

TZAV – “COMMAND”

LEVITICUS (VAY’YIKRA) 6:1 – 8:36

INTRODUCTION

1. The first five chapters addressed the children of Israel – these address the priests.
 - a. Of course, the instructions affected the entire nation of Israel.
 - b. This is manual on for priests concerning sacrifice.
 - c. These are the same sacrifices covered previously with additional details for priests.
 - d. The text uses the word תורה *torah* to describe these instructions.
2. The name of the portion – צו *tzav* – is word that means to “command.”
 - a. This is related to word מצוה *mitzvah*.
 - b. Previous to this phrases like, “speak unto...” or “say to...”
 - c. This word emphasizes the extreme importance in doing things the right way.
 - d. This is accentuated in the next torah portion.

CHAPTER 6: THE BURNT & MEAL OFFERINGS

1. Verse 2: “**law of the burnt offering**” – distinct from individual offering in previous portion.
 - a. This is the continual offering brought each morning and evening.
 - b. This was on behalf of the entire community.
 - c. That it was perpetual gives its name - תמיד *tamid*.
 - d. The evening offering would burn through the night until priest came in the morning.
 - e. Thus the first duty was to remove the ashes from the previous day’s offerings.
 - f. Those ashes were carried outside the camp to a “clean place.”
 - g. This is same “clean place” where the bull for the *ha’cohen ha’mashiach* was burned.
2. This became to be a national institution hence the development of the priestly courses.
 - a. So that the entire nation could participate in this through these divisions of priests.
 - b. In the *mishkan*, Aaron and sons were on duty throughout the year.
3. Verse 5: Fire of altar - “it shall not go out”: continually burning without ceasing.
 - a. By means of two daily burnt offerings.
 - b. Even on Shabbat, the fuel was to be placed upon the altar.
 - c. The law, “not to kindle a fire on Shabbat” didn’t apply to Sanctuary.
 - d. In fact, the priests “worked” on Shabbat in Sanctuary.
 - e. So then it seems, Shabbat is to cease from activities that are in your interests.
4. Verse 6: Continual fire, like the *ner tamid*, was viewed as being a witness of Israel’s mandate.
 - a. To be a light to the nations and witness of the one true God.
 - b. Midrash observes this altar used for 116 years:
 - 39 in wilderness
 - 14 in Gilgal
 - 13 in Nov
 - 50 in Gibeon
 - c. In all those years, copper layer never melted and wooden component didn’t char.
5. Verse 10 – 11: Of the part of *minchah* not burned it was given to the priests as their portion.

- a. Any food coming in contact with “holy food” (meal or flesh) itself became holy.
 - b. This is interesting considering the prohibition against mingling holy and profane.
 - c. The principle is based on the idea that “vessels” can absorb taste of food.
 - d. Consequently, that vessel must be treated in accordance with *halachic* principle.
 - e. So of these things considered holy, things “absorbing” holiness will be holy.
6. A *midrashic* tale further illuminates this principle but also negates idea we can mingle.
- a. Context is a young man who is listening to learned rabbi and also those who negate the commandments of the Torah.
 - b. When the rabbi confronts the young man about the danger of this, the man says:

“I am not easily influenced. I come to you as well, but I have not become a *chasid*. The rabbi answered, ‘There is a basic difference between the holy and the profane. Regarding holy meat, the Torah says *whatever touches its flesh becomes holy* (Lev 6:20) but the Sages explain that this applies only if the taste of the holy food was actually absorbed into the item touching it. But in the case of something that touches a contaminated item, even a mere touch is enough to contaminate. With you, unfortunately, you have only touched holiness, but not absorbed it. You have already absorbed the contamination of your new friends.’”

7. You must be in a holy place to absorb “internalize” the holiness.
 - a. And if absorbing holiness, would be hesitant to mingle with profane.
 - b. Eating unclean foods or that offered to idols would be akin to absorbing the profane.
 - c. Later in text, earthen vessels that have absorbed taste are considered “leftover.”
 - d. Like the meat of offerings, it must be destroyed (burned) due to holy status.

CHAPTER 7: THE GUILT & PEACE OFFERINGS

1. Verse 8: “Shall have to himself the skin” – of the burnt offering because all is consumed.
 - a. Bring this up again to recognize it was a complete offering.
 - b. Only the skins remained and this given to priest attending the work.
2. Verse 11: Peace offerings fall into three divisions:
 - Thanksgiving offering in acknowledgment of deliverance from sickness or danger.
 - Fulfillment of a vow made in time of distress.
 - Free will offerings when the heart is moved to remember God’s goodness.
3. Thanksgiving or תודה *todah* offering considered to be supreme type of sacrifice.
 - a. Sages teach that in Messianic era, all sacrifices will be complete in what they teach.
 - b. Only exception will be *todah* offering – to continue forever.
 - c. This is interesting in consideration that Y’shua will reign as king.
 - d. Ample passages suggesting sacrifices and offerings during His reign (Ezekiel).
 - e. One example is in Zechariah after return of LORD:

“And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. . . . In that day ‘HOLINESS TO THE LORD’ shall be engraved on the bells of the horses. The pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. Yes, every pot in Jerusalem and Judah shall be holiness to the LORD of

hosts. Everyone who **sacrifices** shall come and take them and cook in them. In that day there shall no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.”

- Zechariah 14:16, 20-21

- f. The word used for “sacrifices” is word for “slaughter (an animal).
4. Verse 18: “abhorred thing” is פגול *pigul*: something that is disqualified.
 - a. When performing a service if there are improper thoughts.
 - b. In this case, to eat the portion of meat beyond the time allowed.
 - c. To do so would invalidate the offering and the person would be guilty.
 5. Verse 20: Reminded again that one is who is unclean not to eat of the peace offerings.
 - a. To do so means to be “cut off from His people.”
 - b. In Hebrew called כרת *karet*, “spiritual excision.”
 - c. Explained as anything from exile to untimely death.
 - d. Again reminds us not to partake of LORD’s supper unworthily – He is our peace.
 - e. Some were sick and some “slept.”
 6. Verse 23-24: “No fat” of the ox, sheep or goat.
 - a. These are the three sacrificial animals whether or not consecrated.
 - b. Rabbinically believed prohibition involves animals that can be used as offerings.
 - c. Other animals, deer for instance, not burned on altar, fat is permitted.
 7. Verse 26: “No blood in any of your dwelling places.” This applies EVERYWHERE.
 - a. Some prohibitions apply only to land of Israel but this is universal.
 - b. From “fowl or beast” are mentioned, not fish; prohibition said not to apply.
 - c. Salting process was not used; but don’t recommend eating raw fish.
 8. Verse 29-30: “He shall bring his offering.” – the owner of the offering is to bring it.
 - a. When a subject sins against his king, he doesn’t bring a gift; he seeks forgiveness first.
 - b. When bringing a tribute, it is an honor for him and king for him to bring personally.
 - c. He brings it with his own hands.
 - d. He and the priest share in the ritual of waving.
 - e. Owner holds it in his hands, priest places his hands under the owners.
 9. The breast is given to priests – breast represents where the heart is.
 - a. The right thigh (lifted before the LORD) represents ability to move.
 - b. Both are to be presented unto the LORD.
 - c. Footnote: right thigh considered to be best part of animal, given to guests.
 - d. Example in 1 Samuel 9:22-24 (Samuel reserved it for Saul).
 10. Occurs to me in midst of these particulars, Christians would say this routine led to legalism.
 - a. Legalism and lack of heart did develop.
 - b. They became religious and that is why Y’shua came to reinitiate the heart issue.
 - c. Christianity has done likewise where Y’shua’s sacrifice is concerned.
 - d. Relationship became religion and those routines and traditions are no different.
 - e. This has always been and forever will be a matter of the heart.

CHAPTER EIGHT – CONSECRATION OF PRIESTS

1. This chapter is devoted to the consecration “filling the hands” of Aaron and sons.
2. Verse 5: “this is the thing that the LORD commanded”: doing what God instructed him to.

3. Sages say Moses had status of king and teacher, yet humbles himself by washing priests.
 - a. But this is the thing God commanded him to do.
4. Likewise, on the night before His death, Y'shua "washed" feet of His disciples and said:

“So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, ‘Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’ - John 13:12-17

5. Before Aaron and sons are inaugurated, Moses serves as High Priest.
 - a. He taught them what to do by example and “brought them” to a specified place.
 - b. When time comes for them to step into their calling, Moses humbled himself to wash.
 - c. Y'shua taught disciples by example; when time came for them, He specified place.
 - d. Then humbled Himself and washed their feet.
 - e. Furthermore, upon their consecration, Aaron and sons will eat a solemn meal.
 - f. Y'shua does this as His disciples prepare to eat a solemn meal.
5. Moses was initiating them into service: first to God and secondly to the people.
 - a. Moses had faithfully served God and the people – even when people didn't realize it.
 - b. Likewise, Y'shua led by example teaching how to serve God first, then each other.
6. Generally, each time priest entered court, would wash hands and feet only.
 - a. Yet at consecration an immersion in a *mikveh* was called for.
 - b. I find that interesting because of a dialogue between Peter and Y'shua.

“Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, are You washing my feet?’ Y'shua answered and said to him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.’ Peter said to Him, ‘You shall never wash my feet!’ Y'shua answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.’ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!’ Y'shua said to him, ‘He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.’ ”
- John 13: 6-10

7. Interestingly, Peter is the one to write and say, “We are a royal priesthood.”
 - a. Y'shua had told him, “You'll understand later.”
 - b. In some way, according to Y'shua, these men had already immersed themselves.
 - c. With the exception of Judas – interesting later, Korah (Levi) will mount a rebellion.
8. Verse 12: “He poured of the anointing oil” – only High Priest had oil poured upon him.
 - a. Aaron and his sons were sprinkled with oil.
 - b. Traditionally, Moses poured on Aaron's head, then placed some between eyebrows.
 - c. Then, with finger, connected the two points of oil forming a Greek Chi or X.
9. Verse 14-15: Moses slaughters the bull of the sin offering.
 - a. Priests had to be cleansed of any transgressions before they could help others.
 - b. Interesting that משה *Moshe* which comes from משה *mashah* – to draw out (of water).”
 - c. Linked to משה *mashach* – “to separate out” - from which we get משיח *mashiach*.

10. Verse 22: “the ram of inauguration” – special offering for the consecration of priests.
 - a. Was a peace offering: word used is מלאים *miluim*, literally “completion or fullness.”
 - b. This word related to שלמים *shalamim* which is “peace offering.”
 - c. *Miluim* comes from מלא *milah* (complete, fullness).
 - d. *Shalamim* from שלם *shalem* (whole).
11. Y’shua, who is our **peace**, came to make the two – uncircumcision and circumcision – one.
 - a. This is the **fullness** that Paul spoke of in Romans 11.
 - b. The blood of the consecration ram is placed on:
 - Ear – to always hear God’s command.
 - Hand (thumb) – carry out His will.
 - Foot (big toe) – to move quickly to serve God.
12. Verse 30: Oil and blood sprinkled upon Aaron and son’s garments.
 - a. Typified their main duties.
 - b. To diffuse light of God’s holiness.
 - c. To proclaim truth that God grants atonement for repentant hearts.
13. Verse 33: “You shall be inaugurated” – your hands shall be filled.
 - a. In literal sense, they would have their hands filled with offerings.
 - b. Idiom to say, “consecrated, inaugurated” – “it is in your hands now.”
 - c. They had to remain there seven days without leaving so as not to be polluted.
 - d. Strictly said, “that you die not.”
 - e. Rabbinically, reason given was in preparation for what was to occur seven days later.