

Torah: Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:1 – 5:26(6:7)
Haftarah: Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 43:21-44:23
B'rit Hadashah: Mattityahu (Matthew) 12:1-21

	yr. 1 1:1-2:16	yr. 2 3:1-4:26	yr. 3 4:27-5:26
1	1:1 – 4	3:1 – 5	4:27 – 31
2	1:5 – 9	3:6 – 11	4:32 – 35
3	1:10 – 13	3:12 – 17	5:1 – 10
4	1:14 – 17	4:1 – 7	5:11 – 13
5	2:1 – 6	4:8 – 12	5:14 – 16
6	2:7 – 13	4:13 – 21	5:17 – 19
7	2:14 – 16	4:22 – 26	5:20 – 26

and if one soul (neck) sins and unintentional wrong / from the people of the land by doing one of the commands of HaShem / which are not to be done and incurs guilt...	<i>ve'im-néfesh akhát tekhetá' vish'gagáh me'am ha'áretz ba'asotáh akhát mi'mitz'vót ADONAI ashér lo-te'aséynah ve'ashem</i>	וְאִם-נֶפֶשׁ אַחַת תִּחַטָּא בְשִׁגְגָה מֵעַם הָאֶרֶץ בַּעֲשֻׂתָהּ אַחַת מִמִּצְוֹת יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא-תַעֲשֶׂינָהּ וְאָשָׁם:
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We read from the first parashah of the third and central book of the Torah. It is known in English as Leviticus, referring to the priestly tribe of Levi. Much of its content relates to the ritual, legal and moral practices performed by the people through the priesthood so that HaShem can continue to dwell among his people. The Hebrew name of the book, *Vayikra* (וַיִּקְרָא), means “and he called,” connecting deeply to its relational context and content. There are five types of offerings: burnt (‘*olah* - עֹלָה), grain (*minkah* – מִנְחָה), peace (*shelamim* - שְׁלָמִים), sin (*khata* - חַטָּא), and guilt (‘*asham* – אָשָׁם).

The haftarah speaks of the people's failure to bring offerings as described in the Torah portion. But the foundation of concern is in regard to their failure to praise Him and call upon Him from their hearts.

Highlights

- Le. 4:27-31** The sin offerings (*khata'at* – חַטָּאת) here are essentially the same as for leaders, except that a female sheep or goat is to be offered rather than a male. Female stock are more abundant, as fewer males are required to maintain flocks. The “people of the land” (*am ha'áretz* – עַם הָאֶרֶץ) refers to the populace at large, socially those with a voice, as opposed to individuals such as officials and priests.
- Le. 4:32-35** Procedure for female sheep is the same as for a female goat (above).
- Le. 5:1-10** Inadvertent sins of omission are addressed. If one could not afford a lamb, two pigeons/doves were appropriate. Confession is only explicitly mentioned here (v. 5) in all of chapters 4 and 5, as it is the only way awareness of this sin would be known.
- Le. 5:11-13** Further insufficient means allowed for two quarts of fine flour to be the minimum sin offering.
- Le. 5:14-16** Inadvertent misuse or destruction of sanctuary property requires a guilt offering and restitution plus twenty percent.
- Le. 5:17-19** Offerings for when one sins without knowing it; guilt is not based on awareness. (Job 1:5)
- Le. 5:20-26** Misappropriation, robbery and fraud (e.g. withholding wages) are in view here. Sages separate this from intentional sins when the offender comes forth on his own and confessed (Nu. 5:5-7). Restoration of the victim is priority here.

Thought Focus

How do we relate to sacrifices today? There are three basic types of offerings.

- Respect:** Sin offerings reflect a restoration of a transgression. For example, we transgressed, crossed a boundary and took something from HaShem that did not belong to us. Now, we take something that belongs to us and offer it up; give back to HaShem. These offerings are consumed by fire and the priesthood, allowing us to enter into covenant relationship with HaShem.

- Love: Peace offerings reflect wholeness. They are shared across boundaries, with HaShem and each other. These offerings are given freely, and they are consumed in celebration with people who are close to us and also with the priesthood. They help us to live in covenant relationship with HaShem and in community with each other.
- Awe: Burnt offerings are entirely (and voluntarily) given to and consumed by HaShem. When we live lives of such Respect and Love, it can only lead to service and worshiping HaShem. Everything ultimately belongs to HaShem.

Inadvertent sin: The offerings described in chapters 4 and 5 are efficacious only when offenses are inadvertent (*bish-ga-gah* – בִּשְׁגָגָה). This Torah concept is foundational to our nation. John Adams said, “Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”

What is the “soul”? The term “soul” (néfesh – נֶפֶשׁ) is used multiple times in our reading. Perhaps there is a deeper connection between the “sacrifices” and the “soul.” The sacrifices as described in our readings clearly involve blood – and lots of it. Blood is connected with the covenant at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 24:8). Blood plays an important role. Le. 17:11 tells us that the soul (life) of a creature is in the blood, and blood makes atonement for our soul. Blood keeps us alive, every cell. It reminds us how fragile and delicate we are. Our soul lives in our veins. Blood is the gift of life. Blood is physical, the soul is spiritual. This sacrificial system draws our soul closer to HaShem (and to each other!).

Daily Devotional questions for reflection and application

1. (1:1) God “called” to Moshe, and then “spoke” to him. Is God calling to you or speaking with you? Or both? What are you hearing today? (Gen 3:9, Isa 1:18, Mat 3:1-6, Mat 4:12-17, Mat 4:18-22)
2. (1:14) How important is the size of your offering? More importantly, where is your heart in the matter? (Isa 1:11, 15, Luk 21:2-3, 2Co 9:6-13)
3. (2:7) God doesn’t want your money, he wants you! Do you worry about your assets, or trust Him to provide? Do you offer the depths and variety of your life to Him? (Luk 21:1-4, Isa 42:3, Isa 40:11, Deu 16:16-17, Act 2:44-45, Rev 8:2-4)
4. (3:1) Yeshua is our peace offering. Have you really made peace with God? With others in your life? (Mat 5:9, Rom 5:1-10, Co 1:20, Rev 3:20, Jud 6:17-24, Pro 16:7, Heb 12:14)
5. (4:2) Do you recognize ignorance in your life? How do you view ignorance in the life of others? (Act 14:17, Rom 2:14-15, Jam 2:10, Rom 6:2, 1Jo 1:8-9, 2Ki 22:13, 2Pe 1:10-11)
6. (4:27) Do you deal with recurring or habitual sin in your life? If so, what’s your plan? (Rom 6:1-18, Luk 15:21, 1Jo 1:9, 1Ki 8:46-50, Job 33:23-28)
7. (5:11) God’s kingdom is available to poor and rich alike. Have you invested in Him fully? (Mat 13:44-46, Mat 6:21, 2Co 8:9, Pro 22:23, Rev 3:18)