

Shiur L'Yom Chamishi¹

[Thursday's Study]

READINGS: **Torah Shelach Lecha:** Numbers 15:1-21
 Haftarah: Joshua 2:17-21
 B'rit Chadasha: Hebrews 3:16-19

When you have come into the land you are to inhabit
[Numbers 15:2]

Today's Meditation is Revelation 4:1-11;

This Week's Amidah Prayer Focus is Petition No. 8, *Mish'pat* [Redemption-Focused Justice]

Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe l'emor – Then the Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying ...
Daber el-B'nei Yisra'el v'amarta aleihem – Speak to B'nei Yisrael, and say to them ...
Ki tavo'u el-eretz moshveteichem asher ani noten lachem - when you come to the land I am giving to them as a homeland Numbers 15:1-2.

The Holy One's wilderness proving ground obstacle course is taking its toll on us. Here in *Hagar's Haunt /Yish'mael's world* the prevailing spirit is a toxic mixture of cynicism, sarcasm, irreverence, blame casting, and self-absorption. Genesis 21:9. The prevailing emotions are fear, outrage, and despair. Genesis 21:16. The prevailing mindsets in this region are drawn right out of Hagar's playbook - *despising authority, narcissism, and fatalism*. Genesis 16:4 and 21:15. The prevailing behavior patterns are those of a 'wild donkey'. Genesis 16:12. Indeed, since we have been in this desert, Yish'mael's *braying loudly* and *kicking violently* behavior patterns have become our default reaction to every situation. And Yish'mael's 'hand against' approach has become our default approach to every conversation, interaction, and relationship.

The wilderness of Paran could have been our *antechamber* – a joyful place from which to launch our Great Prototypical Return to the land of our patriarchs. Instead of being our antechamber, however, it has become an *anti*-chamber. We are suddenly *anti* everything. It started with us being anti-grateful. Then we became anti-manna. Then we found ourselves *anti-Moshe*. Now we are also *anti-Aharon, anti-Eretz Yisrael, anti-propheying elders, anti-Yehoshua, and anti-Kalev. Truth be known, we are even a little bit - or maybe a lot - anti-the Holy One*. Like Yish'mael and Hagar, we are suddenly obsessed with a mixture of outrage, paranoia, and despair over whoever and whatever we don't like. As a result, we are reaping the inevitable fruit of a 'hostility toward all, and hostility toward us' whirlwind.

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Here is a faithful saying: *Whenever a human being, institution, or nation allows his or its approach to life to be defined by who and what he/it is against, things get ugly for that human being, institution, or nation very quickly.* A Kingdom of Priests and Holy Nation must always stay focused on and be known for who and what it is FOR; not who and what it is AGAINST!

***So ... What Now? What Do Covenant Partners Do
When The Relationship Between Them Is Strained?***

We lost so much in the Wilderness of Paran. We lost our focus. We lost our passion for life. We lost our way. We lost our enthusiasm for the Holy One and His Grand Redemptive Plan. We lost our vision for the future. But we didn't lose our Bridegroom-King. Like He always does, the Holy One tried to pull us closer to Him; but alas, like foolish men frequently do, we responded badly. We resisted His gentle drawing. We chaffed against His cords of lovingkindness. We pulled away. Maybe it was *Devakut* [i.e. bonding, intertwining] *fatigue*. Maybe it was *transition anxiety*. Maybe it was *intimacy overwhelm*. Whatever it was, we did not handle it well. We insisted on thinking, acting, and interacting like embittered slaves again for a while. We threw a tantrum. We ranted. We railed. We said things we shouldn't have. We whimpered. We cried. We gaslighted² our Redeemer – not to mention His servants Moshe and Aharon! We picked up stones and threatened to stone Y'hoshua, Kalev, and anybody else who might dare stand in our way. We abandoned our post. We deserted our mission. We planned our return to Egypt, and our surrender to Pharaoh.

So now, dear ones, let us *step back* and *take a look at ourselves through* the lens of the immutable law of sowing and reaping. What have we been sowing into the world? What has our contribution to this desert been? Have we been agents of blessing, inspiration, redemption, and restoration? Hardly! Have we spread *emunah* [Kingdom-mission awareness and faithfulness], *ahava* [Kingdom love], *simchah* [Kingdom joy], *tikvah* [Kingdom hope], and *shalom*? We have done the exact opposite! Considering what we have sown this desert, what exactly can we expect to reap from it? What do you think our Creator sees when He evaluates where we presently are in our development as His '*am segulah*', His kingdom emissaries,

² 'Gaslighting' is an oft-used term in modern psychology. It is drawn from a 1938 stage play called *Gas Light*, in which a husband attempts to drive his wife crazy. His method is to surreptitiously dim the lights in the marital home - which were powered by natural gas, hence the name given to play and technique. When the wife would remark about the light being dimmer, the man would deny it, and suggest that she was imagining things. 'Gaslighting' thus means to try to make someone else question their own sanity, intelligence, or value – especially by disrespectfully disagreeing with the other person's recollection of past events or evaluation of current situations, or trivializing the other person's feelings or plans.

and his holy nation? What does He see when He examines our *thoughts, moods, and attitudes*? What does He see when He examines our *speech, our vocabulary, our intonation, and the subject matter of our conversations*? What does He see when He examines the *deep places of our hearts*? What does He see when He takes a close look at our *interactions and relationships with one another and with His Creation*? What does He see when He observes at our *daily routines*? What does He see when He watches the way we *spend - or fritter away - our time*? What does He see when He looks at the way we *manage - or waste - money and other material possessions*? What does He see when He looks at the *attitudes of our heart regarding His other creations*? What does He see when He sorts through the *words that escape our mouths*? What does He see when He looks at the way we *exercise control over - or cave in to - fleshly appetites and urges*? What does He see when He looks at the passions, dreams, desires, and delights of our heart? What does He see when He compares the things we say we believe and live for with what we actually do and how we actually live? And considering what He sees, what is the most appropriate decree He could make concerning us - even if His goal is still the redemption of our nation to its original Avrahamic calling?

Learning to Be Honest With Ourselves About Where We Are In Our Journey

If we are honest with ourselves we will admit that at present we are most definitely not anything close to the pure, spotless Bride the King of the Universe deserves. We are not nearly as kind, or patient, or forgiving, or gracious as He is. We are nowhere close to as wise, as good or as holy as He has called us to be. We are not anywhere near ready to wear His crown of righteousness, to wield His scepter of justice, or to serve as His co-regent in any arena or sphere of influence He might assign to us.

Each year immediately between the high-point of our spirituality - i.e. *Shavuot* - and the low point of our spirituality - i.e. *the 9th of Av* - the Holy One leads us into the desert to test us. He knows what is in us, of course - but we don't. He tests us in order to let us see for ourselves what He already knows - i.e. how totally unready we are to be a blessing to, and build a functional model of Kingdom *ahavah, emunah, simchah, tikvah, and shalom* for, the families of the earth. He takes us on a sentimental journey through the book of Numbers every late spring and summer. In the course of what should be our most productive season He has us instead relive the sterile narratives of our desert wanderings. The space between 'Sinai-high' enthusiasm and 'Kadesh-Barnea-low' experience becomes our essential 'proving ground' each year. During this season the Holy One always processes us through the same old set of flesh, pseudo-intellect, and *sinat chinam* challenges. The names of the primary instigators and the vocabulary of their

incendiary slogans change a little each year to provide a little variety, but the substance of the challenges is always the same. Creation keeps groaning, as it watches the sons of the Covenant fail the course miserably each year. But Creation – and Heaven – keep watching anyway, because they know the plan of the Holy One, and His investment of Heaven’s resources in us, will eventually bear fruit that will outlast all the tares the adversary has sown – even those tares sown by him through the instrumentality of our unclean lips and unconsecrated tongues! Creation’s groaning is accompanied by an ‘eager expectation’, you see – an eager expectation that one of these years, through abiding in and walking in unity of purpose with Messiah, we will overcome the desert obstacle course like He did, and rise up with Him to take up the role prepared for us before the foundation of the world – to be His agents of healing and restoration, and true ‘sons of God’, with ‘redeemer’s eyes and tongues’, instead of willing slaves to the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life, and foolhardy carriers of the most toxic burden of all, *sinat chinam*.

Alas, this does not look like the year. Considering what most of us – including all but a very, very few leaders - have been sowing into the world this late spring and summer, we are not anywhere near ready for Isaiah 40, 42, 54, 56, 60, or 61 to be applied to us. We obviously do not know, have not learned from, and are not abiding in Messiah nearly enough for that yet. While we love to play parlor games of ‘worship’, ‘preaching’, ‘teaching’, ‘prayer’, and ‘ministry’ among ourselves in the nice, tidy, ivory tower gatherings of our religious institutions, we have not yet even come close to allowing the *Ruach HaKodesh* [i.e. ‘Holy Spirit’] or the Torah that we have been given to lead and guide us through life’s tough tests and challenges. We have not learned to keep our focus, maintain shalom and simchah, transcend and overcome; we choose instead to murmur, complain, speak *lashon hara*, judge one another harshly, devalue the holy things of our King, and hold malice in our heart for our fellow man. So, we apparently still have a long way to go. We have proven, once again, that we are not ready to even put aside our fears and fleshly appetites for a few days, much less lay down our lives, to the extent necessary to fulfill the glorious mission of revealing to the peoples of the world the *goodness of His Heart*, the *depths of His Wisdom*, the *fringes of His Power*, and the *transforming wonder of His Love*. We have been *unfaithful to* – if not downright *surlly toward* - our Covenant Partner. He is always faithful, always wise, always kind. We, on the other hand, become a *hot mess* the moment you take us out of our institutional ‘*feed-me-with-raisin cakes*’ comfort zones.

Let’s look at the record, shall we? Delivered from bondage in Egypt quite without any merit of our own and brought under the Holy One’s *chuppah* [wedding canopy] at Sinai to hear His Voice and enter into betrothal with Him, what was the first

thing we did? We committed adultery with a golden calf-god we had made for ourselves from the golden earrings our Egyptian neighbors had given us the night we were redeemed. Where did we do this? We did this under the *chuppah* at which we had just pledged our troth to the Bridegroom-King. He disciplined us for this, but then He not only forgave us but actually re-affirmed His covenant *despite our blatant adultery*. He *dressed us in finery* and *provided for His Presence to always be with us*. He gave us *the intermediary* we requested.

Over an 11-month period our Bridegroom-King then taught us *how to live as His Bride-People* and to *take practical steps toward nurturing the potential and maturing into the mission for which He created us*. He gave us a foolproof protocol of Heavenly Wisdom pursuant to which we could, if we would just bask in and pursue it, gradually experience an extreme makeover and become a beautiful, vibrant, *new creation*. Then He began to lead us to our *wedding chamber* – a land He had promised to our ancestors – the most beautiful land on earth, which He had meticulously and lovingly prepared for us. What did we do in response? Almost as soon as we lost sight of the *chuppah* of Sinai we began to *murmur* and *complain* and wail like spoiled children. We sat down in the desert and threw a tantrum. We openly declared in the Face of our Betrothed that the leeks, onions, and fish we ate as slaves in Egypt were more valuable and desirable to us than the miraculous provision He gave us, much less the prospect of eating the fruit of the land of milk and honey He promised to give to us. So what did *He* do? He disciplined us again, then He forgave us again. And yes, He re-affirmed His covenant again.

More recently we have *seen the land He promised*, and have verified that it indeed flows with milk and honey just as He said. We observed for 40 days, through the eyes of 12 spies, that because of His blessing the land He promised to give us is far more fruitful than any land since Eden. We even *sampled its luscious grapes, figs, and pomegranates*. And yet even as our eyes stared in wide-eyed wonder at the abundant fruit brought back by the *meraglim* we found ourselves unable to believe His promise that He would drive out the inhabitants of that land – a group of peoples who in their combined strength did not even come *close* to the threat which had been posed by our Egyptian oppressors, whom He crushed like a fly with His Mighty Hand.

We made the decision to be a *run-away Bride* – to leave the King of Glory standing at the altar bedecked in splendor while we run back into the desert from which we came. We cried out to Moshe the Friend of the Bridegroom that we would rather die in the desert – or even go back to Egyptian bondage – than enter the wedding chamber the Bridegroom of Heaven had selected and prepared for and was offering to us. And now He has forgiven us even this insult. But He has

informed us that He has granted our request. We can – we *will* – die in the desert rather than go into the wedding chamber with Him, live as His Bride, and reign as His co-regent. We will die in the desert because *that was the highest aspiration we could muster at the great crossroads of destiny*. We could not – or would not – let ourselves *dream His dream*. We could not – or would not – *see ourselves through His eyes*.

So with the exception of Y’hoshua and Kalev everyone twenty years of age or older – in other words every single person who participated in the decision to leave the Bridegroom at the altar - *will die in the desert*. We ourselves willed it and forcefully decreed it. So let it be written, so let it be done.

***A Time for Thinking and Planning Trans-Generationally –
For our Children, and Children’s Children, and Bloodlines!***

*But what about our children ... what will happen to them? Ah, that we know. We are assured by the Holy One that someday, when our six hundred thousand men [excluding Y’hoshua and Kalev] and over a million women over 20 have all died in this desert – as we requested – the Holy One will *take our children into the land*. And we are assured as well that when our children go into the land He will deliver the ‘giants’ we so feared into the hands of those very children for judgment. Those very children will have the chance to fulfill the magnificent destiny we scorned.*

We should *realize our mistake* now of course. We should realize now how *foolishly we acted*. We should realize now *how rashly we spoke*. We should realize now *how great a price we personally will pay* for failing to trust and pulling our hand and heart away from our Bridegroom. And we desperately want better for *our children and children’s children*. For them we want everything the Holy One had prepared for *us – and more*. So, how can we prepare them to make better choices in their moments of decision? How can we teach them what they need to know to make the right choices at the critical times? How can we overcome the horrible example we have set by our deeds? The truth is that *we cannot do any of those things*. The truth is that we are helpless to fix the mess we have created. But thanks be to Heaven the Holy One is not helpless. He will not leave the ‘fixing’ of things in our hands. He Himself will intervene. He Himself will teach them everything they need to know. And He will begin that new era of teaching *this very day!* I call the Divine Discourse we study today the ‘***Initial Second-Generation Discourse***’.

When You Are Come Into the Land ...

Please note that after advising the generation of the Exodus that with the exception of Y’hoshua and Kalev every one of them was destined to die in the desert of Paran – and therefore never come any close to the land of promise than they were

when they rejected it – the very next thing out of our Covenant Partner’s mouth was: “*When you are come into the land of your habitations, which I give to you ...*”

This message is obviously not intended for the let-me-die-in-the-desert crowd. It is for Y’hoshua, Kalev, and the generation that will actually enter into and possess the Land. This Discourse of Divine Utterance begins as follows:

Vayedaber Adonai el-Moshe l’emor

The Holy One spoke to Moshe, saying,

Daber el-B’nei Yisra’el v’amarta

Speak to the children of Yisra’el, and tell them,

aleihem ki tavo’u el-eretz moshveteichem asher ani noten lachem

When you come into the homeland that I am giving you,

V’asitem isheh l’Adonai

and build a fire unto the Holy One

olah o-zevach l’falei-neder o vindavah

[such as for] an olah or a sacrifice, to accomplish a vow, or as a freewill offering,

o b’mo’adeychem l’asot re’ach nichoach l’Adonai

or in your set feasts, to make a sweet savor to the Holy One,

min ha-bakar o min ha-tzon

of the herd, or of the flock ...

[Numbers 15:1-3]

For those of us over 20 years of age, who are destined to die in the desert as we requested, these words of our Covenant Partner mean nothing. After all, these words are premised with the phrase “*when you are come into the land ...*” Alas those words no longer apply to us. We now know that we will never enter the land about which our covenant partner speaks, hence we never approach Him through *korbanot* there. None of the 2 million or so of us who are over 20 – save Y’hoshua and Kalev - will celebrate the feasts of which He speaks in the place He ordained for them to be celebrated. Not one of the rest of us who walked out of Egypt to freedom behind the pillar of fire and cloud will ever see the wheat of which the Holy One in this Discourse speaks growing on Kena’an’s luscious hillsides. We will not even get to see that wheat, much less harvest it, grind it into flour, or take its first fruits to Y’rushalayim [Jerusalem] in festal procession.

Not one of our number will plant or prune the vineyards that produce the grapes from which the wine of which He speaks in this passage will be made. Nor will we ever see, much less tend, the olive orchards or work the olive presses from which the oil of which He speaks will come forth in abundance. None of us will ever enjoy the dates or the figs or the pomegranates that grow in abundance at the

oases where our ancestors Avraham, Yitzchak and Ya'akov watered their flocks. But ... *our children will!* Oh yes, by the Holy One's great grace and covenant faithfulness ... *and may His great Name be praised ... our children will!*

Train Up Your Children In the Way that They Should Go

In His wisdom and in His tender love the Holy One our God knows that the first thing our children need to hear after learning that we, their fathers and mothers, will not claim our inheritance ... is that *they still can*. The Holy One does not have a Western mindset. The Holy One did not tell Moshe to set up booths for psychological counseling to help the children cope with the trauma of what had happened. He told Moshe to begin immediately *to teach them what life in the promised land as the Holy One's cherished Bride would be like* – to create in them a hunger that we never possessed. A hunger that could never be quenched by leeks and onions.

May you know such a hunger. And may you transmit it to your children, and to your children's children, forever.

First Things First – the Minchah?

After turning his attention, and the focus of Torah, to the younger generation in the Camp of the Redeemed – i.e. those under 20 years of age – the Holy One started off the Discourse with instructions about making *korban minchah*. What a strange subject with which to start the training of a generation! Especially since this subject had been addressed in detail at Sinai with the prior generation in the course of the Great *Korbanot Discourse*. See **Leviticus 1-6**. But that Discourse was all about the making of *korbanot* in the *Mish'kan* of the Wilderness. With the 'next generation' the Holy One wants to take the *korbanot* protocols to a whole new level. Now He wants to invite the younger generation to draw near Him *IN THE LAND*. And while the first protocol of approach of intimate communion He had invited this generation's fathers at Sinai to make had been the protocol of *korban olah* [commonly thought of as 'burnt offering'], He invites the children who enter the land of the patriarchs to combine the *olah* protocol with *korban minchah* [commonly thought of as 'grain offering']. Hence the Bridegroom-King opens the *Second-Generation Korbanot Discourse* by saying:

V'hik'riv ha-mak'riv korbano l'Adonai minchah

And when he draws near he is to approach the Holy One with a minchah

solet isaron balul birvi'it ha-hin shamen

it is to consist of a tenth part of fine flour mixed with the fourth part of a hin of oil:

v'yayin l'nesech

and wine for the drink offering,

revi'it ha-hin ta'aseh al ha-olah

the fourth part of a hin, should he prepare with the burnt offering,

o l'zavach l'keves ha-echad

or for the sacrifice, for each lamb.

[Numbers 15:4-5]

Why, once the Redeemed Community enters the land of the patriarchs, does the emphasis of invitation shift to the *minchah*? Let's remind ourselves of some of the things we learned about the *minchah* in *Sefer Vayikra*. First of all, we learned in the course of our studies in *Sefer Vayikra* that the approach of *minchah* is not by command – but according to Divine invitation. The Holy One knows we whom He has redeemed want to approach Him, and commune intimately with Him, and both receive His counsel and bask in the delight of His Presence. He planted those desires in us. He also knows however that in our fallen human state we *do not have the slightest clue* how to do any of those things. So, He graciously gives us these protocols of approach. Secondly, we learned that *minchah* is a term that arises out of mature Covenant relationships. It refers to a voluntary gift of enthusiastic appreciation made by a *vassal* [the weaker party to the Covenant] to his *suzerain* [the stronger party to the Covenant] *in recognition of all the blessings of shalom and physical provision he, the vassal, is enjoying by reason of his participation in the Covenant relationship*. This is a recognition that without the much more important participation of the stronger covenant partner, none of the *shalom* or physical provision the vassal enjoys would be possible. To approach with a *minchah* is to acknowledge and declare the vassal's total dependence upon the *suzerain's* performance of His part of the Covenant undertakings.

Thirdly, we learned in our studies from *Sefer Vayikra* that the Holy One does not need, and has no use for, the grain, oil, or frankincense of the *korban minchah* protocol. What He wants instead is the sweet time of intimate fellowship and sharing counsel with us, as we deal with one of our basic human needs. He has no use for the material things of our *korbanot*. None of them really go to Him. It is US who need these things, not Him. We need them *desperately*. The Holy One knows that separating, preparing, and surrendering them, and approaching the Throne of the Bridegroom-King with them in hand, are all healing processes that meet a deep and ever-present human need in us.

Fourthly, we learned that the basic human need that the *korban minchah protocol* is designed to address, meet, and atone for is the need to break off the lies of the Serpent about what attitude toward and relationship with the material things in this world we who are created in the image of the Holy One are supposed to have. We think things are food which are not food. We treat things as our personal eye candy that were meant for something totally different. We respond to physical, tangible

things that are designed and intended for Divine redemptive purposes as if they were our private treasure of knowledge, by which we become able what is ‘good’ and what is ‘evil’. And we are so poisoned in our minds, emotions, appetites, urges, and vision by the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and the Serpent-speak that came with it that without Divine help and guidance we are totally helpless to resist the inexorable pull of the soul-tie we have entered into with the physical, material things of this world.

The *korban minchah* protocols of Torah are designed to meet this defect in the human mind, heart, and soul head on. Our self-centered, lustful approach to the material things of this world needs to be dealt with. Essential to the healing, restorative protocol, however, is man’s awakening from the post-hypnotic suggestion of out-of-control appetites, urges, and fleshly desires, and the re-alignment of his vision and perspective on material things with that of His Maker. That is what *korban minchah* is all about. To make *korban minchah*, you see, a man has to recognize, acknowledge, and embrace the reality that nothing material is his to *keep* or *delight in a fleshly or self-centered way*. Everything that passes through a person’s hands is only ‘on loan’ from the Creator and subject to his stewardship for the purposes of the Covenant.

Hence we learned in the course of our studies in *Vayikra* that the making of *korban minchah* presents a Hebraic picture of someone – an individual worshipper or a nation – adopting a posture and attitude of *totally surrendering all material possessions and acquired properties* to the use ordained for them by the Holy One. Finally, we learned in the course of our meditations about *Vayikra* that making *korban minchah* can be likened to that part of the prayer Yeshua taught His talmidim to pray which said: ‘*Give us this day our daily bread.*’ The *korban minchah* protocols awaken us to the reality that it is the Holy One – our suzerain - not our own labor or intelligence, that enables us to acquire possession and use of physical things.

But Why Is the Minchah Protocol So Important to the Generation That is Arising?

The subject of the *minchah* protocol is *bread*. Why is that important to the generation that will enter and take possession of the land? First of all, because when the people enter the land, the daily portion of manna will cease, and bread will have to be produced by personal labor. We will have to choose what we will attribute the bread to. We can give all the credit to our labor, or we can acknowledge that our labor would be nothing had not the Holy One instilled amazing Creative potential into both the land and each seed, and had He not watered the land with both the former and latter rains in their proper season. We

can see ourselves as self-sufficient, independent producers of wealth, or we can see ourselves as mere stewards of the land, co-laboring with a Great King. The *minchah* protocols will remind us that all we are is the latter – and that this is the way it should be.

Secondly, remember what Y’hoshua and Kalev responded when their fellow spies spoke ill of the Land of the Patriarchs and made a big deal about the giants they had seen there? Y’hoshua and Kalev said:

*The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.
Because the Holy One delights in us He will bring us into this land and give it to us -
a land that flows with milk and honey.*

*Only do not rebel against the Holy One, nor fear the people of the land,
for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them,
and the Holy One is with us. Do not fear them.*

[Numbers 14:7(b) – 9]

For the generation who will *sh’ma* the counsel of Y’hoshua and Kalev the land and the giants in it will be *as bread*. And, in order to acknowledge that they have been given into our hands by the Holy One, and Him alone, we will have a deep need to make *korban minchah*.

The Other Korbanot Protocols the Holy One Wants To Teach Afresh to the Arising Generation

After re-introducing the generation that will enter and take possession of the Land of the Patriarchs to the protocols of the Pathway to Bridal Intimacy called *Korban Minchah*, the Bridegroom-King moves on to other protocols, with other focuses. After the *minchah* protocols are revisited with the new generation, the Holy One’s focus turns to the subject of the *korban olah*. As aforesaid, the theologians of the Western world dismissively refer to these protocols as ‘*the law of the burnt offering*’. The theologians of Western World, having never seen either a *Mish’kan* or the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, and being totally blinded to Divine Wisdom by a Greco-Roman mindset, understandably have no clue what these Words of the Holy One mean. But we need to know. We need to know that there is something much, much deeper and more eternally significant going on here than the spilling of the blood of physical bulls, rams, lambs, and goats on Mount Moriyah³ and the filling up of the skies above Jerusalem with sweet-smelling smoke.

³ Unlike pagan animal sacrifices and offerings to false gods, which could be slaughtered anywhere, in any number, at any time, the *korbanot* were only to be presented according to specified protocols, and only at one place – the national altar of Israel. This national altar was originally in the outer court of the *Mish’kan* [Tabernacle], and later at the *Beit Ha-Mik’dash* [Holy Temple]. The Holy One made it clear that no ‘sacrifices’ or offerings were ever to be made in anyone’s home or backyard, or at any local church or synagogue. See **Deuteronomy 12:13-14**.

As we have previously discussed in these studies, the Hebrew word that our English Bibles translate as “offering” or “sacrifice” is *korban*⁴. Westerners have no grid for this. Though Scripturally the making of *korban* is the prescribed means of approach to the Holy One, Western intellects cannot comprehend the beauty and grace inherent in the Holy One’s ways. Western intellects want their ‘God-time’ confined to clean buildings with nicely arranged pews and well-dressed clergymen officiating over highly structured, carefully timed meetings that make those attending ‘feel’ spiritual without really being conformed to Yeshua’s image. Western intellects have no understanding of getting personally engaged, real, raw, vulnerable, and intimate with the Bridegroom-King.

The terms ‘law’ and ‘burnt offering’ are, of course, nowhere to be found in the Hebrew text of Torah. They have come to us through the subjective interpretation of the translators, especially those hired by King James II of England. Such terms belong to the language and mindset of Germanic peoples and Saxon Englishmen of the seventeenth century - to people who had been taught from birth to mistrust, and therefore to hate, all things Hebraic. The Germanic and Saxon cultures of the ear, like most ethnic groups, had no experience with the *korbanot* protocols of the Holy One, but had extensive experience with barbaric pagan rituals of “sacrifices” and “offerings”. Such rituals were designed by and for pagans. They were not of Divine Origin or Institution, and had nothing to do with the Covenant Lifestyle of the Holy One’s chosen people. The purpose of the “sacrifices” and “offerings” the King James translators had seen was not to *approach* the Creator of the Universe in love [the Hebraic concept]; to the contrary, the purpose of such rituals was to *appease* bloodthirsty and potentially angry and dangerous “gods” in hopes that would keep those gods from interfering with the presenting pagan’s own fleshly plans and priorities. To the pagan mind the forces of the universe beyond understanding or control – the sun and moon, love, war, violent storms, volcanoes, etc. – had to be “gods”. Since those forces could neither be *controlled* nor *impressed* by human logic, they were *feared*. Greek, Germanic, Anglo and Saxon cultures were, after all, all about *using human logic to de-mystify ... and ultimately control ... every aspect of their worlds*. The pagans did not want to be *close to* the forces they feared – *they wanted those forces to leave them alone!* They pictured those forces as *bloodthirsty predators* who were going to destroy and eat *something* – so they decided it was better that *animals* die and get eaten by the bloodthirsty ones than they! They reasoned that if they gave the bloodthirsty monsters (i.e. their “gods”) *enough* animal (or in some cases human) blood, their ‘bellies’ would stay “full”, and their bloodlust would stay satisfied, and the gods would leave them alone to live in peace - like a full lion or shark will not bother even an easy prey. Hence they “fed” a constant flow of sacrificial animals - and in some

⁴ *Korban* is spelled *qof, resh, beit, nun sofit*. Strong’s Hebrew word #7133, it is pronounced *kor-bawn*’.

cases people - to their gods ... and just hoped for the best. That is not however the Biblical concept underlying the spiritual act of *korban*.

The More Excellent Way – Modeled For Us By the Patriarchs

Hebrews, the ultimate lovers of the Creator, have never considered the Holy One to be either bloodthirsty or malevolent. The Holy One is instead viewed by sons and daughters of Israel's Patriarchs as a *Benevolent Creator, a Loving Father, a Trustworthy Teacher, and a Passionate Suitor*. After the model of *Hevel* (Abel), *Noach* (Noah), and *Avraham* (Abraham), Hebrews *seek after the Holy One, longing to come closer and closer to Him, to engage in more and more frequent and meaningful interaction with Him, to get to know Him better and better, to give Him the honor He deserves, to draw strength and wisdom from Him, to bask in His Presence, and to become who He created us to be*. Hence in Hebrew thought the Almighty One is to be passionately *longed for, approached, embraced and clung to*. To a Hebrew good comes from surrendering everything to Him and making the accomplishment of His Will the center of one's life. Therefore Hebrews, when not corrupted by pagan influence, have never been tempted to throw animals or people onto burning altars to appease 'God' and keep Him "fat and happy". Such 'animal sacrifices', and "offerings" are abstract concepts drawn from the pagan cultures of Greece, Germany, and England. 'Animal sacrifices' and 'offerings' are what Hebrew Scripture considers "foreign" practices.

Lessons from the Verb Root of the Hebrew Word Korban

The verb root of the Hebrew word *korban* is the word *karab*. It means ***drawing near to and approaching after the manner of and in the merit of the ultimate son and heir, Messiah!*** Each animal, each bundle of grain, each sampling of fruit, which was brought to the *Mish'kan* [or to the Temple in later days] as *korban* was a hieroglyphic substitute for, and representation of, the "sacrifice" of the ultimate Son and Heir – the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, yet who the Holy One told us in Genesis 3:15 would come as "seed of woman", would crush the head of the Serpent, and would restore perfect fellowship between the Creator and mankind.

The *korbanot protocols* open the way into His Glorious Presence to a people who would otherwise be barred by the flaming sword of the anointed cherub. The *korbanot protocols* are the precious gift that the Bridegroom in His Covenant Faithfulness, goodness, and mercy provides to we whom He loves. Each *korban protocol* constitutes a mirror image on earth of a great event of atonement and empowerment that He has choreographed and accomplished in Heaven. And each of the *korbanot* called for by Torah represents *an essential protocol for recognizing, meeting, and atoning for a basic human need*.

In Search of the Hebraic Meaning of What English-speakers Have Come to Know as “Burnt Offering”

Olah means “ascending”. So a *korban olah* literally means making an *approach* in order to *ascend*. *Korban olah* presents a Hebraic picture of someone – an individual worshipper or a nation – adopting a posture and attitude of *totally submission* to the Holy One. It pictures surrendering to His Will. It pictures surrendering to His Ways. It pictures surrendering to His mercy.

The animal from the herd or flock which was brought as a surrogate to take the place of a man desiring to express his total submission to and longing to commune with the Holy One was burned completely on the altar. By coming forward voluntarily to make this particular kind of approach to YHVH the man (or the community) was expressing his willingness to walk into the flames – be it burning bush, fiery furnace, Nazi incinerator, or whatever; and to do so not out of legalistic sense of duty, but out of *pure love for the Holy One*. The making of *korban olah* was –is – thus designed as the protocol for a person to cross the threshold of commitment and dedication to the Covenant Partner and the Covenant. Think of Yeshua’s declaration: ***If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*** Matthew 16:23.

There is a goal for every man’s Covenant relationship with the Holy One – and it is not to win a ticket in some Mansion-in-Heaven giveaway promotion. The goal is to enable us to joyfully surrender everything we think we are or ever dared to want to be or do in exchange for the opportunity to become the person made in the image of our Creator that we were born to be, and to accomplish, in intimate fellowship with the Holy One, everything He brought us forth upon the earth at such a time as this to accomplish.

The Specific Essential Human Need Which the Holy One Empowers Us to Address Through the Korban Olah Protocol

The Holy One, as a kind and loving Covenant Partner, desires to restore each of us to our unique presentation of man’s glorious estate. Indeed this individual restoration project is a primary focus of His grand redemptive plan. But He knows that only He – working in cooperation with the human being – can bring about this restoration, and He knows that before this restoration process can be fully effectual each man’s participation in the process must be *voluntary*, and *motivated not by hope of reward nor by fear of retribution*, but by *sheer and unquenchable love*.

The Holy One knows exactly what man’s basic human needs are, and He is fully aware what it will take to address, meet, and atone for every one of those needs. And that is where the *korban* protocols of Torah come in. Each of the *korbanot*

protocols designed for us by the Holy One are intended to help us deal with one of the basic human needs man has as a result of the Fall.

The Great Chasm of Separation Between the Human vs. Divine Wills and Purposes

Korban olah is designed to address, meet and atone for this most critical of all basic human needs. What is the first and most critical basic need of human beings? It is the need *to completely and voluntarily surrender our human will to His Divine Will*. Without such a surrender, there can be no restoration to man's former estate. Creation exists solely by and for the Will of the Holy One. Our stubborn, self-centered wills are the primary obstacle the Holy One has to overcome. Not to worry - that is what *korban olah* is all about. The *korban olah* protocols of Torah are designed to meet the first and most critical human need head on.

Why, you may wonder, is an all-out surrender of the human will necessary for our redemption, our mission, and our destiny? Our stubborn will has to be dealt with. The Holy One knows exactly how far we have fallen from our former glorious estate - and how far we have to go to get back to where we belong and who we are capable of becoming. The Holy One remembers that before the Fall the human being's will and His Will flowed in perfect unity at all times. That was, after all, a major part of what man's being created *in the image* [i.e. *to function as the earthly shadow*] of the Holy One meant.

In the early days in the Garden of Eden everything the Holy One purposed in His Brilliant Mind His Friend and Close Companion Adam joyfully rushed to bring into reality in real time. Back then the doing of the Will of the Holy One, in close cooperation and intimate fellowship with the Holy One all the while, was Adam's delight and greatest pleasure. Back then co-laboring with the Creator to accomplish the Creator's Purposes and Plans Will, was to Adam a boundless fountain of joy. And it is that kind of *joyful responsiveness, singleness of purpose, and pleasurable co-laboring* with the Holy One that man was created for. In any *other state* - i.e. in any circumstance or situation where man's will diverges even in the slightest from the Holy One's Will - a toxic process of amputation, separation, and death begins. Something Divine must awaken man from the post-hypnotic suggestion of his fleshly appetites, urges, and fleshly desires. Something must break the cycle. Something must disturb the status quo. Something must re-align man's will and his heart with that of His Maker. Hence the Holy One said of one making *korban olah*: ***... he is to approach with it of his own free will at the door of the tabernacle of meeting before the Holy One.***

To what can the protocol for making *korban olah* be likened? It can be likened unto that part of the prayer the Master taught His talmidim to pray to the Holy One

which said: *Your Kingdom come, Your Will be done, on earth as it is in Heaven.*

The *korban olah* is totally consumed by fire, and the smoke of it ascends from the altar to provide a ‘covering – *kafar* (translated as “atonement”) for the one who brings it. This was the same type of substitutionary approach made long ago by Hevel [Abel] in Genesis 4:4, and by Noah in Genesis 8:20, and by Avraham in Genesis 22. Before one can enter the realm of holiness where interaction with the Holy One takes place, you see, one simply *must* go through this step of threshold commitment. One must not only *see* the flames ... one must *surrender* to them. We, like our forefathers in the Covenant, need very much to approach with One taken “from the flock”. Our surrogate of *korban* is none other than *Yeshua* – the One Who has passed through the fire for us.

Embrace *Yeshua* as your *korban olah*, Beloved. Reach out and lay your hands upon Him. Submit yourself totally to the Holy One, and to *His Will for your life*. And then, through *Yeshua* as your *korban olah*, *approach* the fire of the Holy One – and begin to *ascend*. It may get messy. There is no time limit. This is real – and your life and your heart are an open book. *Gaze into the flaming tongues of fire*. If you look closely, you will see someone *walking around in the fire, unbound and unharmed* – looking like a son of God [cf. Daniel 3:25]. And if you listen carefully, you will hear Him saying ‘*Arise, My Beloved, and come away with Me!*’

Questions For Today’s Study

1. Today’s aliyah discusses the making of certain *korbanot* [usually translated into English as “offerings”, or “sacrifices”]⁵ a “*sweet savor to the Holy One*” by adding three ingredients, in differing measure depending upon whether the surrogate animal through which approach is made to the Holy One is a lamb/kid, ram, or bullock.

[A] Why did the Holy One give instructions on *korbanot* that were specifically to be made *only after the people entered the land of Promise* now - when He had just said that those who He had redeemed from Egypt would die in the desert and never enter the Promised land?

[B] What three ingredients, when added to certain *korbanot*, would cause them to be a “*sweet savor to the Holy One*”?

[C] Look up the three ingredients in the Encyclopedia of Jewish Symbols, and/or in books on dream interpretation, or in whatever source material you have available. Based upon your reading - and on what you feel inside - what spiritual significance do you think each of the three ingredients has?

2. When grain was brought to the threshing floor at harvest time the firstfruits and

⁵ For an explanation as to why the English words “offering” and “sacrifice” are inappropriate and misleading translations of the Hebrew concept of *korban*, see Monday’s Shiur of parsha *Vayikra*.

the tithe were separated out in accordance with the command in Exodus.

[A] What does today's Torah say is to happen in the homes of God's people with the dough made from the grain?

[B] The *korban* of the dough is called the "*Korban Challah*".

[C] Has this *mitzvah* passed away?

[D] How could we fulfill this *mitzvah* today?

3. Also in today's aliyah the Holy One addresses the fact that it is not just B'nei Yisrael who will participate in the fullness of the promise He made to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov. What of the foreigner who desires to partake of the fruit and blessing of the covenant? Let us look at what the Holy One has to say on this subject.

*If a stranger lives as a foreigner with you,
or whoever may be among you throughout your generations,
and will make **korban** to the Holy One by fire, of a sweet savor to the Holy One;
as you do, so he shall do.*

*For the assembly, there shall be one statute for you,
and for the stranger who lives as a foreigner [with you],
a statute forever throughout your generations:
as you are, so shall the foreigner be before the Holy One.
One Torah and one ordinance shall be –
for you, and for the stranger who lives as a foreigner with you.
[Numbers 15:14-16]*

[A] Why do you think a person who is not descended from Ya'akov/Israel – a non-Hebrew – might want to cause a *sweet savor* to arise to the Holy One, the God of the Hebrews?

[B] In order for a non-Hebrew [that is, a gentile] person to make a *sweet savor* arise to the Holy One, what "guidebook" should he or she follow?

[C] Does the Holy One contemplate that the Torah would ever be made inapplicable to gentiles desiring to present a "sweet savor" to the Holy One? Explain your answer.

[D] Does the Holy One consider someone who is a gentile to be either *better than* or *of lesser value* than Jews?

[E] Does this passage say anything to you about how the Holy One desires gentiles to approach Him, and worship Him, *today*?

[F] How does this passage indicate a gentile who wishes to worship the Holy One should relate to the Torah?

4. In today's Haftarah the gentile innkeeper of Yericho, *Rachav* [Rahab], continues cutting covenant with the Hebrews and their God. Let us eavesdrop together at their conversation. The Hebrews are speaking:

"Behold, when we [the Hebrews] come into the land,

*you shall bind this **sh'ni bachalon** [line of scarlet thread]
in the window which you let us down by:
and you are to gather to you into the house your father, and your mother,
and your brothers, and all your father's household.*

*It shall be, that whoever shall go out of the doors of your house into the street,
his blood shall be on his head, and we shall be guiltless:
and whoever shall be with you in the house,
his blood shall be on our head, if any hand be on him.
But if you utter this our business,
then we shall be guiltless of your oath which you have made us to swear.”*

*She said, “According to your words, so be it.” She sent them away, and they departed:
and she bound the **sh'ni bachalon** [scarlet line] in the window.*

[A] What was to be the “sign” which would lead to Rachav’s salvation?

[B] How were Rachav’s family members to be saved?

[C] How did this covenant require each individual member of Rachav’s family have to make a choice as to whether to trust in the Holy One, the God of the Hebrews, in order to be saved?

5. In this week’s B’rit Chadasha reading the writer of the letter to the First Century Messianic Community of the world has been discussing the tragic failure of the generation of the exodus, and the generation of the Sinai revelation, to enter into the *rest* of the Holy One. In discussing why they chose to, and were allowed to, die in the desert, as vagabonds without a home, rather than enter the land promised to Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya’akov, he says:

*Wasn't it with those who sinned whose bodies fell in the wilderness?
To whom did he swear that they wouldn't enter into his rest,
but to those who were disobedient?
We see that they were not able to enter into his rest because of unbelief.*

[A] According to the writer of Hebrews why do people fail to enter the “rest” of the Holy One.

[B] Look up the word translated “rest” in Strong’s. What is the Greek word. What does it mean?

[C] Obviously, since the writer of Hebrews is referencing the events and promises of Torah (a revelation in Hebrew, to Hebrew-speaking peoples), the “rest” is a Hebrew concept – not a Greek one. Search out the Hebrew word for “rest” in this context, write the Hebrew word in Hebrew letters with vowel points, find the verb root, and describe the hieroglyphic “picture” you see developing.

*May the Holy One create in you a hunger too great to be quenched by leeks and onions.
And may you see the fullness of the wheat, of the orchard,
and of the vineyard of God.
And may you cause a sweet savor to arise to the Holy One ... whatever your nationality.*

The Rabbi's son

Meditation for Today's Study

Revelation 4:1-11

*After these things I looked and saw a door opened in heaven,
and the first voice that I heard, like a shofar speaking with me,
was one saying, "Come up here,
and I will show you the things which must happen after this."
Immediately I was in the Spirit.
Behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and one sitting on the throne
that looked like a jasper stone and a sardius.
There was a rainbow around the throne like a yahalom to look at.
Around the throne were twenty-four thrones.
On the thrones were twenty-four Zakenim sitting, dressed in white garments,
with crowns of gold on their heads.
Out of the throne proceed lightnings, sounds, and thunders.
There were seven lamps of fire burning before his throne,
which are the seven Spirits of God.
Before the throne was something like a sea of glass, similar to crystal.
In the midst of the throne,
and around the throne were four living creatures full of eyes before and behind.
The first creature was like a lion, and the second creature like a calf,
and the third creature had a face like a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle.
The four living creatures, each one of them having six wings,
are full of eyes around about and within. They have no rest day and night, saying,
**"Holy, holy, holy,
holy, holy, holy, holy, holy, holy
is the Lord God, Shaddai, Who was and Who is and who is to come!"**
When the living creatures give glory, honor, and thanks
to him who sits on the throne,
to him who lives forever and ever,
the twenty-four Zakenim fall down before him who sits on the throne,
and worship him who lives forever and ever,
and throw their crowns before the throne, saying,
**"Worthy are you, our Lord and God, the Holy One,
to receive the glory, the honor, and the power, for You created all things,
and because of your desire they existed, and were created!"***