

## Living Souls, the Messiah, and the Sacrificial System

In weeks reading from **Parashat Tzav** (*Vayikra / Leviticus 6:1-8:36*), the Lord speaks to Moshe to command the sons of Aaron regarding the Olah (raise) offering (*6:8-9*), the Minchah (grain) offering, the Chatat (sin) offering, the Asham (guilt) offering, and the Shelamim (Peace) offering. The Torat (תּוֹרָה, law) of the Olah offering is to keep it burning continually. The Torat (law) of the Minchah offering is to present it before the Lord at the altar (*6:14-18*). The Torat of the Chatat offering is to eat it in a holy place. The Torat of the Asham offering, it is to be slain in the same place the burnt offering is slain (*7:1-2*) and eaten in a holy place. The Torat of the Shelamim offering (*7:11-13*) states this is a thanksgiving offering, one is to bring it with the cakes of unleavened bread and the person is to present one of every type of offering as a contribution to the Lord (*7:13-16*). All of the flesh of the offering is to be eaten up by morning (*7:17-19*). The Scriptures state *8:34 'The Lord has commanded to do as has been done this day, to make atonement on your behalf. (NASB)* This week's reading is a summary of the sacrifices (*Vayikra / Leviticus 6:8, 14, 25, 7:1, 11, 37*) what can we learn from these Scriptures?

### ספר ויקרא פרק ו

ב צו אֶת-אֶהָרֹן וְאֶת-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הָעֹלָה הוּא הָעֹלָה עַל מוֹקֵדָה עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כָּל-הַלַּיְלָה עַד-הַבֹּקֶר וְאֵשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ בָּתָּח תּוֹקֵד בּוֹ:

### Vayikra / Leviticus 6:8, 14, 25, 7:1, 11, 37

6:9 'Command Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the law for the burnt offering: the burnt offering itself shall remain on the hearth on the altar all night until the morning, and the fire on the altar is to be kept burning on it. (NASB)

ז וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הַמִּנְחָה הַקָּרֵב אֹתָהּ בָּנֵי-אֶהָרֹן לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֵל-פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:

6:14 'Now this is the law of the grain offering: the sons of Aaron shall present it before the Lord in front of the altar. (NASB)

יח דַּבֵּר אֶל-אֶהָרֹן וְאֶל-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַחֲטָאת הַמִּקּוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁחַט הָעֹלָה תִשְׁחַט הַחֲטָאת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים הוּא:

6:25 'Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'This is the law of the sin offering: in the place where the burnt offering is slain the sin offering shall be slain before the Lord; it is most holy. (NASB)

### ספר ויקרא פרק ז

א וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאֲשָׁם קֹדֶשׁ קֹדְשִׁים הוּא:

7:1 'Now this is the law of the guilt offering; it is most holy. (NASB)

יא וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זִבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר יִקְרֶיב לַיהוָה:

7:11 'Now this is the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings which shall be presented to the Lord. (NASB)

לו זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַתּוֹרָה לְעֹלָה לַמִּנְחָה וְלַחֲטָאת וְלָאֲשָׁם וְלַמְלוּאִים וְלַזִּבְחַת הַשְּׁלָמִים:

7:37 This is the law of the burnt offering, the grain offering and the sin offering and the guilt offering and the ordination offering and the sacrifice of peace offerings, (NASB)

According to the books of Genesis and Exodus, God chose the people of Israel and called them an “*am segulah*” meaning “*a treasured people*” (see *Shemot / Exodus 19:5, Devarim / Deuteronomy 7:6*). Note that prior to the book of Leviticus, the Lord God Almighty functioned “*on the outside*” and we learn in Exodus that the Lord led His people out of Egypt, made a covenant with them at Sinai, and has taken residence among them in the Mishkan (Tabernacle). The Lord is “*in the midst of the people,*” a fulfillment of His promises spoken of throughout the Torah. The book of *Leviticus* reveals how to be in relationship with Him, and the key is found within the sacrificial system.

According to the Torat (law) of the sacrifice, when a person acts in disobedience to the Lord (when he sins) he is to bring a sacrifice, where God allows the death of the sacrifice to take the place of the sinner. The guilty person lays his hand upon the head of the animal and confesses his sins before God. When the Lord sees the shed blood ascending in smoke, He forgives the sinner based on his faith and Teshuvah (repentance). Why does God allow the death of an animal to take the place of a human being? According to the Scriptures, when a person sins against the Lord, he deserves to die. The accuser comes before God and makes a case against the person’s Neshama (Soul), were our sin forfeits the neshama (the soul). According to the book of Genesis, God created a “*Nefesh Chai*” (נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה, Living Soul) in all creatures. Bereshit / Genesis 1:24 states that He created a *Nefesh Chai* in the cattle (the beasts of the field).

**ספר בראשית פרק א**

כד וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים תּוֹצֵא הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה לְמִינֵהּ בְּהֵמָה וָרֶמֶשׂ וְחַיֵּת־  
 אָרֶץ לְמִינֵהּ וְיִהְיֶה-כֵן: כה וַיַּעַשׂ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-חַיֵּת הָאָרֶץ לְמִינֵהּ וְאֶת-  
 הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינֵהּ וְאֶת כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינֵהוּ וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים כִּי-טוֹב:

***Bereshit / Genesis 1:24-25***

*1:24 Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind’; and it was so. 1:25 God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good. (NASB)*

Note the NASB translates “*Nefesh Chai*” as “*living creatures,*” choosing not to take the more literal meaning “*living soul.*” The Lord God Almighty gave each living creature a *Nefesh Chai* (a living soul); the difference between man and beast is that the Lord did something unique in the creation of man, He “*Nishmat Chaim*” (נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים, breathed heavily life) into man and woman (see *Bereshit / Genesis 2:7*). It is within this unique creation, the Lord Himself literally breathing life into man that draws the distinction between man and beast. It is within the sacrificial system that one “*Nefesh Chai*” is given in substitute for another “*Nefesh Chai*” that enables us to draw near to the Lord in the forgiveness of sins. Regarding the sacrificial system, is it the death of the *Nefesh Chai* that results in our ability to draw near to the Lord?

Reading through Parashat Tzav, the sacrifices are listed in a particular order:

*Burnt offering → Grain offering → Sin offering → Guilt offering → Peace offering.* Based on the order of the prescribed offerings, everything seems to point to the final offering of peace. Note that the Shelamim offering (7:11-13) is a thanksgiving offering where one is to bring one of every type of offering as a contribution to the Lord (7:13-16). In Midrash Rabba the rabbis speak extensively on the Shelamim offering (*Midrash Rabba, Chapter 9, Part 9, ט סימן ט ויקרא פרשה ט סימן ט*) saying the following:

*“R. Simeon B. Yohai said: Great is peace, since all blessings are comprised therein, as it is written, The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace (Tehillim / Psalms 29:11).”*

The order of the offerings suggest that the Lord will give strength to His people in blessing them with peace. The midrash continues saying:

*“Whence do we know that this was also in connection with sacrifices?”*

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*Scripture teaches us this by saying at the end of the chapter on communal sacrifices, These you shall offer unto the Lord in your appointed seasons, beside your vows, and your free will offerings, whether they be your burnt offerings, or your meal offerings, or your drink offerings, or your peace offerings (Bamidbar / Numbers 29:39). Now I know that peace is the climax of all things in this world; whence do I know that it is to be so in the world to come? It is said, Behold I will extend peace to her like a river (Isaiah 66:12). The Rabbis said: Great is peace, seeing that when the Messianic King is to come, he will commence with peace, as it is said, How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of the messenger of good tidings, that announce peace (Isaiah 52:7).”*

The rabbis say that *“Peace”* is the climax of all things in the *olam hazeh* (in this world), and in the *olam habah* (the world to come), and when the Messianic King comes, he will commence with peace. Interestingly, when Yeshua the Messiah came, the work that He did in His life was following by the giving of His peace. Yeshua made atonement upon the cross, fulfilling the Messianic prophecies of the Tanach through His sacrifice to atone for the sins of the world. The rabbis say that the Messianic King will commence with peace. Having completed what He has come to do, Yeshua commenced with giving His Peace by the power Holy Spirit and in truth. He has brought peace to each one of us, between God and between one another. Halleluia, Praise the Lord!

### **John 14:27**

*14:27 ‘Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful. (NASB)*