

# פרשת תרומה / Parashat Terumah

Shabbat Adar 4, 5769, February 28, 2009  
32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d  
<http://www.matsati.com> | [matsati@matsati.com](mailto:matsati@matsati.com)

5

## The Cherubim ... an eternal perspective?

### השבועות הזה קוראים / This Week's Reading

תורה: Exodus 25:1-27:19  
הפטרה: 1 Kings 5:26-6:13  
הברית: Matthew 5:33-37; 2 Corinthians 9:1-15  
החדשה

10 Terumah is a Hebrew word which means “lifted apart” or “offering.” Terumah  
can refer to (i) “Heavenly offerings” which are a type of sacrifice in the Torah, (ii)  
15 Terumat Hamaaser which refers to a tithing obligation originating from the  
Terumah sacrifice which is still regarded as obligatory in Judaism today on the  
produce grown in Yisrael, (iii) Terumot the plural form of Terumah which is a  
section of the Mishnah on the tithing obligations and (iv) Terumah the nineteenth  
20 weekly portion of the Torah which primarily contains the instructions on how to  
build the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). The Terumah or minchah (מנחה, gift offering)  
is a type of biblical sacrifice that does not involve blood for atonement. Now in  
the KJV the gift offering, grain offering, or meal offering, is rendered as “meat  
offerings” however this type of offering didn’t specifically involve meat.  
25 Scholars believe the term gift offering originally refers to all voluntary sacrifices  
but that it later came to refer to only non-meat offerings. In this week’s portion I  
find it interesting the parsha which details the construction of the Mishkhan  
(Tabernacle) it is named Terumah (Offering). This leads me to believe there is  
some kind of thematic connection here between the Mishkhan and the Terumah.  
The different kinds of offerings and the laws laid down in the Torah definitely  
30 provide a form of continuity between the states of mankind/human life and the  
provision HaShem prescribes for forgiveness of sins which cause us to impart our  
devotional obedience to Him. While reading through the parsha I was reminded  
on the importance of blood atonement and I believe HaShem symbolizes its  
importance by the use of the Cherubim here in the scriptures. As we study the  
Cherubim in this week’s parsha keep in mind the importance of blood atonement,  
what message is HaShem trying to tell us using the Cherubim in the construction  
of the ארון הברית (Ark of the Covenant) in the narrative?

35 In HaShem’s mitzvah to make no graven image it is interesting HaShem  
commands Moshe and Yisrael in the construction of the Mishkhan (Tabernacle)  
to make images of Cherubim. I do not believe this is a violation of the idolatry  
mitzvah so why would HaShem cause this image to be molded over the ארון  
40 הברית (Ark of the Covenant)? The Cherub is an angelic being who in the  
scriptures are described as the throne bearers of G-d. What do we know about the  
Cherubim up until this point in the scriptures? The only mention of the Cherubim  
in the Torah is found after Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden when

HaShem places two Cherubim to guard the way to the tree of life, see sefer *Bereshit / Genesis 3:24*. Next, let's look at the scriptures which mention the Cherubim.

45

### שמות 25:18-22

18 וְהָצִי אֲרָפָה וְאִמָּה וְחָצִי רַחֲבָה: וְעָשִׂיתָ שְׁנֵים עָרְבִים  
 19 וְהָבִי מִקְשָׁה תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם מִשְׁנֵי קְצוֹת הַכַּפְּרֹת: וְעָשִׂה  
 כְּרוֹב אֶחָד מִקְצֵה מִזֶּה וְכְרוֹב אֶחָד מִקְצֵה מִזֶּה מִן  
 20 הַכַּפְּלֹת תַעֲשֶׂוּ אֶת הַכְּרֻבִים עַל-שְׁנֵי קְצוֹתָיו: וְהָיוּ  
 הַכְּרֻבִים פְּרָשֵׁי כְנָפִים לְמַעַל סְבָבִים כְּכַנְפֵיהֶם עַל-  
 הַכַּפְּרֹת וּפְנֵיהֶם אִישׁ אֶל-אָחִיו אֶל-הַכַּפְּרֹת יִהְיוּ פְנֵי  
 21 הַכְּרֻבִים: וְנָתַתָּ אֶת-הַכַּפְּרֹת עַל-הָאָרֶן מִלְּמַעַל וְאֶל-  
 22 הָאָרֶן תָּתִין אֶת-הָעֵדוּת אֲשֶׁר אֶתֵּן אֵלֶיךָ: וְנוֹעַדְתִּי לְךָ  
 שָׁם וְדַבַּרְתִּי אִתְּךָ מֵעַל הַכַּפְּרֹת מִבֵּין שְׁנֵי הַכְּרֻבִים  
 אֲשֶׁר עַל-אָרֶן הָעֵדוּת אֵת כָּל-אֲשֶׁר אֶצְוֶה אוֹתְךָ אֶל-  
 בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

**Shmot / Exodus 25:18-22**  
 25:18 'you shall make two cherubim of gold, make them of hammered work at the two ends of the mercy seat. 25:19 'Make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim of one piece with the mercy seat at its two ends. 25:20 'The cherubim shall have their wings spread upward, covering the mercy seat with their wings and facing one another; the faces of the cherubim are to be turned toward the mercy seat. 25:21 'You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony which I will give to you. 25:22 'There I will meet with you; and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, I will speak to you about all that I will give you in commandment for the sons of Israel. (NASB)

50 Here I cut and paste some scriptures where the Cherubim are mentioned. The circled Hebrew words are meant to help with easily locating the words for those who are still learning Hebrew.

55

### שמות 26:1-3

כו וְאֶת-הַמִּשְׁכָּן תַעֲשֶׂה עֶשֶׂר יְרִיעֹת שֵׁשׁ וְ  
 מְשֹׁר וְתַכְלֵת וְאַרְגָּמָן וְתַלְעֵת שְׁנֵי כְּרֻבִים מַעֲשֶׂה חֹשֶׁב  
 2 תַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָם: אַרְבַּע הַיְרִיעֹת הָאֶחָת שְׁמֹנֶה וְעֶשְׂרִים  
 כַּאֲמֵה וְרַחֲב אַרְבַּע כַּאֲמֵה הַיְרִיעֹה הָאֶחָת מִדֶּה אֶחָת  
 3 לְכָל-הַיְרִיעֹת: חֲמֵשׁ הַיְרִיעֹת תַהְיֶינן חִבְרֹת אִשָּׁה אֶל-  
 4 אֶחָתָה וְחֲמֵשׁ יְרִיעֹת חִבְרֹת אִשָּׁה אֶל-אֶחָתָה: וְעָשִׂיתָ

**Shmot / Exodus 26:1-3**  
 26:1 'Moreover you shall make the tabernacle with ten curtains of fine twisted linen and blue and purple and scarlet material; you shall make them with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. 26:2 'The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurements. 26:3 'Five curtains shall be joined to one another, and the other five curtains shall be joined to one another. (NASB)

60

The first introduction of the Cherubim is found in *Bereshit / Genesis*, and secondly in this week's portion on the construction of the Mishkhan. What can we learn here from the placement of the Cherubim guarding the way to the tree of life and the cherubim upon the ארון הברית (Ark of the Covenant)? The Cherubim were placed in the Garden of Eden to guard against man/woman from approaching the tree of life on his own and eating and living forever.

65

***Bereshit / Genesis 3:24***

*3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life. (KJV)*

70

***Bereshit / Genesis 3:24***

*3:24 So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (NASB)*

75

Here G-d is telling us while knowing disobedience and sin we may not enter into the garden and eat from the tree of life. The lesson to be conveyed is that life was to be sought by man, not in himself or in his own power, but in Him who is the author and creator of life, the Most High G-d.

80

***Note:***

*I thought to post both the KJV and NASB version of Bereshit / Genesis 3:24 to compare the two English translations. Did you notice anything while reading through the above verses? Notice there is two spellings, (i) Cherubims in the KJV and (ii) cherubim in the NASB. This is a mistake in Hebrew transliteration. When one learns the Hebrew language generally one also learns how to transliterate the Hebrew into the English language. The name "Cherubim" is an example of transliteration of the Hebrew text directly into English. The singular form is cherub and plural form is cherubim. The correct plural English transliteration is written as Cherubim or Cherubs. Most English speakers are unfamiliar with the Hebrew plural formation and a good example is found here in the KJV where the word "Cherubims" is incorrectly used as a plural form of the Hebrew.*

85

90

95

What can we say about the Cherubim and the ארון הברית (Ark of the Covenant)? The cherub is mentioned several times in the Tanach, in *1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Chronicles, Psalms, Ezekiel, Isaiah* as well as in the book of *Revelation*. Mentioned earlier, in the Hebrew Scriptures, the Cherubim are described as throne bearers of HaShem. These angelic beings attend the Lord and praise Him continually. What can we learn from the placement of the cherubim here in *Shmot / Exodus* chapters 25 and 26?

100

105

As we can see from *Bereshit / Genesis 3:24*, HaShem guarded the way to the tree of life after mans fall into sin and disobedience. The purpose of the cherubim

and the flaming sword was to prevent man from drawing near to the tree of life and taking from the tree and living forever. Isn't it interesting the two golden Cherubim mentioned in this week's portion are mounted to the cover of the ark whose wings stretch over its top? Is this a description of the Cherubim protecting the mercy seat on the ארון הברית (Ark of the Covenant)?

110  
115  
120  
Inside of the holiest place was the Ark of the Covenant which is described first here in Parashat Terumah (*Shmot / Exodus 25:10-22*) is a box in which contained the golden jar containing a sample of the manna on which the Yisraelites lived for 40 years in the wilderness (*Shmot / Exodus 16:33*). Aharon's rod, the dry almond branch that sprouted overnight as a sign to Korach and his rebels that Moshe and Aharon were HaShem's authorized representatives (*Bamidbar / Numbers 17:25*). The second set of stone Tablets of the Covenant that Moshe brought down from mount Sinai (*Shmot / Exodus 34:1-4, 28-29; Devarim / Deuteronomy 10:1-5*) which were in Solomon's Temple (see *2 Chronicles 5:10*) but disappeared later, perhaps at the time of the Babylonian exile around 587 B.C..

125  
The Lid of the Ark was also known as the "mercy seat" called in Hebrew the "Kapporet" meaning the physical place where Adonai met the Cohen Hagadol on Yom Kippur (see *Leviticus 16:2*). The mercy seat was from which in His mercy, He forgave the sins of the people of Yisrael.

130  
So, what can we learn from the Cherubim? Casting their shadow on the mercy seat are the two Cherubim. The Cherubim guarded the Garden of Eden (*Bereshit / Genesis 3:24*). HaShem spoke to Moshe "from between the Cherubim" (See *Shmot / Exodus 25:22, Bamidbar / Numbers 7:89*), the Tanach speaks often of HaShem's presence (see *1 Samuel 4:4, Isaiah 37:16, Ezekiel 10:1-22, and Psalms 80:1, 99:1*). The Cherubim have also been regarded as representing the Shekhina G-d's presence."

135  
140  
145  
The question needs to be considered whether the Torah, understood here in reference to the Cherubim guarding the Garden of Eden (i.e. the tree of life) and the mercy seat upon which atonement was made in blood, this is an everlasting mitzvot (commandment) or whether it represents the condition of this world. We cannot approach HaShem. Did you know nearly half of the 613 mitavot (commandments) of the written Torah are found in the book of *Vayikra / Leviticus*. The Torat Cohanim (laws of the priests), and much of the writing found in the Talmud is based upon the sacrificial system. Here the ארון הברית (Ark of the Covenant) HaShem is exemplifying the importance of blood atonement by the use of the cherubim to protect the mercy seat. The angelic beings in this representation indicate the need for atonement through the sacrificial system. In our growing understanding of the Torah, from the perspective in the use of the Cherubim, we need blood atonement before a Holy G-d. Considering this what does Judaism have to say about blood atonement?

150  
It is by the means of rabbinical reinterpretation (change) of the Torah that Judaism today is a non-Temple based system, and continues to exist in the world. This was accomplished by the teaching of Yochanan ben Zakkai, the Jewish sage of the first century who is credited with the belief that animal sacrifices could be replaced with prayer and acts of loving kindness.

155 Raban Yochanan ben Zakkai once was walking with his disciple Rabbi  
Joshua near Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple. Rabbi Joshua  
looked at the temple ruins and said: “Alas for us! The place which atoned  
for the sins of the people Yisrael through the ritual of animal sacrifice lies  
in ruins!” Then Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai spoke to him these words  
of comfort: “Be not grieved, by son. There is another way of gaining  
160 atonement even though the Temple is destroyed. We must now gain  
atonement through deeds of loving kindness.” For it is written,  
“Lovingkindness I desire, not sacrifice” (Hosea 6:6). Siddur Sim Shalom,  
(Avot DeRabbi Natan) Jules Harlow, ed. (New York: United Synagogue  
of Conservative Judaism)

165

Can you see the significance of this ruling by Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai?  
Judaism today, the “Judaism without the Temple” has essentially bypassed nearly  
half of the explicit mitzvot (commandments) given by G-d to Moshe in the Torah  
170 while simultaneously establishing rabbinic Judaism as the interpretive authority of  
the Torah for all Jews throughout the Diaspora. This change in authority indicates  
a change in the Torah! Judaism today has changed the Torah.

175 In the Garden of Eden HaShem guarded the tree of life with the Cherubim and  
a flaming sword. The Ark of the Covenant, in similar fashion, was constructed  
with the Cherubim protecting the mercy seat where atonement was to be made in  
blood. These are the most essential elements of our faith. Without the blood we  
cannot have atonement for sins. HaShem knew man in his nature would attempt  
to reach out to the tree of life after the fall into sin and disobedience. In similar  
180 fashion various exegetical techniques were subsequently employed by the  
rabbinical tradition to establish a form of Jewish worship that did not require the  
presence of an earthly Temple, and the Torah became a matter of inward  
observance, with prayer and good deeds substituting for animal sacrifices.

Messianic believers today understand the New Covenant (see *Jeremiah 31:31-33*)  
185 *33*) is being fulfilled and yet awaits complete eschatological fulfillment when  
Yeshua returns as Moshiach ben David to establish his kingdom in Yerushalayim  
(Jerusalem). While at the same time the Torah, the mitzvot (commandment) to  
love HaShem, to live our lives for Him in obedience, and to love one another by  
the indwelling power of the Ruach Hakodesh (the Holy Spirit) becomes the  
190 guiding principle of the life of faith of a believer.

The new covenant does not change the way for obtaining justification and  
righteousness before the Lord for it has always been through faith in the blood we  
are counted righteous through the grace of G-d. In the new covenant we have a  
more perfect sacrifice, the son of G-d as our kapparah (atonement) for sin. This  
195 does not change the meaning of the Torah. If the Torah is passed away as the  
church tells us over and over again then we wouldn't have atonement in Yeshua's  
blood. The word Torah itself means “instruction” or “direction” about how to live  
a holy life before G-d and man it should not be surprising to see its connection in  
relation to the covenants G-d has established with mankind and with Yisrael. The  
200 New Covenant is based upon G-d's sacrificial love and provision for us in the

forgiveness of sins in the blood of His son, Yeshua the Messiah. There is continuity in scripture from the *Bereshit / Genesis* to *Hitgalut / Revelation*; the forgiveness of sins requires blood atonement by faith.

205 Tradition is any kind of teaching that is written, spoken, or handed down from generation to generation. Examining *Mark 3:7, 9, 13*, and *Colossians 2:8*, the word tradition refers to the interpretations of the rabbinic community during Yeshua's ministry. In light of this week's study on the Cherubim and the importance of blood atonement we have seen how tradition can nullify the Word of G-d, not only during Yeshua's ministry but even today. I invite you, if you  
210 would like to have true blood atonement for your sins according to G-d's Holy Torah, and not according to the tradition of prayer and good deeds you can have G-d's atonement today, right now. Come say the following prayer with me.

Heavenly Father,

215 I come before you in the humbleness of my heart Lord. I have been raised to believe in certain ways that make your word null and void. I have sinned greatly in the practice of my own way to eternal life outside of the atonement you provided for me. Lord, today I believe you made atonement for my sins in the  
220 blood of Yeshua the Messiah. I believe Yeshua fulfilled the Torah requirement by becoming the atoning sacrifice for my sins. Help me to walk according to your ways and to understand what it means to walk in your ways that are according to your Holy Word and not according to the traditions I have grown to know. I ask please Lord work in my heart and in my life so I can draw nearer to you, I  
225 honestly want more of you. I want to know you Lord at a very intimate level. Please Lord increase my faith and create in me the joy of your salvation in Yeshua the Messiah. Lord I ask that you would come into my heart, and fill me with your Ruach HaKodesh (Holy Spirit). I thank you Lord for such a wonderful salvation. Help me Lord to begin leading a life that brings honor and glory to  
230 your name, and speaks of the authority of your Word in my life. I pray all of these things in Yeshua's name.

Amen.

235

240

### **Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

\*\*\*\*\*

245 הללויה לאדוננו מורנו ורבינו ישוע מלך המשיח לעולם ועד:  
Hallelujah for our Lord, our Teacher, our Rabbi,  
"Yeshua" King Messiah forever and ever