

# פרשת תרומה / Parashat Terumah

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32:1-32:52 MATSATI.COM / Rightly Dividing The Word of G-d  
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## Kapporet (Atonement)

### 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

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In this week's reading from *Shmot / Exodus 26:31-27:19*, we find Moshe's instructions on the construction of the Mishkhan (Tabernacle). According to the Torah, the "mercy seat" was an object which rested upon the Ark of the Covenant and was connected with the rituals of atonement and repentance and finds its connection to the Day of Atonement (יום כפור) a time on which the people fast, pray, and offer sacrifices upon the altar for their sins.

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## שמות 26:31-34

31 הָרֵאִיתָ בְּהָרִי: וַעֲשִׂיתָ פָּרֹכֶת תְּכֵלֶת וְאַרְבָּנָן וְתוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי וְשֵׁשׁ מְשֹׁרֵר מֵעֵשֶׂה חֹשֶׁב יַעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ בָּרָבִים: וְנָתַתָּהּ עַל־אַרְבְּעָה עַמּוּדֵי שָׁמַיִם מִצָּפִים וְזָהָב וְזָהָב וְזָהָב וְזָהָב עַל־אַרְבְּעָה אֲדָנֵי־כֶסֶף: וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַפָּרֹכֶת תַּחַת הַקְּרָסִים וְהִבֵּאתָ שָׁמָּה מִבֵּית לְפָרֹכֶת אֵת אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת וְהִבְדִּילָהּ הַפָּרֹכֶת לָכֶם בֵּין הַקֹּדֶשׁ וּבֵין קֹדֶשׁ הַקְּדָשִׁים: וְנָתַתָּה אֶת־הַכַּפֹּרֶת עַל אֲרוֹן הָעֵדוּת בַּקֹּדֶשׁ הַקְּדָשִׁים: וְשִׂמְתָה אֶת־הַשָּׁחַן מִחוּץ

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Here HaShem is describing the the mercy seat upon the Ark of the Covenant: *Shmot / Exodus 26:34 'You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies. (NASB)* The phrase "mercy seat" is not a translation of the Hebrew text which reads "kapporet" (כפורת) in the Masoretic text or of the Greek term "hilasterion" (ἐξιλαστήριον) from the Septuagint (LXX), rather, "mercy seat" is a translation by William Tyndale from the German translation "gnadenstuhl." The translation of gnadenstuhl literally means "seat of grace," signifying the location of G-d's grace. The word kapporet (כפורת) etymologically is derived from the root kaphar (כפר) which means to cover, atone, or to be atoned. Similarly, hilasterion means atonement (propitiation),

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### Shmot / Exodus 26:31-34

26:31 'You shall make a veil of blue and purple and scarlet material and fine twisted linen; it shall be made with cherubim, the work of a skillful workman. 26:32 'You shall hang it on four pillars of acacia overlaid with gold, their hooks also being of gold, on four sockets of silver. 26:33 'You shall hang up the veil under the clasps, and shall bring in the ark of the testimony there within the veil; and the veil shall serve for you as a partition between the holy place and the holy of holies. 26:34 'You shall put the mercy seat on the ark of the testimony in the holy of holies.

which is a theological term denoting that by which G-d is rendered propitious, where appeasement or satisfaction is made. Note that the Vulgate translates hilasterion as propitiatorium which is a noun meaning atonement; a means of reconciliation and place of atonement.

Regarding the English translation “mercy seat” verses “kapporet” (covering, atonement), the meaning is essentially the same, however there is a certain depth of meaning that is lost in the translation. The root word kaphar and kapporet are used throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. If one performs a survey on these words in the Hebrew Bible on the usage and meaning of the words there are some amazing relationships between atonement and man. For example, during the construction of Noah’s ark, he coated the ark inside and out with “pitch.” The Hebrew word for “pitch” is kaphar. The connection between G-d’s mercy, the connection to atonement, Noah’s ark, Noah and his family being saved from the global flood, etc is simply an amazing study. For us today the English translation and meaning can diverge from the original translation of the Hebrew and Greek texts if they are not properly understood within the biblical context.

The Hebrew text of *Shmot / Exodus 25:22* says that HaShem will meet with Moshe to speak to him and in the future to speak to the Kohen HaGadol (High Priest) from between the Cherubim. According to the Biblical account, the kapporet was manufactured from gold whose dimensions are 2.5 X 1.5 cubits and placed upon the Ark of the Covenant. The Ark of the Covenant was then placed in the Holy of Holies, a place that could only be entered on Yom Kippur by the Kohen HaGadol who would then sprinkle blood onto the kapporet (mercy seat) to make atonement for sin.

Atonement, the Ark of the Covenant, and repentance hold great significance throughout the Scriptures. Atonement is the state of being reconciled before G-d whereby without reconciliation one cannot have a relationship with the Lord because G-d desires justice and justice requires that payment must be made to make satisfaction for ones offences. According to the Torah, a life needs to be sacrificed in order to satisfy the demands of the law and the justice of G-d. With this in mind, it is interesting to note how the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) deals extensively on this matter of sin, justice, and redemption. Take for example the second epistle to the *Corinthians*; Rav Shaul (Paul) argues that Yeshua became a sin offering on our behalf.

***2 Corinthians 5:21***

*5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (NASB)*

***2 Corinthians 5:21***

*5:21 The one who in his person was without da'as of chet (transgression) [Act 3:14; Jo. 8:46; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; I Pet. 2:22; I Jo. 3:5], this one Hashem made a sin offering, chattat kapparah [Gal. 3:13; Yeshayah 53:10] on our behalf that we might become the Tzedek [DANIEL 9:25] of Hashem in Rebbe, Melech HaMoshiach. [I Cor 1:30; Php. 3:9] (OJB)*

80 Note the differences here between the English translations, the New American  
Standard Bible (NASB) and the Orthodox Jewish Bible (OJB). The OJB  
translation says that “HaShem made a sin offering” meaning that Yeshua became  
our sin offering which is consistent with the NASB translations that He became  
sin on our behalf. (Note that the “making to be sin” and “to be made a sin  
85 offering “there is a deeper understanding and contextual connection to the Torah  
requirement for atonement by blood in the OJB translation.) In the epistle to the  
Hebrews, the author recounts the description of the Ark of the Covenant, the Holy  
of Holies, and the kapporet (mercy seat) and then goes on to portray the role of  
the mercy seat during Yom Kippur as a type and image of what Yeshua has done  
on our behalf. The author suggests that Yeshua’s becoming our sin offering is a  
90 greater atonement by stating that Yom Kippur was merely a type and shadow of  
things to come.

**Hebrews 9:1-16**

95 *9:1 Now even the first covenant had regulations of divine worship and the  
earthly sanctuary. 9:2 For there was a tabernacle prepared, the outer  
one, in which were the lampstand and the table and the sacred bread; this  
is called the holy place. 9:3 Behind the second veil there was a tabernacle  
which is called the Holy of Holies, 9:4 having a golden altar of incense  
and the ark of the covenant covered on all sides with gold, in which was a  
100 golden jar holding the manna, and Aaron's rod which budded, and the  
tables of the covenant; 9:5 and above it were the cherubim of glory  
overshadowing the mercy seat; but of these things we cannot now speak in  
detail. 9:6 Now when these things have been so prepared, the priests are  
continually entering the outer tabernacle performing the divine worship,  
9:7 but into the second, only the high priest enters once a year, not  
without taking blood, which he offers for himself and for the sins of the  
105 people committed in ignorance. 9:8 The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that  
the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed while the outer  
tabernacle is still standing, 9:9 which is a symbol for the present time.  
Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the  
worshiper perfect in conscience, 9:10 since they relate only to food and  
drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time  
of reformation. 9:11 But when Christ appeared as a high priest of the  
good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect  
115 tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; 9:12  
and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood,  
He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal  
redemption. 9:13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a  
heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of  
the flesh, 9:14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the  
eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your  
120 conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 9:15 For this reason  
He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken  
place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under  
the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of*

125 *the eternal inheritance. 9:16 For where a covenant is, there must of*  
130 *necessity be the death of the one who made it. (NASB)*

The Scriptures from this week's reading and the parallelisms found within  
the texts of the Ketuvei Shelachim (Apostolic Writings) demonstrate the internal  
130 consistency of the Bible. The Apostolic Writings have a single and consistent  
theological focus upon the salvific nature of Yeshua the Messiah. Common  
themes found in the Tanach include monotheism, the divine origins of morality,  
G-d's call of a chosen people, the idea of the coming Messiah, the concept of sin,  
135 faith, and redemption, all of these and more are consistent throughout all of  
Scripture. In fact, the study of these is central to both Jewish and Christian  
theologies. The real issue is over the differences of personal opinion on who the  
Messiah really is. *Hebrews 9:15* says that Yeshua is the mediator of a new  
covenant as a result of His death which has taken place for the redemption of the  
140 transgressions that were committed under the first covenant. The author of  
*Hebrews* continues in *9:16* saying *For where a covenant is, there must of*  
*necessity be the death of the one who made it. (NASB)* According to the Torah,  
without an offering for sin you will be required to make atonement with your own  
life (by your own blood). This form of atonement will forfeit your soul. In the  
gospel of Matthew, Yeshua spoke of the priceless value of one's soul when he  
145 said "*What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own*  
*soul?*" (See *Matthew 16:26*) Therefore, we are faced with a fundamental choice,  
a decision that must be made regarding our soul, this world, and Yeshua the  
Messiah. Yeshua laid His life down so that we could take up our lives and live  
life to its fullest extent, in the greatest blessing of all, in fellowship with the Most  
150 High G-d. If you place your faith in Yeshua, that His blood was shed for the  
forgiveness of your sins, and then you will have satisfied the blood requirement,  
you will have made kapporet (atonement) for your sins, payment for your  
transgressions. In as much as you acknowledge and believe the work Yeshua did  
on your behalf, you are saved without a shadow of a doubt.

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**Be Blessed in Yeshua our Messiah!**

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

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