



## Parashah 25: Tzav

Leviticus 6:8 - 8:36

“Give an order”

“So Aaron and his sons did everything YHWH commanded. .”

Leviticus 8:36

### 1. The Burnt Offering - 6:8-13

- a) What responsibility did the priest have for the fire on the altar of burnt offering?

What are the implications of continuous burning? What does this teach us?

*The priest must keep the fire on the altar burning continuously. This implied continuous offerings. (We know they had at least one each morning and evening.) This teaches that we are constantly sinning and in need of a sacrifice.*

- b) Why do you think it was necessary for the priest to change clothes to clean the ashes from the altar?

*Nothing associated with the tabernacle service was to be common; all things that involved the sacrifice were to be sanctified before God. Thus the priest had to have clean, sanctified clothes to clean the ashes.*

### 2. The Grain Offering - 6:14-23

- a) What part of the grain offering was to be the ‘memorial portion’? What was to be done with it? What was to be done with the remainder?

*The memorial portion was a handful (3 fingers full) of flour + oil + all the incense. This was to be burnt on the altar. The remainder was to be baked without yeast and to be eaten by Aaron and his sons in the courtyard.*

- b) What specific instructions were given for the grain offering that was to be part of the ordination of Aaron and his sons as priests? Who was to prepare this offering?

*For the ordination ceremony itself, the grain offering was to be cooked with oil on a griddle and the resultant fried bread was to be broken and presented to God and completely consumed by fire. It was to be prepared by the son who was to succeed the high priest.*

- c) Can you see any spiritual significance to the command in verse 23? (“Every grain offering of a priest shall be burned completely; it must not be eaten.”)

*Given that the grain offering represented thanksgiving for the sustenance of life, the fact that the priest’s grain offering had to be completely consumed by fire might indicate that the priest’s were to be completely dependent on God for their sustenance. Thus they must live off the offerings brought to them by the people. Another possibility is that as Yeshua was the bread of*

*life offered completely for the people's sins, so was the service of the priest to be. Other possibilities exist.*

### **3. The Sin Offering - 6:24-30**

- a) What happened to the parts of the sin offering that were not burned on the altar? How was it to be treated? To whom did the sin offering really 'belong'?

*The priest who offered the sin offering was to eat the remaining portions in the courtyard. It was to be treated as holy. The offering belonged to God.*

- b) What was to be done with the vessels in which the remaining sin offering was cooked? Why do you think this was necessary?

*The vessels in which the meat was cooked were to be thoroughly cleaned if metal and broken if pottery. This again reinforced the holiness of the offering: anything it touched became holy and it should not be treated as common.*

- c) What happened to the sin offering if its blood was used inside the Tent of Meeting?

*If any blood from the sin offering was used in the tent of meeting, then the entire offering had to be burned.*

### **4. The Guilt Offering - 7:1-10**

- Were the regulations for the sin offering and the guilt offering different? What parts of which offerings did the priests receive as their share?

*From the priest's point of view, the offerings were the same. God's parts were the fat including the tail, kidneys, and liver. The priest got the rest. In the case of a bull, the priest got the hide.*

### **5. The Fellowship Offering - 7:11-21**

- a) What two types of fellowship offerings are described in these verses? What are the differences between them? How were the "leftovers" to be treated in both cases?

*One type was an offering of thanksgiving, the other was the result of a vow. The thanksgiving offering was shared with the priest (and possibly other invited guests), was served with bread & drink, and was to be eaten the same day. The vow or freewill offering was shared with the priests and parts could be leftover till the next day. Everything had to be used up by the third day.*

- b) Why do you think God is so concerned that the meat of this offering, as well as the persons eating it, be "ceremonially clean"?

*God wants us to understand how important it is to keep the holy and the common (or profane) separate. If we are fellowshiping with Him, we must not include any common things.*

### **6. Eating Fat and Blood Forbidden - 7:22-27**

- Is it clear what parts of the animal are specifically forbidden to be eaten? What is the punishment for the violation of this command? What do you think this means?

*God makes it clear that we are not to eat the fat or the blood of animals. Violation requires that one is "cut off from his people." This could mean "excommunication" from worship or perhaps even death. (The rabbi's call this kares, spiritual excision. They interpret it to mean that the soul of the offender is cut off from the rewards of the afterlife.)*

### **7. The Priests' Share - 7:28-38**

- a) When a worshipper brings a fellowship offering, what is he to do with it according to verse 30? What significance do you think this might have?

*The offerer is to bring the offering and to wave the breast before God. By waving the offering before God, we are physically presenting it to him.*

- b) Who gets which parts of the fellowship offering?

*God gets the blood and the fat, the breast & right thigh belong to the priests (Aaron and his sons), "the regular share for generations to come." (7:36)*

### **8. The Ordination of Aaron and his Sons - 8:1-36**

- a) Who was invited to the ordination ceremony? What offerings were made as a part of the ordination ceremony?

*All the people were invited to the ordination ceremony. A bull for a sin offering, two rams (one a burnt offering, the other as an ordination offering) and bread for a grain offering were presented.*

- b) What was done to Aaron and his sons before the consecration process began? How was the consecration process begun? What was the symbolic purpose for this?

*Aaron and his sons were washed with water, cleansing them before dressing them in their sacred garments. Then Moses anointed everything associated with the tabernacle with oil, including Aaron and his sons. This symbolically set these items apart solely for the use of God.*

- c) What animal was the first to be sacrificed? For what purpose was this sacrifice? What was the second animal to be sacrificed and what was its purpose?

*The first animal sacrificed was a bull as a sin offering. Atonement for the sin of Aaron and his sons must be made before they can approach God. Next a ram was offered as a burnt offering, symbolic of total commitment to God.*

- d) What was the third animal to be sacrificed and what was its purpose? Describe the process that was followed. What was done with the blood from this sacrifice? Do you see any significance in this act?

*The third animal offered was the other ram as an ordination offering. Some of the blood from this sacrifice was placed on Aaron's (and his sons) right ear lobe, right hand thumb, and right big toe. This symbolized that they were set apart to hear God, to do God's work, and to follow God's leading. The appropriate portions were waved before God and eaten as prescribed.*

- e) How long did the entire ordination process last? According to verse 34, what was the purpose for this ordination process?

*The entire process may have only lasted a few hours, but Aaron and his sons were to remain before the tent of meeting for 7 days. (The rabbis believe that the entire process was repeated each of the 7 days.) Verse 34 says the purpose of this process was to make atonement for Aaron and his sons.*

## Digging deeper . . . .

1. First Peter 2:4-10 says that we, as believers in Yeshua, are members of a “holy priesthood.” Compare the role of our priesthood with that of the Levitical priesthood described in this Torah portion. What insight does this give you into our roles? Can you see how the ordination ceremony conducted for Aaron and his sons might foreshadow our own “ordination” ceremony?

*Many interesting comparisons can be made between the two priesthoods. One especially critical one is the part that sacrifices play. The counterpart to the offering of bulls, rams, lambs, and goats is the offering of our bodies, every day, totally, completely, unto death, an appropriate sacrifice for our sin. Our “ordination” process may be likened to our baptism as believers: we were cleansed, dressed in the robes of Yeshua’s righteousness, and begin to operate in our priestly roles, offering our prayers, our praise, and our service to God on a daily basis. It could be meaningful to apply some of the blood of our ordination sacrifice to our ear lobes, our thumbs, and our big toes as a commitment to listen, serve, and walk with God.*

### Functions of the Priesthood

- Represent the people before God and God to the people
- Present sacrifices on behalf of the people for cleansing and forgiveness of sin
- Called to be holy, set apart for use by God
- Serve in the Tabernacle

### Comparison of Priesthood

#### Old Covenant

- ✧ Levitical Order
- ✧ Tribe of Levi, descendants of Aaron
- ✧ Sacrifice bulls and goats
- ✧ Mediator of the Old Covenant  
(Torah written on stones by Moses)
- ✧ High Priest:
  - Passed through descendants of Aaron
  - Made sacrifices for his own sin
  - Continually made atonement for the sins of the people

#### New Covenant

- ✧ Order of Melchizedek
- ✧ Believers in Yeshua, adopted sons
- ✧ Our bodies, a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1)
- ✧ Mediator of the New Covenant  
(Torah written on our hearts by God)
- ✧ High Priest:
  - One, Yeshua, descendant of Judah
  - Sinless
  - Made atonement once for all  
(Note: Hebrews 4:14-5:10; 8:1-10:18)

2. Read Mark 12:28-34. What do you think Yeshua meant in verse 33? Can you see how these commands are related to burnt offerings and sacrifices?

*If we truly understood what it meant to love God with all our heart, all our understanding, and all our strength and to love our neighbor as our self, then we would have no need for sacrifices. This is the goal of the Torah and we strive toward that goal by walking in obedience to the commands of God.*