

## Gifts that Call

### Introduction:

The name of Torah portion means “And He called.”<sup>1</sup> God calls us to be His friends and to worship Him. We will follow this theme starting with the Haftarah, moving to the Torah and concluding with the New Testament.

### Haftarah:

**Isaiah 43:24-35 (Moffatt Bible) You have not bought sweet cane for me, you have not filled me with rich meat of sacrifice. No, you have burdened me with sins, and wearied me with your iniquities. <sup>25</sup>Yet is it I who for my own sake blot out your ill deeds, I put your sins out of my mind.**

In Isaiah 43 and 44, we see Israel has some sins. Even though Israel sins, God loves Israel. He chooses not to remember Israel’s sins, not because of anything Israel has done, but because of who the Lord is. We need to keep that in mind as we look at the offerings in the Torah portion.

### Torah:

For this week, the Torah portion is Leviticus Chapters 1 to 5.

**Leviticus 1:1-4 (Moffatt Bible) Then the Eternal called Moses, and from the Trysting tent gave him these orders for the Israelites. <sup>2</sup>“When any man of you brings an offering to the Eternal, you must make your offering from your live-stock, from your herds and flocks. <sup>3</sup>If the man’s offering from his herd be a burnt-offering, it must be an unblemished male, and he must offer it of his own freewill at the entrance to the Trysting tent before the Eternal. <sup>4</sup>He must lay his hand upon the head of the victim, and it shall be accepted as expiation for him.**

Verse 2. The Hebrew word that is translated offering means “brought near.”<sup>2</sup> Rabbi Packouz says it “... is best translated as a means of bringing oneself into a closer relationship with the Almighty.”<sup>3</sup> The offering was only for our benefit, to bring us close to the Lord.<sup>4</sup>

An offering and a sacrifice are different. An offering implies a gift that satisfies the one who gets the gift. But God does not need our gifts. He has no needs or desires we can satisfy.<sup>5</sup>

Our gifts do nothing for God. They are intended to bring us closer to Him. That was the purpose of the sacrificial offerings. They were to bring people closer to the Lord, not to appease a god who hated humanity.

Verse 4, hands were laid on the hands of the victim, the offering. This was a way of indicating the animal was the offering.<sup>6</sup> By laying hands on the animal, the person identified with the animal and with the atonement for sins.<sup>7</sup> Through identification with the Atonement, Yeshua Messiah, we are saved.

### New Testament:

The New Testament portion comes from Hebrews Chapter 10. The New Testament portion comes from the first half of Chapter 10. The first half of the chapter has a couple of major themes.

<sup>1</sup> Harvey J. Fields. *A Torah Commentary for Our Times*. Vol. 2 (New York: UAHC Press, 1991), 99.

<sup>2</sup> Bernard J. Bamberger. “Leviticus.” *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*. (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1981), 750.

<sup>3</sup> Kalman Packouz. “Torah Portion of the Week: Vayikra.” *Aish.com* (Miami Beach, FL: Aish Friends of Shabbat Shalom, 2000) , [http://www.aish.com/torahportion/shalomweekly/Vayikra\\_5762.asp](http://www.aish.com/torahportion/shalomweekly/Vayikra_5762.asp).

<sup>4</sup> Packouz, internet.

<sup>5</sup> Packouz, internet.

<sup>6</sup> Bamberger, 757.

<sup>7</sup> Barker, et. al., 147.

First, the system of sacrifices and offerings, the old covenant, prefigures the new covenant.<sup>8</sup> Second, the Messiah's sacrifice is once and for all.<sup>9</sup>

The verse we will focus in on from this chapter is the verse that is the key message of salvation through Yeshua's sacrifice. Verse 17 (*Moffatt Bible*). **And their sins and breaches of the Law I will remember no more.**

In the Old Testament, our gifts were intended to bring us close to the Lord. In the New Testament, God's gift, salvation through Yeshua Messiah, is intended to bring us close to the Lord.

God is angry with sin, not with people. The portion in Hebrews helps us understand that while God's anger with sin is intense, His anger was spent at Calvary. A heavy - weight German theologian, von Balthasar, talks about the momentum of God's wrath over the broken covenant being spent in the far greater momentum of God's love.<sup>10</sup>

Von Balthasar does not use these words, but here is how I picture this. The anger of God at sin is a speeding freight train. And it runs straight into Yeshua at Calvary. When we see the incredible impact, we believe all is hopeless. Yeshua dies, because of the impact. But then we see the empty tomb. Yeshua has risen. And we realize that on Calvary, the Son, God in flesh, absorbed the full impact of God's anger with sin. In effect, God took upon Himself His anger with sin. That is how much God loves you.

Perhaps, now you can understand how the call of the sacrificial offering is so strong. People have problems resisting the overwhelming love of Yeshua, the offering.

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<sup>8</sup> Heading for the first 18 verses in the *Christian Community Bible: Catholic Pastoral Edition*. (St. Pauls: Claretian Pub., 1999), N.T. 443.

<sup>9</sup> Heading for the first 18 verses in Kenneth Barker, et. a., eds. *The NIV Study Bible: New International Version*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Pub., 1985), 1869.

<sup>10</sup> Hans Urs Von Balthasar. *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 205.