



## Wembley Synagogue

צו

### Insights from the commentators into the Sedra of Tzav 5768

#### What's the Sidra about?

**1st Aliya:** Additional instructions regarding the Olah - burnt offering, and the Mincha - meal offering are detailed.

**2nd Aliya:** The special meal offering of the Kohen Gadol and the special inaugural meal offering of the regular Kohen is described. This was the same offering in both cases; however, the Kohen Gadol brought his offering every day while the regular Kohen did so only on the day of his inauguration into the service of the Bet Hamikdash. Additional laws of the sin offering and the guilt offering are detailed.

**3rd Aliya:** Additional laws of the peace offering are detailed along with those portions of the offering that must be shared with the Kohen.

**4th, 5th, 6th, & 7th Aliyot:** The remainder of the Parsha describes the first seven days of the inaugural process for Aharon and his four sons. Moshe functioned as the Kohen Gadol to officiate over the inaugural process, and Aharon and his sons were forbidden to leave the Mishkan the entire time.

צו את-אהרן ואת-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זאת תורת העֹלָה -Command Aharon and his sons saying, 'This is the law of the burnt offering.' (6:2) Rashi writes that the term "tzav" denotes "zeiruz" — encouragement — for the present and future generations, and Rabbi Shimon said that it is especially necessary to give encouragement in cases of chisaron kis — loss of money. What monetary loss does the pasuk refer to? From karbanot shelamim — peace-offerings — that were brought in the Sanctuary, the Kohanim serving that day would receive the breast and thigh (7:31). The karbanot olah — burnt offerings — were burnt entirely on the altar, and the Kohanim thus gained nothing from them (except for the hide, which were given to the officiating Kohanim 7:8). Thus, the Kohanim, being mortals, may have had very little interest in bringing up the burnt-offerings and would instead encourage people to bring peace-offerings (karbanot shelamim). The Torah, therefore, particularly exhorts the Kohanim concerning the burnt-offerings. (Source: Vedibarta Bam)

וְלֵבַשׁ הַכֹּהֵן כִּדּוֹ בַד וּמְכַנְסֵי בַד יִלְבַּשׁ עַל-בָּשָׂרוֹ וְהָרִים אֶת-הַדָּשֵׁן - The Kohen shall put on his fitted linen tunic, and he shall put on linen breeches on his flesh. he shall separate the ash. (6:3) The daily avodah, service, in the Bet HaMikdash began with terumat ha'deshen, the separation of the ashes, of the previous day. The Kohen would don his priestly vestments, scoop up a shovelful of the ashes that had been left over from the previous day and place them on the floor of the courtyard, on the eastern side of the Altar. The Mishnah in Yoma 22 maintains that while the privilege of performing most of the priestly services in the Bet HaMikdash was decided by a goral (lottery), the terumat ha'deshen was not. It was basically done on a first come, first served basis. In the event that there were a number of Kohanim "competing" for the privilege, they would use an interesting method. All of those who vied for the opportunity to serve would race up the thirty-two amah ramp (Kevesh) of the Altar. Whoever reached the four amot on the top of the ramp first won the privilege to serve. This was all fine until one incident in which two Kohanim raced up the ramp. As both lurched forward to the top, one deliberately pushed the other, who proceeded to fall off the ramp, breaking his leg. When the Bet Din realised that the system was inherently dangerous for the Kohanim, they decreed that the goral process of selection would now be applicable to the terumat ha'deshen. (Source: Peninim on the Torah)

וְזאת תורת החטאת במקום אשר תשחט העֹלָה תשחט החטאת - In the place where the burnt-offering is slaughtered shall the sin-offering be slaughtered. (6:18) Why did the Torah prescribe that the two korbanot be slaughtered in the same place? A sin-offering is brought by a person who has violated the Torah, while a burnt-offering is brought as a contribution to the *Beit Hamikdash*. To protect the reputation of the people, the Torah commands that they both be slaughtered in the same place, so

that if someone observes the animal being slaughtered, he will not suspect that the owner is a sinner, but rather a generous person bringing a contribution. Since *tefillah* (prayer) takes the place of *avodah* (sacrifices), the *Gemara Sotah* 32b says that the sages have prescribed that the *tefillah* of *Shemoneh Esreh* be recited quietly, so that a sinner who wants to confess to Hashem should not be overheard by his neighbour and suffer embarrassment. (Source: Vedibarta Bam)

וּבְלִי-חָרֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּבְשַׁל-בּוֹ יִשָּׁר - And a vessel of earthenware that it (the sin-offering) is cooked in shall be broken (6:21) The meat of every sacrifice could only be eaten within a prescribed period. Any vessel in which meat of a sacrifice was cooked had to be cleansed. However, an earthenware vessel could not be sufficiently cleansed and had to be broken. This is because it is impossible to completely remove the flavour of the meat that was absorbed by the walls of the vessel. The above verse surely intended its basic legal interpretation, (that earthenware which had absorbed forbidden flavours must be broken.) This law applies to all sacrifices. Even so, perhaps the Torah chose to illustrate this law using a sin-offering as an example in order to convey a lesson. The Hebrew term for sin-offering is often used in other contexts to mean sin. An "earthen vessel" is a metaphor for a person because Hashem formed man from the earth. Thus, in the metaphorical sense, a "vessel of earthenware" in which a "sin-offering was cooked" refers to a person in whom sin was "cooked" - the person became so caught up in sin, that the ways of sin have become ingrained in his very being - just as the flavour of something cooked in pottery remains absorbed within the pot's walls. For one whose "vessel" was saturated with the forbidden flavour of the sacrifices, the only course of action was to break the vessel. Likewise for one whose character has absorbed the ways of sin. The solution would be to "break" his heart with sorrow over his misdeeds. Remorse over one's wrongful conduct to the point of a "broken" heart about the sin is a key ingredient of repentance. (Source: Kli Yakar)

וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זְבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב לָהּ אִם עַל-תּוֹדָה יִקְרִיב - This is the law of the Peace Offering that is sacrificed to G-d. It is offered as a Thanksgiving offering(7:11-12) The *Gemara* in *Berachot* 54b rules that a *Korban Todah* (Thanksgiving-Offering) is brought by four groups of people to express their gratitude to Hashem for being saved from potential danger. In the absence of the Temple, they instead publicly recite a blessing known as *Birkat HaGomel*. It is curious to note that after hearing somebody make a blessing we answer simply, "Amen," with one exception. After hearing a person say *Birkat HaGomel*, we respond, "Amen, Mi sheg'malcha kol tov, Hu yigmalcha kol tuv selah" - He who has bestowed upon you all good should continue to bestow upon you all good. As this lengthy response is found nowhere else, it clearly needs an explanation. In his introduction, the *Shalmei Nedorim* offers a beautiful insight based on a fascinating episode related by the *Gemara* in *Shabbat* 53b. The wife of a poor man passed away shortly after giving birth. The pauper lacked the means to hire a nurse-maid for his newborn, but the baby's life was saved when the man's body miraculously became capable of nursing the baby. Rav Yosef praised the man, saying that he must have had great merits to have brought about such an open miracle. Abaye, on the other hand, remarked how lowly he must have been for needing a miracle performed on his behalf. The *Shalmei Nedarim* explains that Abaye's intent was not to say that the man was wicked. After all, he merited an extraordinary miracle to save his child's life. Rather, Abaye was lamenting that the miracle used up so many of his merits (see Rashi *Bereishit* 32:11). In light of this insight, he explains that *Birkat HaGomel* is recited after a person has been saved from potential danger. While we are happy that he survived, we are also afraid that it may have come at the expense of his accumulated merits. As a result, a simple "Amen" won't suffice, and we add a special prayer requesting that his good fortune should continue and not be depleted through this miracle! (Source: Peninim on the Torah)

שבת שלום!  
Shabbat Shalom!



Shabbat starts 6.01pm



Shabbat ends: 7.04pm

לע"נ ר' מרדכי צבי ב"ר חיאל משה וולפסון ז"ל

The *Insights into the Sedra* sheet is edited by Chazan Anthony Wolfson

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