory – than that. You need an attitude adjustment. You need a course-correction. You need a brainwashing reversal. And you need a behavior modification. You need it to cost you something. You need to produce fruit consistent with *teshuvah*. You need a new life purpose birthing process. That is what *korban chatat* is about. To suggest that it is, was, or was ever intended to be about forgiveness of sins is equivalent to saying that loving one’s neighbor is about restraining an urge to kill him. The Holy One did not need the blood of bulls or goats – or the death of His son - to forgive sin. He has been forgiving sin all along without any of those things. See Adam and Chava [Genesis 3:21]. See Kayin [Genesis 4:13-15]. See Avraham [Genesis 12:11-20]. See Yitzchak [Genesis 26:7], See Rivkah [Genesis 27:5-13], See Ya’akov [Genesis 27:5-24] and his sons [Genesis 34]. See Moshe [Exodus 2:11-12]. See Aharon [Exodus 32:2-6]. See all Israel who participated in the calf sin [Exodus 32:11-14]. The Holy One does not need men to bring Him anything to induce Him to forgive sin - it is an integral part of both His nature and His plan for mankind. See Psalm 51:1-16. See also Matthew 9:2, where, long before the death, burial or resurrection, and without any *korban chatat* being presented, Yeshua declared the paralytic man’s sin forgiven on sight. The reality is that it isn’t the Holy One Who needs the *korban chatat* at all – it is us! He knows we need something like that. He knows we need to go through a dramatic process of attitude adjustment, course-correction, brainwash reversing, and behavior modification. He knows that we need the catharsis of dying and being resurrected, trading our ashes

for His Beauty, leaving sin/iniquity/rebellion behind in a pile on the altar, and then rising up to get on with the life to which we are called. *Selah* - pause, and meditate quietly on that!

Of Courses, Distractions, Detours, and Course Corrections

In an effort to be faithful to the theme of *the season* we are in on the Creator's calendar, let's play a little '*climb out of the theological box*' game. Spend a few seconds – or moments if you can spare them - meditating on each of the following five words, as they apply to your life:

Identity.
Mission.
Destiny.
Journey.
Destination.

Are those words – and the Divine Plan of the Holy One for you to engage with them - washing over you yet? Are you hearing the sweet whisperings of our Covenant Partner's upward call on your life? Good! Now let's take a further step. Here are the next ten words upon which I encourage you to spend a few moments meditating:

Course.
Pathway.
Shepherd.
Direction.
Mountain.
Valley.
Stream.
Oasis.
Rest.
Resumption.
Navigation.

We are going somewhere. But, alas, we are not there yet. We are approaching the critical stage. Here are the final twelve words that will, hopefully, prepare us to hear, embrace, and apply what the Holy One is saying in today's aliyah – and at this season of the Divine Calendar:

Crossroads.
Distraction.
Deviation.
Danger.
Awakening.
Yearning.

Return.
Reconciliation.
Restoration.
Ascent.
Testimony.
Impact.
Fruitfulness.
Bringing *tikkun* (i.e. repair, restoration).

These are the lenses through which the Holy One views your life. He knows you are on a journey. He is actually leading you on that journey. There is a purpose for it all. What is that purpose? Come with me, and let's peer through a glass darkly at our King's glorious 'end game':

Then it will come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Holy One's house will be established on the top of the mountains, and it will be exalted above the hills; and all nations will rush to it. Many peoples [ethnicities] will come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Holy One – to the house of the God of Ya'akov; He will teach us His ways, and we will walk in His paths." For out of Tziyon will go forth the Torah, and the word of the Holy One from Jerusalem. He will issue decrees involving the nations, and manifest Himself and His Ways to many people; They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation; neither will they teach or study war anymore.
[Isaiah 2:2-5]

Some deviations from the course that the Holy One has set before us are inevitable. Some detours from the pathway to the fullness of the Kingdom are to be expected. But the Plan is a good plan. Its completion is sure. And course-corrections for all involved are just an understood part of the process.

Applying The Lessons We Have Just Learned In The Context of Our Journey to Individual and National Greatness

The Holy One wants to reintroduce Himself and His Plan to mankind – starting with you and me. He wants His Courts to become 'home turf' for all nations – starting with B'nei Yisrael. He wants the place where the 24 elders fall on their faces and the living creatures constantly cry 'Holy, Holy, Holy' to become our headquarters. He wants His Throne – and the beautiful words that emanate from it – to become our movement's command and supply center. Knowing the frailty of our human frames, He has lovingly designed protocols of approach and fellowship that will enable us to become one with Him in heart, in mind, and in will.

In *Tzav*, therefore, the Holy One is empowering and instructing Aharon and his sons how model these things for us. Instructions and protocols are being

downloaded. We are learning to let the Messiah lead us on journeys of reclamation through places of the soul and spirit where *angels fear to tread*. We are being introduced to *the protocols of the King's Courts*. See **Esther 4:11**. We are being shown *the secrets of the King's Stairway*. See **II Chronicles 9:3-4**. We are being prepared *to reside in the presence of the Greatest Majesty* in the world. See **II Samuel 9:11**. We are being taught and shown how mere mortal men can not only enter the Presence of the Creator of the Universe and live, but actually experience *paradigm-shifting interactions* with the Almighty on a regular basis. We are learning the Heavenly Bridegroom-King's beautiful choreography of redemption. And we are learning that redemption is not an end to itself, as we have always been taught; it is, instead, merely a byproduct of alignment with the Holy One's Plan to Redeem Mankind as a Species and Restore Creation to its Original Intended State of Beauty, Fruitfulness, and Shalom.

The Pathway of Life, Health, and Peace That Our Bridegroom-King Has Paved For Us

We have learned that the Holy One has designed *five "pathways to intimacy"* with Him. We have learned not to call these five pathways 'offerings' or 'sacrifices', but "*prophetic protocols of intimate approach*". We have also learned that each of the pathways to intimate communion that the Holy One has designed for us is Divinely targeted to deal with one of the five most fundamental needs of the Creature called man in the aftermath of the Garden of Eden debacle.

We have thus learned that the *korbanot* described in the first few chapters of *Vayikra* [Leviticus] are beautiful, life-changing protocols designed by a kind and loving Bridegroom for His flawed bride-to-be to *draw near to Him and receive healing from Him at the point of her deepest needs*. We have discovered that the sooner we get English words like 'animal sacrifices' and 'offerings', with the pagan connotations those words engender in our minds, completely out of our vocabulary the better off we will be.

The Secrets of Bride-Preparation and Readiness

The *korbanot* protocols unveiled in the early chapters of Sefer Vayikra are *empowerments for a Bride-like approach* to the Holy One as He sits enthroned. Each of the *korbanot* in its own way reminds us that our *appetites* and *self-interest* and *hurt feelings* and *failures* and *sense of both pride and shame* should not cause us to run *away from* our Divine Bridegroom, but to run *to* Him.

The purpose of the *korbanot* is to reflect on earth the reality that there is something better for us than living according to the life force of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge. The *korbanot* declare that *the Holy One has a plan, a strategy, and a*

protocol to get His most Beloved but fallen Creature man not only back to the Garden but back to the Tree of Life. They are given that the world may know that a way has not only been provided for us to get past the flashing sword of the cherub which guards the entrance to the tree of life, but that He is personally inviting us to come and is lovingly guiding our every step along the way. The korbanot are made a part of Torah in order that all mankind may know that a way has been paved for us to get us back to the arms of the Holy One which molded us from the clay, and to get us back to the breath of life we so desperately need, and which He patiently waits to breathe into our souls the way He breathed life into Adam at the beginning. They provide a ‘visual’ for us – and the world – to see portraying on earth in our days the reality of what has happened outside of space and time that led the Holy One to declare His work of Creating to be “complete” after six days. Each type of korban is given to us as a reminder that a lamb was slain before the foundation of the world.

The *korbanot* are discussed in such detail, from so many perspectives, because the Holy One wants every wandering prodigal out there to know that no matter how far he or she has strayed - THERE IS AN INVITATION ISSUED AND A WAY PROVIDED FOR US TO GET BACK HOME WHERE WE BELONG! That is why the Hebrew people begin the education of young children with Sefer *Vayikra*.

A Radical Change of Focus

The focus in the previous parsha was on the ones “*running to*” the Holy One. The Holy One laid out the protocol for such people – what type of surrogates should be brought when, depending upon what the reason or motivating factor for “*running to*” the Holy One was. We learned that the *korban olah* was not commanded – it was totally voluntary – the passionate impulse of a loving helpmeet. Through *korban olah* one desiring to worship in spirit and truth could approach the Overshadowing Presence and express his/her total devotion and dedication to the Holy One, and his/her willingness to walk into the flames if necessary just to *be near Him and commune with Him and learn from Him*. That is how the Serpentine life force of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge is put to death.

We also learned that the *korban minchah* was ordained by the Holy One as the way of approach of one prepared to acknowledge that every material possession he/she has belongs to the Holy One and that he/she is only a steward of such things for the good of the Holy One’s Creation, not just himself/herself. That is how the issues human beings have arising out of the curse that fell on the *eretz* by reason of Adam’s ingesting of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil are dealt with.

We further learned that the *korban shelem*, *korban chata't*, and *korban asham*, each in its turn and its unique way, also was designed by the Holy One to meet one of the five fundamental needs of the human being. Each one likewise fulfilled a specific purpose for those whose desire was to run to the Holy One rather than struggling to find meaning in life independent of Him.

As we began our study of *Tzav* yesterday, however, the focus of the Divine Instruction shifted. Instead of looking at the *korbanot* from the perspective of a worshipper approaching our Divine Bridegroom in awe and in love, in *Tzav* the Holy One caused us to look at the same process *from the perspective of the kohen who mediates at the event*. The Divine Instructions found in *Tzav* are about the privilege of a *kohen* to act as the Holy One's visible representative on earth, to perform covenant actions that confirm the Holy One's acceptance of the worshipper's approach. It is likewise about the responsibility of the *kohen* to *keep the altar of approach pure, to keep its fire burning, and to keep its holiness intact*.

Understanding A Marvelous Truth About the Holy One's Mizbe'ach [Altar]

When the function of the *mizbe'ach* [altar] was described in Exodus 29 the Holy One made it clear that the altar was *k'dosh k'doshim* [holy of holies]. Our English Bibles do not tell us this – they just tell us the altar is something they call 'most holy'. They do not tell us that the altar – the one out in the courts of the *mish'kan*, where we bring our *korbanot* - is *just as holy as the area behind the veil, between the wings of the cherubim atop the mercy seat*. Here is what Torah tells us about this:

*... cleanse the altar, when you make atonement for it; and anoint it, to sanctify it.
For Seven days make atonement for the altar, and sanctify it:
and the altar will be k'dosh k'doshim [holy of holies];
whatever touches the altar will be holy.*

***There I will meet with the children of Yisra'el;
and the place will be made holy by my glory.
I will make the tent of meeting and the altar holy.***

[Exodus 29:36-37, 43-44]

The promise of these verses is astounding – and directly contrary to what is commonly taught. It is commonly taught that the only one who could “meet with” the Holy One under the Tabernacle system was the high priest, and that he could only do so once a year. What is commonly taught is that the only meeting between the Holy One and the descendants of Avraham took place on the Day of ‘Atonement’ [*Yom Kippur*], when the high priest went behind the veil to sprinkle blood on the “mercy seat” in the holy of holies. That is what is commonly taught, but it is simply not true. What is commonly taught is *man's doctrine*, not Torah's

teaching. Torah makes it very clear that the Holy One did not promise merely to meet with the *kohen gadol* [high priest] once a year; He also promised to meet with *b'nei Yisrael* [the Community of the Redeemed of Yisrael] at the brazen altar, at the door (in the court) of the *Mish'kan*, every single day! Read it again:

*the altar will be k'dosh k'doshim [holy of holies];
whatever touches the altar will be holy.*

*There I will meet with the children of Yisra'el;
and the place shall be made holy by my glory.*

Wow! The instructions regarding *korbanot* are the means given – the protocol - for the fulfillment of the Holy One's wonderful promise to *meet with us at the altar* – and to *overshadow us there with His Glory*.

Is it possible that when a man of the Redeemed Covenant Community came to approach the Holy One at the altar, and brought with him one of the prescribed surrogates, and followed the specified protocol, something supernatural and edifying *really did take place*, and the man *really did experience meeting with the Holy One*? Is it possible that men who brought surrogates to the altar were not doing so to perform an “obligation of the law” [most of the *korbanot* we have been reading about were not obligatory, but voluntary anyway]? Is it possible that when men in covenant with the Holy One came to the *mish'kan* bringing surrogate animals and grain, they actually *met with the Holy One* in a way we who have never known either *mish'kan* or altar can hardly imagine, were overshadowed by the Glory of God, and were transformed forever by the encounter? Is it possible that our ancestors had ‘meat to eat’ we in this generation ‘know not of’?

Can You Hear Me Now?

If we cannot see and comprehend this truth – if we refuse to let go of our ridiculous Greek/English notion that the Tabernacle was just a place where naïve Jews of yesteryear brought “offerings” and made “animal sacrifices” similar to what went on in the pagan temples of the Greeks, Romans, and Druids of England - we will miss the entire point of *Vayikra*, and will never truly learn what it means to draw near to the Holy One and meet with Him as we were created to do, in the way which will bring Him the most glory, and us the least.

But I digress. I was speaking of *korbanot* from the perspective of the *kohen* [priest]. I was speaking of the privilege of the *kohen* to mediate – to act as friend of the Bride – in the divine encounters which occurred daily between ordinary men and the Creator of the Universe – right there in front of the brazen altar in the courtyard of the *Mish'kan*.

Korban Minchah – From the Kohen’s Perspective

Today’s aliyah focuses on two specific aspects of the job description of Aharon and his sons – and ultimately *us* – as *kohanim* [i.e. priests] of the Kingdom of Heaven. First of all, in verses 14-18 of Leviticus 6 [in Hebrew Bibles this passage is numbered as verses 7-11] we began to see the process of making of *korban minchah* from the *kohen*’s perspective.

Imagine if you will that you are a son of Aharon, the *kohen*, living in Eretz Yisrael in the years immediately after Israel took possession of the land under Y’hoshua and began to grow wheat, barley, olives, flax, etc. Imagine further that it is your turn this week to receive the *korban minchot* of individual worshippers from among the Redeemed Community. Imagine yourself dressed in the *kohen*’s robe, tunic, and headdress, standing by the brazen altar in the court of the *mish’kan*. Imagine a man – a man you do not even know – coming toward you with grain, olive oil, and frankincense in hand. This man comes according to Torah. He does not *have* to. He *wants* to. He wants to *meet with the Holy One*, to *surrender to the Holy One all the ‘stuff’ of His life*, and to *acknowledge to the Holy One that he is merely a steward of all that the Holy One has placed in his care*. The man who approaches you this day is thankful that the Holy One brought forth grain from the land allotted to Him, and that he had the privilege of partnering with the Holy One in the sowing, the production, and the harvesting of that grain. This man has left both a *corner of his field* and *the gleanings of the crop* for the poor in his community. He has presented the first fruits of his crop to one of your brothers at the festival of *Matzah* and brought tithes of it to another of your brothers at the festival of *Shavuot*. And now he wants to take the critical third step. He wants to declare publicly, before the Holy One and other worshippers, how thankful He is for the precious gift of productivity he has been given. And He wants to do this according to the very instructions of the Holy One whom He loves and honors. In other words, he wants to make *korban minchah*.

Remember that making *korban minchah* is one of the five fundamental spiritual needs of every human being who desires to worship the Holy One of Israel, the Creator of Heaven and Earth⁴. Remember that materialism – the self-centered, myopic focus on the stuff of this world which Yeshua called the love of ‘Mammon’ – functions like a destructive cancer in relation to the Covenant the Holy One established with Avraham and hence with us.

Having an inordinate love for temporal things, you see, leads to all kinds of offense

⁴ The five basic spiritual needs of every human being who desires to worship the Holy One of Israel, the Creator of Heaven and Earth are described in Leviticus chapters 1 through 5. They are: 1. to make *korban olah*; 2. to make *korban minchah*; 2. to make *korban shalem*; 4. to make *korban chata’t*; and 5. to make *korban asham*.

and all kinds of evil. It leads us into *worry*. It leads us into *fear*. It leads us into *envy*. It leads us into *offense*. It leads us to *behave like territorial animals*. It leads us to *hate those who have more than we do* and to *look down our noses upon those who need – or think they need – what the Holy One has entrusted to us*. Indeed, the more affection we have for the ‘stuff’ of this world the less we are capable of loving the Holy One our God. And that is why the Holy One has ordained that making *korban minchah* – *i.e.* going before the Holy One with humility and thanksgiving regarding one’s relationship with material things - is therefore one of the *five basic spiritual needs* of every human being who desires to worship the Holy One.

Now imagine that the man about whom we were speaking comes because he has the heart of a worshipper and wants to worship the Holy One HIS WAY. Imagine the man is approaching you. He needs you to walk him through this beautiful experience of worship. You have been granted the privilege of participating in this awesome moment of inspiring surrender with him. But what do you do? What is the proper protocol How can you make his experience the powerful and potentially life changing encounter between a man and his God that it is intended to be? The Holy One tells us in today’s aliyah.

*This is the torah of the **minchah**:*
*the sons of Aharon are to present the **minchah** before the Holy One before the altar.*
*He is to raise up from it his handful of the fine flour of the **minchah**,*
*with its oil, and all the frankincense that is on the **minchah**,*
and burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the Holy One.

This passage introduces two specific instructions from the Holy One as to what procedure you, as a *kohen*, are to follow in connection with the *korban minchah*. We will discuss these two instructions independently in the order they appear in the Torah.

Instruction #1: The Cloud-Covering

The first of these instructions has to do with creating a cloud of smoke over the altar area reminiscent of the *chuppah* the Holy One spread over the Redeemed Community at Mount Sinai. This first instruction has to do with the portion of the *minchah* that is to be burned on the *mizbe’ach* [altar]. So, Dear Friend, I have had you imagining you were a *kohen*, receiving a man’s *minchah*. Now imagine reaching your right hand into the grain or cakes that he holds forth to you and taking a portion to place on the altar. The size of your hand and the strength of your grip determines this amount. Feel the grain or the cakes in your hand. This is the surrogate that will symbolically receive the blow of the flashing sword of the *cherub* – and open the gates to the Holy One’s garden – and the way to the tree of life – for this man. Get a good grip!

Now take your other hand [i.e. your left] and fill it with the olive oil the man has brought with his grain. Put your hands over the grates of the altar in the front, keeping the oil away from the flames. Open your right hand, letting the grain or cakes in that hand fall upon the grates of the altar. Hold your left hand high over that grain, then open it and let the olive oil pour over the grain.

Next take all the frankincense the man has brought and sprinkle or pour it upon the oil. Watch the flames of the altar start reaching for the oil. Watch the fingers of flame begin to parch the grain. Watch the frankincense begin to smoke. Watch a chuppah-like cloud begin to form over the altar, over you, and over your dear brother, the humble worshipper who is pouring out his soul to his – and your – God. Breathe in the sweet odor that fills the air around you both as the flame consumes the surrogate. Sense the excitement in Heaven as the fragrant cloud reaches the nostrils of the Bridegroom-King, and the angels before His Throne rejoice that on earth, as in Heaven, the *minchah* of the field belongs to the One Who is Worthy. Imagine your new friend back under the *chuppah* at Sinai, reliving the betrothal ceremony. Thanks be to the Holy One - the pathway leading to the tree of life is once again clear for him – and for all who will come.

Instruction #2: The Covenant Meal

At this point, with the incense cloud covering the altar, the second instruction for the *kohen* concerning the *minchah* kicks in. Here is how our aliyah presents this all-important second instruction:

*That which is left of it [i.e. the minchah], Aharon and his sons are to eat.
It is to be eaten without yeast in a holy place.*

They are to eat it in the court of the Tent of Meeting; it is not to be baked with yeast.

*I have given it as their portion of my korbanot made by fire.
It is kadosh k'doshim [most holy] - as the korban chata't, and as the korban asham.*

*Every male among the children of Aharon is to eat of it,
as their portion forever throughout your generations,
from the korbanot of the Holy One made by fire.*

Most people greatly misunderstand the so-called ‘*priest’s portion*’. It is generally taught that the ‘*priest’s portion*’ of the sacrifices/offerings becomes the property of the priests. Not so – at least not as we, in contemporary America, think of ‘property’. The *kohen* is not free to use the unconsumed portion of the *minchah* for his own purposes. Once the *minchah* enters the gate of the *mish’kan* not one kernel or crumb of it can ever leave. None of the *minchah* can be taken ‘home’ by the *kohen* for personal use. None of the *minchah* can be taken to the market by the *kohen* and sold for money or exchanged for other goods. The remainder of the *minchah* is not the *kohen’s* ‘salary’, nor even can it be considered a ‘love offering’. It is not really the *kohen’s* at all, in any sense we in 21st Century America would

appreciate.

So whose is the *minchah*? It is 100% *the Holy One's*. The *kohen* takes custody of it, it is true, but he does so as a trustee, and is told *specifically what he must do with it*. He must eat it – without leaven – in the court of the *mish'kan* – in front of all the worshippers and spectators who come there. Hungry or not, the *kohen* must eat it – he and all the other priests. The priests are to hold a public *matzah feast*, somewhat like a Passover seder, but without the *Haggadah* and bitter herbs. Why, you may ask? What purpose does this serve? Ah Dear Reader, that is the beauty of it. It is a *covenant meal*. The *kohanim*, as the ‘friends of the Bride’, dine between, on behalf of, and as chaperones for, the Bridegroom and His Bride.

Think of the covenant meal as a ‘rehearsal dinner’ before a wedding. The meal is not about anybody’s sustenance, provision, or appetite. It is an integral part of the wedding festivities. The eating of the *minchah* by the *kohanim*, right in front of everyone, is a declaration by covenant partners that ‘*all is well*’. The betrothal is *on - and going strong*. The Bridegroom and Bride are both fully committed not only to each other but also to *the process*.

And at this *matzah* feast, the *kohanim* – those anointed with the holy oil picturing Messiah – are touched both by the Bridegroom, on the one side, and the Bride, on the other. And when that occurs, something wonderful and mystical happens:

Whoever touches them will be kadosh [holy]."
[Leviticus 6:14-18]

On earth as it is in Heaven.

The Korban Minchah of the Kohen Himself

The Torah then proceeds to discuss a different kind of *minchah* – the *minchah* every *kohen* must make for himself, once in a lifetime. Neither Aharon nor any son of Aharon could serve as a *kohen* unless/until he had experienced the meeting with the Holy One that the *korban minchah* entailed. In verses 19-23 [verses 12-16 in the TaNaKh] of Leviticus 6 we study a special *korban minchah* made by every *kohen* once and only once - on the day he enters the priestly service.

What is so important about the making of *korban minchah* that it was a prerequisite to entering into service as a ‘friend of the Bride’? We learned in our study of Tuesday’s aliyah of parsha *Vayikra* that making *korban minchah* is *acknowledging that everything that our efforts can produce, and all that we possess, is the Holy One's* - and that *we are merely stewards*. The *korban minchah* teaches us that all our labor and creativity, and all they produce, is worthless – even *dangerous* - *if it is not totally dedicated to the Holy One and submitted to His*

will.

The *kohen*, as we have seen, has no possessions, and no inheritance. All that is ‘his’ is really the Holy One’s. Even the portion of the *korbanot* that Torah calls ‘his’ is really not his at all. The *kohen*, more than all people, must surrender the desire and natural drive to possess and acquire and hoard worldly goods to the Holy One. He must know, and acknowledge, that material possessions are valuable only to the extent we see them for what they are - a medium of approach – an opportunity to come near to – the Holy One.

Korban minchah indelibly imprints on our souls the truth that if we clutch material possessions, and call them our own, and assert our rights to eat what we please, and produce wealth, and spend our money, as we please – we walk *away from*, not toward, the destiny for which we were created. And that is not all. Let us dig deeper - and take a long look at the *minchah* through Hebraic eyes.

The Minchah – Through Hebraic Eyes

The Hebrew word *minchah* (*mem, nun, chet, hey*) is apparently derived from the verb root *nachah*⁵. Expressed as a hieroglyphic this word presents a picture of *a son or heir* [nun], *going through a gate or opening in a fence* [chet], *up to a place of revelation* [hey]. This hieroglyphic has traditionally been interpreted as “*to lead forth*” – often in reference to the Holy One’s leading forth of men to do His Will. Adding the prefix *mem* (the “m” sound in Hebrew) to this verb root would give us *minchah* – which would represent the animated, flowing lifestyle (*mem*) of being led forth by the Holy One (*nachah*). Perhaps now we can understand why every *kohen* was required to experience the *korban minchah* encounter with the Holy One himself before he could enter into the priesthood, where he would assist others in the same type of encounter.

Korban minchah points out the difference between doing what one wants to do in life and asking the Holy One to “*bleed it*”, on the one hand, and committing to do what the Holy One has designed one to do, on the other hand. It points out the dramatic difference between inviting the Holy One to “*come into one’s life*” [a presumptuous, selfish request of a man/woman with a pagan mentality where God is the servant, and man is the deity], on the one hand, and *totally surrendering one’s life and all one’s “stuff” to the Holy One* for whatever purpose and circumstance the Holy One may deem most advantageous for the Holy One’s glory and for the fulfillment of the Holy One’s ultimate plan for the redemption of mankind.

⁵ Nachah is *nun, chet, hey*, Strong’s Hebrew word # 5148.

A Challenge – and an Invitation

What about you? Have you made *korban minchah* on the brazen altar of Heaven – i.e. the eternal one after which the earthly *Mish'kan* was patterned? Has your life become an animated, flowing lifestyle (*mem*) of being led forth by the Holy One (*nachah*)? Or have you, consistent with the watered-down religious teaching of the past few centuries, merely invited some part of the Godhead to come into *your* heart and *your* life, to make *your* life more like *you* want it to be - like a genie in a bottle? The difference is vast. The consequences are great. The opportunity is awesome. The time is ... *now*. Your High Priest ... *is waiting*.

Ha-Kohen Ha-Mashiach?

When discussing the Torah of the Minchah the Holy One uses a very interesting Hebrew phrase: *ha-kohen ha-mashiach*. Leviticus 6:22 [in traditional Hebrew Bibles, Vayikra 6:15], reads:

V'ha-kohen ha-mashiach

And the kohen ha-mashiach

tachtav mibanav

in his stead, from among the sons

ya'aseh otah chok-olam l'Adonai

He is to make/do this. It is an ordinance forever unto the Holy One.

kalil toktar.

It is to be burnt in its entirety.

The same descriptive phrase – which is translated in our English Bibles innocuously as ‘the anointed priest’ - is found three times in the Hebrew text in connection with the Torah’s introduction of the *chatat* – i.e. the *korban* surrogate that the Holy One says is to be brought by one to atone for breaches of the covenant. See **Leviticus 4:3, 4:5, and 4:16**.

Look beyond the ‘anointed priest’ of the generation of Moshe. Look closely, and you might just see *ha-kohen ha-mashiach*.

Questions For Today’s Study

1. Beginning in verse 14 [v. 7 in the TaNaKh] of chapter 6 of *Sefer Vayikra* the Holy One gives the *torah* [teaching, instruction, guidelines concerning] of the *korban minchah* [the approach to the Holy One through the surrender of all claim of possession or to pride with regard to the work of one’s hand, and with regard to the produce of one’s business].

[A] Review the lesson from last week where you were asked about the *korban minchah*. What does the *korban minchah* symbolize?

[B] List all the things the priests were instructed to do with the *korban minchah*.

[C] Verses 16-18 discuss the instructions concerning the eating of the portion of the *minchah* left over after the “memorial portion” [Heb. *azkarah* - reminder, remembrance]. List the “do’s” and “don’ts” of eating this *korban* [offering].

2. In verses 19-23 the Holy One discusses with Moshe a special *korban minchah*.

The Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying, This is the korban of Aharon and of his sons, which they are to make korban to the Holy One in the day when he is anointed: the tenth part of an efa of fine flour for a korban minchah perpetually, half of it in the morning, and half of it in the evening.

It is to be made with oil in a baking pan.

When it is soaked, you are to bring it in.

Offer the korban minchah in baked pieces for a sweet savor to the Holy One.

V’ha-kohen ha-Mashiach, from among the sons,

is to present it; it is an ordinance forever unto the Holy One.

He is to burn it in its entirety.

Every korban minchah of a Kohen is to be wholly burned. It is not to be eaten."

[Leviticus 6:19-23]

[A] What is the purpose of this special *korban minchah*?

[B] Where are the priests to get the grain that serves as their surrogate?

[C] When is this *korban* to be made?

[D] Who is responsible for preparing this *korban*?

[E] List the steps of preparation.

[F] What does this special *korban* symbolize?

3. In the Haftarah *Yirmayahu* [Jeremiah] has just been given a message for B’nei Yisrael - a message to come *back to the Torah*, to *true worship*, and to *the covenant of their fathers*. *Yirmayahu* is to give Kingdom diplomacy a ‘window of opportunity’. But he is to have no illusions about the outcome. *Yirmayahu* is warned by the Holy One in today’s aliyah that the prophetic message he has been told to speak will fall on stubborn hearts and deaf ears. He is therefore to prophesy *not as an instrument of change – but as the introducer of a new series of the Holy One’s redemptive judgments*.

This is the terrible knowledge *Yirmayahu* is given - his words, however eloquent, and however timely spoken, will never produce *t’shuvah*. The hearts of his people are too hardened. His prophetic ministry is – from the perspective of seeing visible results – doomed to fail before it starts. He is sent at this time – and given this prophetic message - *merely to harden their hearts even more*, and seal their judgment. Perhaps this is why *Yirmayahu* is called ‘the weeping prophet’. But wait. *Yirmayahu* – and all of us – need to know that – however bad things may look the Holy One has everything under control. The spiritual reality is that the only thing that will produce *t’shuvah* in truly backslidden people are the terrifying

judgments which the Holy One will loose upon them following their rejection of the ‘final warning’, or ultimatum, prophets such as Yirmayahu are told to speak.

For all you prophets out there, remember this: immediate results such as were seen by Yonah at Nineveh are wonderful [although Yonah did not think so, as I seem to recall], but our purpose in life is to *draw inspiration and joy from the Holy One – not to seek feelings of satisfaction and draw a sense of self-worth from the response of people to the messages we relay*. We have not been called by the Holy One to *please people*, and we are not to count heads like a gunfighter counts notches in his gun. We are to draw strength from the Holy One alone. And we are to draw that strength regardless of whether anyone responds to the message we speak.

*Speak all these words to them; but they will not sh'ma you:
Call to them; but they will not answer you.*

Tell them,

*“This is the nation that has not sh'ma-d the voice of the Holy One their God,
nor received instruction [musar – Strong’s Hebrew word #4148]
emunah [truth/faith] is abad [destroyed, perished], and is cut off from their mouth.*

*Shear off your nezer [hair], [Y'rushalayim] and cast it away,
and take up a qinah [lamentation] on the bare heights;
for the Holy One has ma'as [rejected – see Strong’s #H3988]
and natash [forsaken – Strong’s #5203] the generation of his wrath.*

*“For the children of Y'hudah have asah [built/done/formed] ra
[that which is evil] in my sight, says the Holy One:
they have set their abominations in the bayit [house], which is called by my name,
to defile it.”*

[A] Go back to the beginning of Chapter 7 and list the things that Jeremiah was supposed to tell the people.

[B] In Strong’s and Gesenius look up the word our English Bibles translate as “lamentation” in verse 29 [It is *qinah*, Strong’s Hebrew word 7015, from *kah-yawn*, #6969, *kuf, yod, nun sofit*]. Write the Hebrew word in Hebrew letters, with vowel points. Search out the verb root and first few usages of this word. Then, considering the hieroglyphic word picture, Gesenius’ commentary, and the first few Biblical usages, describe the Hebraic word picture you see developing around this word.

[C] What were the “abominations” [Strong’s Hebrew word #8251 *shiqquwtz*, pronounced *shik-kootz'*, *shin, kuf, vav, tzade*; first usages in Deut. 29:17, and I Kings 11:5-7, II Kings 23:13] that the “children of Y’hudah” have set up in the *mik'dash* [Temple]?

[D] How did these “abominations” *defile* the Temple [*i.e.* make it *tamei* [Strong’s Hebrew word # 2930, *tet, mem, alef*, first usage Genesis 34:5, 13, 37]?

[E] If the Holy One knew that Yirmayahu’s message was not going to be received, why do you think the Holy One called him and sent him out with that message anyway? What purpose in the Holy One’s eternal plan of redemption did

the sending of Yirmayahu with this message serve?

4. In today's suggested reading from the B'rit Chadasha the writer of Hebrews is continuing to speak in glowing terms of the High Priesthood of Yeshua.

*For every Kohen Gadol is appointed to offer both gifts and korbanot.
Therefore it is necessary that this Kohen Gadol also have something to offer.*

*For if he were on erez, he would not be a Kohen at all,
seeing there are Kohanim who offer the gifts according to the torah;
who serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things,
even as Moshe was warned by the Holy One
when he was about to make the Mish'kan [Tabernacle]
for he said, **"See, you shall make everything according to the pattern
that was shown to you on the mountain."***

*But now He has obtained a more excellent avodah,
by so much as he is also the mediator of a better diatheke [arrangement/lay-out],
which has been erected on better declarations.*

[Hebrews 8:3-6]

[A] Look up the Greek and Hebrew words translated "ordained", "gift(s)" and "sacrifice(s)" in verse 3; write these words/definitions.

[B] What is Yeshua's korban of ordination?

[C] Of what was the Tabernacle of Moshe a "copy" or "shadow"?

[D] In Strong's, look up the Greek words translated in verse 5 as "example" and "shadow" in verse 5. Write the Greek words and their definitions.

[E] What Hebrew concepts would correspond to these Greek words, and how would the meaning of the verse be different if read Hebraically?

[F] In verse 6, what "ministry" of Yeshua is referred to as "more excellent" than the ministry of earthly priest?

[G] What covenant is referred to as a "better" covenant? What are the terms of the 'better' covenant and what covenant is it "better" than?

[H] What promises are referred to as "better"? What are the terms of the "better" promises and what promises are they "better" than?

[I] In Strong's and Thayers' Lexicon look up the word translated as "better" in verse 6. Write the Greek word and its meaning. What would be the corresponding (original) Hebrew concept [see Genesis 29:19, Exodus 14:12]?

*May we all approach the Holy One with fear and trembling, and with humble thanksgiving
for the korban offered by our High Priest, Yeshua.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Psalm 115:14-18

Blessed are you by the Holy One, Who made heaven and eretz.

The heavens are the heavens of the Holy One;

But the eretz has he given to the children of men.

The dead don't praise the Holy One, neither any who go down into silence;

But we will barak [bless] the Holy One.

From this time forth and forevermore: Hallel [Praise] the Holy One!