

My Food and My Offerings

In this weeks reading from Parashat Pinchas (*Bamidbar / Numbers 25:10-30:1*) the Lord speaks to Moshe saying that Pinchas, the son of Eleazar, has turned away His wrath from the sons of Israel because he was zealous for the Lord. Pinchas' Jealousy for the Lord is found in *Bamidbar / Numbers 25:7-9*. Pinchas saw the sin of the sons of Israel and took action against a man who was sinning. While studying this week's Torah reading, the Lord commands the children of Israel to be careful that they bring the food offerings in their appointed times.

ספר במדבר פרק כח
א וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ב צו
אֶת-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אֶת-
קַרְבְּנֵי לַחֲמִי לְאֲשֵׁי רִיחַ גִּיחְחִי תִשְׁמְרוּ
לְהַקְרִיב לִי בְמוֹעֲדוֹ: ג וְאָמַרְתָּ לָהֶם זֶה
הָאֲשָׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה כִּבְשִׂים בָּ-
גִּי-שְׁנָה תְּמִימִם שְׁנַיִם לְיוֹם עֹלָה תְּמִיד:
ד אֶת-הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בַבֹּקֶר וְאֶת
הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בֵּין הָעֶרְבָיִם: :

Bamidbar / Numbers 28:1-4

28:1 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying,
28:2 'Command the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be careful to present My offering, My food for My offerings by fire, of a soothing aroma to Me, at their appointed time.'
28:3 'You shall say to them, 'This is the offering by fire which you shall offer to the Lord: two male lambs one year old without defect as a continual burnt offering every day. 28:4 'You shall offer the one lamb in the morning and the other lamb you shall offer at twilight; (NASB)

Note how the Scriptures are worded here, the Scriptures say “*My food (bread)*” (לֶחֶמִי) and “*My offerings*” (קַרְבְּנֵי). The idea here is that the Lord is calling the offerings of food and sacrifice His. The people are not to think in terms of their offering being “*theirs.*” Consider the title for a moment. When giving to a particular ministry, do you think in terms of the offering being yours that “*you*” are giving away? The Scriptures tell us that the Lord fed our fathers in the wilderness for the purpose of humbling them and He tested them to see if they would choose to do what is right. The Scriptures were given so that we may learn we do not gain our wealth by the power of our own hand but by the mercy of God. *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18* states that the Lord gives us the ability to work so that He can confirm the covenant that He has made with us and that he swore to our fathers.

Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:16-18

8:16 'In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end. 8:17 'Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.' 8:18 'But you shall remember the Lord your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as it is this day. (NASB)

The rabbis pick up on the words “My food” (לֶחְמִי) and “My offerings” (קִרְבָּנִי) and write the following in *Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar, Parashat 21, Part 16* (מדרש רבה במדבר פרשה כא סימן טז).

Midrash Rabbah Bamidbar Parashat 21, Part 16

My food which is presented unto me for offerings made by fire (28:2). The Holy One blessed be He, said to Moshe, Tell Israel that I ask for this not because I require sacrifices. The whole world is Mine. The beasts which you will sacrifice I created. In the same strain it says, If I were hungry I would not tell you (Tehillim / Psalms 50:12). For Me, it implies, there is neither eating nor drinking. R. Simon said, Thirteen attributes of mercy are recorded of Him; as it says, And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed, The Lord ... merciful, etc. (Shemot / Exodus 34:6), and is it conceivable that the merciful would entrust his food to the cruel? This explains the text, If I were hungry, I would not tell you. R. Judah cites the following in the name of R. Simon, the Holy One blessed be He, said, I have put at your disposal then clean animals. Three are in your domain and seven are not in your domain. I did not trouble you to run about among the mountains to fetch a sacrifice from those that are not in your domain. I only bade you bring from those that are reared by your own crib. This explains the text, Do I not take bullocks out of your house or goats out of your folds? (Tehillim / Psalms 50:9). This explains, If I were hungry, I would not tell you. R. Isaac said, It is written, My food which is presented unto Me. But is there such a thing as eating and drinking for Him? You can learn the answer by analogy with the ministering angels, of whom it says, His ministers are a flaming fire (Tehillim / Psalms 104:4). Whence do they derive their sustenance? R. Judan, citing R. Isaac, said, From the lustre of the shechinah they derive their sustenance; as it says, In the light of the king's countenance is life (Mishley / Proverbs 16:15). R. Simeon b. Lakish said, It is written, A continual burnt offering, which was offered in mount Sinai (Bamidbar / Numbers 28:6). If you assume that I (God) eat and drink, you may learn the contrary from Moshe. See what is written of him, And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water (Shemot / Exodus 34:28). Now if I ate and drank, he would have done the same. This explains the text, If I were hungry, I would not tell you.

The midrash discusses the present topic of “My food” and “My Sacrifices.” They say the Lord does not require sacrifices because He is the creator and owner of all life on earth. They also discuss whether the Lord needs to eat and they conclude the Lord does not need to eat and therefore does not require that one brings the Sacrifice. This seems to fly in the face of the doctrine that Israel needed to “earn” their salvation by bringing sacrifices at the Tabernacle doesn’t it?

Note how the sacrifices are a picture of sin and death and the requirement of innocent laying down for the guilty (bearing the guilt) so one may be forgiven of sins. The sacrifice represents death and this is the reason why God does not glory in sacrifice, because it would lead one to think in terms of our God being a god of death. Our Lord glories in life, in righteousness, and in holiness. According to Isaiah, the Lord has a passion for His glory, so much so that he will delay His wrath for the purpose of His name's sake. His wrath brings death, whereas His mercy brings life.

Isaiah 49:9-11

48:9 'For the sake of My name I delay My wrath, And for My praise I restrain it for you, In order not to cut you off. 48:10 'Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction. 48:11 'For My own sake, for My own sake, I will act; For how can My name be profaned? And My glory I will not give to another. (NASB)

Notice what the Lord is saying in *Isaiah 49:9-11*, He says “*For My name's sake,*” “*For the sake of My praise,*” “*For My own sake,*” “*How should My name be profaned,*” and “*My glory I will not give to another.*” The point is that the Lord desires to display the glory of His name and according to *Midrash Tehillim 45, Part 1*, the Lord plans on doing this in the world to come by placing His glory upon us in the Olam Haba. The Apostle Paul's interpretation on this is that we are given the praise and glory of His grace in Yeshua the Messiah according to his letter to the Ephesians.

Ephesians 1:4-6, 12, 14

1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love 1:5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. (NASB)

1:12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. (NASB)

1:14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. (NASB)

Paul interprets the words of Isaiah and agrees with the rabbis that the Lord desires to place His presence (glory) in His children (*Isaiah 43:6-7 Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, every one who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory.*) Yeshua had the same purpose in mind for the glory of God in *John 12:27-28* in the garden when he said, “*Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour?' But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.'* Then a voice came from heaven, ‘*I have glorified it, and I will glorify*

it again.” The Apostle Peter says the Lord wants us to serve Him in a way that will glorify His name, *“Whoever serves, [let him do it] as one who serves by the strength which God supplies – in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”* (1 Peter 4:11) Note again this is a parallel to Parashat Ekev in *Devarim / Deuteronomy 8:18*. Paul also tells us that Yeshua will fill us with fruits of righteousness for God’s glory in *Philippians 1:9, 1:11*, *“It is my prayer that . . . [you be] filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”*

In this world, the Lord allows the bad things to happen to us so that we make the choice to choose righteousness and justice even in the midst of evil that is being done to us for His name’s sake. The purpose is to bring glory to His name and we fulfill our purpose of being created, which again is to bring glory to His name! The Torah’s instruction to be conscious to bring *“My food (bread)”* (לֶחֶמִי) and *“My offerings”* (קִרְבָּנִי) in their appointed times is a reminder of what we have in this life, what we set before the Lord does not truly belong to us but to our Father in heaven. With this kind of attitude, we can with great joy give to the Lord and be disciples unhindered by the me, myself, and I, mentality. In *Isaiah 54:13* we read, יִגַּד וְכָל-בְּנֵי־יְהוָה לְמוֹדֵי יְהוָה וְרַב שְׁלוֹם בְּנֵי־הָ: *“All your children will be disciples of YHVH and great will be the peace of your children.”* The context of *Isaiah 54* says, in righteousness you will be established, whoever assails you will fall, no weapon that is formed against you will prosper, there is a heritage in the Lord for His servants, the Lord will give water and food who need them, and working for wages that perish and do not satisfy. The Lord says to listen to Him, eat what is good, listen and obey so we live and the Lord will make an everlasting covenant with us, and will call a nation Israel does not know. Isaiah is speaking of listening and obeying God’s Word. According to the rabbis, we know that eating and living is paralleled to studying Torah and having life (e.g. *shomer mitzvah shomer nafsho*). Note, Yeshua uses a similar hermeneutic in *John 6* (e.g. *he who eats my body and drinks my blood will have life*). Our Father God through Isaiah instructs the wicked to forsake his ways and the unrighteous to forsake his thoughts and let these men return to the Lord and He will have compassion on him and forgive his sins. Yeshua’s words in *John 6:45* are reminiscent of *Isaiah 54-55* and of the Torah portion for this week.

John 6:44-47

6:44 ‘No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. 6:45 ‘It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught of God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. 6:46 ‘Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. 6:47 ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. (NASB)

Yeshua says that *“Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.”* (6:45) How do we learn and hear from our Father in heaven if we are not studying the Torah and the life of Yeshua? The Lord in His calling men to Himself, he gives an

internal peace that leads to outward peace with one another, safety, happiness, righteousness, and truth; the Lord is setting up His kingdom in each of us in righteousness and holiness in the Messiah. According to *Habakkuk 2:14* we read, *“For the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea.”* (NASB) Here we find a future expectation of the glory of God indwelling His people. This is accomplished by understanding this Torah concept of *“My food (bread)”* (לֶחֶמִי) and *“My offerings”* (קִרְבָּנִי) that we have nothing to offer besides our faith in the One whom God had sent to save us from our sins, Yeshua the Messiah. Believe, trust, place your faith in Him (Yeshua) today and enter into the peace and inheritance that He has for you for the glory and praise of the Lord God Almighty, our Father who is in Heaven!

