

#24 VaYikra Leviticus 1:1 to 6:7 (5:26 CJB)

By Moshe Schwab

While Praying:

- * Live in peace; May our lives be in order at home and all we do.
- * Don't allow anything to trap us into doing what is wrong. Examine what we think and do. Sometimes our thinking needs to change so we don't sin.
- * Don't trust in worldly power or any power that doesn't come from God. They will keep you from God's blessings.
- * Don't allow anything to cut you off from your growth in God. We sometimes aren't aware of things in our lives that can divert us from God.

VaYikra means and He called. VaYikra begins with Adonai speaking to Moshe from the Tent of Meeting concerning various offerings the Israelites were to make. The animal offerings were to be animals without defect and the person bringing the offering was to lay hands on the head of the animal and it would be accepted on behalf of the person for their sins. The priest was to sprinkle the blood of the animal and then sacrifice it. If they offer birds, they should be a dove or young pigeon. For the grain offerings, choice flour was to be used; no leaven or honey was to be used for a burnt offering; they were to make sure to use salt for all offerings. If anyone sinned both in ignorance or not, they could be forgiven. A person can also sin by keeping silent when their testimony could exonerate someone. A person could sin in the treatment of holy things, or by being deceitful, by stealing, or by lying.

A sacrifice for sin needed to be made for both the sins we commit where we know we were wrong and for those we found out were committed in ignorance (Leviticus 5:17 CJB). If it was realized that we did something wrong that required restitution, restitution plus an additional 1/5 was to be made. It has been always understood that forgiveness involves repentance whether the sin was done in ignorance or not. Repentance means true sorrow and the determination not to repeat the mistake again as well as restitution if that is involved.

Leviticus 17:11 CJB says we need a sacrifice for sin, "For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for yourselves; for it is the blood that makes atonement because of the life." Hebrew 9:14 CJB talks about the need for blood atonement " In fact, according to the Torah, almost everything is purified with blood; indeed, without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." That's why the Messiah Yeshua had to come and give himself for us.

Yeshua came from heaven (John 17:4-5), died for our sins (Romans 4:25), and on the 3rd day rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:3-7). He is the final sacrifice for sin. God gave Himself for us and no one could take His life unless He willingly gave Himself (John 10:18).

Hebrews 10:11-14 CJB.

"Now every cohen stands every day doing his service, offering over and over the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this one, after he had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, sat down at the right hand of God, from then on to wait until his enemies be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has brought to the goal for all time those who are being set apart for God and made holy."

It is now through Yeshua we can have forgiveness. He was the Messiah for all of time and for all the world. Yochanan (John) said we are to confess our sins to God and Yeshua's blood purifies us from sin. 1 John 1:7-9 say, "But if we are walking in the light, as he is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of his Son Yeshua purifies us from all sin. If we claim not to have sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sins, then, since he is trustworthy and just, he will forgive them and purify us from all wrongdoing." Deciding to live right brings peace into our lives.

One of the most obvious things we get from repentance, and getting our lives in good order and keeping God's commandments is peace. We should not only be at peace with God, but we should have peace in our home and in all we do. Doing what it right helps us to treat others well and put them ahead of our own agendas; it rids our lives of power trips, gets rid of the need to be defensive, and allows us to be who we are without putting up fake fronts. Doing things right is like a breath of fresh air to life.

Joshua was in much need of encouragement and we need encouragement too. "Haven't I ordered you, 'Be strong, be bold'? So don't be afraid or downhearted, because ADONAI your God is with you wherever you go;" Joshua 1:9 CJB. We don't have to face what Joshua faced, but we all have to deal with the things of life and we all react in different ways. Don't get down; be brave and do what is right.

Don't allow anything to trap us into doing what is wrong. Examine what we think and do. Sometimes our thinking needs to change so we don't sin. Years ago, someone felt empowered to publicly humble me. How many of us have had someone treat us poorly? It would have been a whole lot better if they had tried to coach me instead of humiliate me. He should have tried to help me instead of humbling me.

I wasn't even sinning! He didn't like me wearing t-shirts. Everybody perceives things differently don't they. He was probably trying to help me look better, but went about it the wrong way. Any time we try to help someone we need to do it humbly with their best interests in mind. Take them aside privately and make sure they don't take you wrong. Galatians 6:1 CJB says, "Set him right, but in a spirit of humility, keeping an eye on yourselves so that you won't be tempted too."

Watch out that we are not so prideful that we end up hurting others with our advice or attitudes. On the other hand, when people try to speak into our lives, don't be overly defensive. Being able to listen to someone who cares about us can really help us out a lot. Years ago, I remember working on my job resume tirelessly. I took a class and read articles and a book or two and felt I had a good idea what I needed to do. My friend mentioned a few things I could also do and instead of getting defensive and thinking I don't need his help, I took his advice to heart and his advice made a big difference. Sometimes it's good to see what other people see; we can be a little blind to the ways we do things sometimes. Being open to others can make us a better person if we allow others to speak into our lives without taking offense. Sometimes people can see patterns in our personality which are not good for us.

This leads naturally to how do we make changes in our life? Have any of us been a different person at times when we are out in public than how we are with our family. People can put on nice fronts in public, but be failures with their family and how they treat others at work. I have been really shocked to find this out with some of the people I have known.

Perhaps they think it is their right to be demanding or being confrontational and it is a way for them to feel in control. Maybe they grew up being a tough guy or girl and continue acting that way into adulthood. Perhaps they think they need to live up to a worldly standard and project that standard. Some people act like they own the world and they always have something going on. It gets tiring listening to them brag.

Sometimes we make resolutions that lead us to treat others bad. For example, this one guy decided that a woman was never going to run his life the way his mom ran his. His marriage was terrible. We can decide to follow roles we learned or hated when we grew up. I remember years ago that every time I met this lady she would always talk about her special interests. All I could figure is she was obsessed with them. It was a strange experience. Find out what others are interested in or talk about a great scripture that encouraged you. Some people hate to lose so they get angry easily. There is so much we could say about this.

We need to change to follow how the Bible says to do things. We are not giving into others by being kind to them. I decided long ago I was going to be kind no matter what the other person did. Do what the Bible says and get rid of the old person who thinks they have to control, follow a certain role, or whatever is driving us. Let the Bible drive us so we can be a good example to others. If a wrong thought comes into your head, tell yourself you are not going to act that way.

We are to be an example to others. That's what the Bible tells us to do. "Set the believers an example in your speech, behavior, love, trust and purity;" 1 Timothy 4:12 CJB. Shaul (Paul) said in Ephesians 4:29-32 CBJ:

Let no harmful language come from your mouth, only good words that are helpful in meeting the need, words that will benefit those who hear them. Don't cause grief to God's Ruach HaKodesh, for he has stamped you as his property until the day of final redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, violent assertiveness and slander, along with all spitefulness. Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted; and forgive each other, just as in the Messiah God has also forgiven you.

We need to be committed to do what is right all the time. Start by doing kind acts at work or at home. Give kind and encouraging words at home. The Bible says to be kind, so be kind. Think about it and do it; let it become who you are and drop your hardness, your defensive attitudes, and quit being fake.

Don't trust in worldly ways or any power that doesn't come from God. It will keep you from God's blessings. God is the creator and He says that being kind and tender with others is the best way to live. So, stop being unreasonably demanding and, man or woman up and take on some spiritual responsibility. All worldly people seem to do is fight and cause destruction. Worldly ways seem to want a fake life of conquest, temporary riches, and sin. Real life comes from a God that knows us because He is the Creator and knows what is best. Isaiah 45:9 says, "Woe to anyone who argues with his maker, like potsherd lying on the ground! Does the clay ask the potter, 'What are you doing?' or, 'What's this you're making, that has no hands?'" Mankind seems to want to argue with God all the times instead of just doing what God says.

Don't allow anything to cut you off from your growth in God. We sometimes aren't aware of things in our lives that can divert us from God. Who hasn't sinned in ignorance? Most people have sinned knowing they were wrong. We are all sinners Rabbi Shaul said in Romans 3:23 NKJV: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God;" We all need to repent, and get right with God. We also need to do what is right with those we come in contact.

Let's work on inspecting our lives, changing how we do things, and getting it right. It says in Lamentations 3:40 CJB, "Let us examine and test our ways and return to ADONAI." Psalm 139:23-24 CJB says, "Examine me, God, and know my heart; test me, and know my thoughts. See if there is in me any hurtful way, and lead me along the eternal way." I usually pray something like this around Yom Kippur, but it is not a bad idea to pray about this and take some time to think about how you are doing things in your every day life.

I remember years ago hearing this saying, "Do it right the first time." So why keep doing things the wrong way time after time. If our car kept breaking down over and over for the same thing because the mechanic didn't get it fixed, would we just keep going to them? So, let's think about how we can do things better. Stop being harsh and selfish and start being loving and kind. "Do nothing out of rivalry or vanity; but, in humility, regard each other as better than yourselves - look out for each other's interests and not just for your own;" Philippians 2:3:4 CJB. Start trying and learn how to work with others better and do things God's way, make the effort. God will forgive us for our sins, but what He really wants is for us to start doing things right. Hosea 6:6 says, "For what I desire is mercy, not sacrifices, knowledge of God more than burnt offerings."

I had a really great boss at one time. He sat down with me and talked to me like he cared about me and he encouraged me to do better. When I got done talking to him, I sensed that he valued me and trusted in my abilities. Whether it's work, family, friends, or the person at the checkout counter, leave a legacy of blessing and goodness. "Whatever work you do, put yourself into it, as those who are serving not merely other people, but the Lord. Remember that as your reward, you will receive the inheritance from the Lord;" Colossians 3:23-24 CJB. "Set the believers an example in your speech, behavior, love, trust and purity;" 1 Timothy 4:12 CJB. Whatever we do, we can have an impact. We can do it. Shaul said, "I can do all things through him who gives me power;" Philippians 3:13 CJB.

The ingredients or lack of ingredients in the offerings points to spiritual things. ¹

Animals without blemish and choice flour – purity of life; giving of best

Adding Salt (all offerings) – trusted fellowship

No Honey (meal offering) – no spiritual gladness (perhaps it means that Messiah Yeshua had not yet come)

No Leaven (meal offering) – no sin

Adding Oil (meal offering) – anointing; making holy

Add Frankincense (meal offering) – spiritual goodness

Thanks offerings – Minchah (meal offering)

Shelamim (peace offering); part of these offerings were to be eaten; it perhaps recognizes the peace that comes from being in agreement with God.

Sin Offerings – Olah (ascending offering)

Chatat (sin offering)

Asham (guilt offering); these are all burnt up perhaps showing that the sin is now forgiven.

Yoma 1 (the Talmud) talks about a perpetual miracle during the sacrifices.

"The fire on the altar was in the form of a lion, it was extremely bright light like the sun, it appeared to have matter, it produced no smoke, and it burned up anything, wet or dry."²

Since this portion is around the time of 1st of Nisan it is a good time to mention the four Jewish New Years:

1st Nisan – counting the king's reigns

1st Tishrei – new year for calendar

1st Elul – animal tithes (like tax day)

15th Sh'vat – tree new year

¹ For an explanation on the offerings you can go to:

<https://hebrew4christians.com/Scripture/Parashah/Summaries/Vayikra/vayikra.html>

² From <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/Talmud/yoma1.html>