

עץ חיים

ETZ HAYIM

TORAH AND COMMENTARY

THE RABBINICAL ASSEMBLY
THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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6 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²Command Aaron and his sons thus:

This is the ritual of the burnt offering: The burnt offering itself shall remain where it is burned upon the altar all night until morning, while the fire on the altar is kept going on it.

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ²צַו
אֶת-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶת-בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר
זֹאת תֹּרַת הָעֹלָה הִוא הָעֹלָה עַל-
מוֹקְדָה * עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ כָּל-הַלַּיְלָה עַד-

v. 2. מ' זעירא לפי נוסחים מקובלים

THE PRINCIPAL TYPES OF SACRIFICE (continued)

THE DISPOSITION OF SACRIFICES (6:1–7:38)

The rituals for each of the various sacrifices outlined in chapters 1–5 are presented in chapters 6 and 7. These chapters also offer us a unique glimpse into the participation of the priesthood in the sacred meals within the precincts of the sanctuary.

The important Hebrew word *torah*, which appears in these chapters, derives from the verb ירה, “to cast, shoot”—an arrow, for instance. The verb, in one of its forms, means “to aim, direct toward”—hence “to show the way, instruct.” The word *torah* here is limited to the content of the instruction.

THE BURNT OFFERING (*olah*) (vv. 1–6)

For the preparation and presentation of this offering, see Lev. 1.

2. where it is burned On top of the altar grill, where the firewood was placed.

all night until morning The daily burnt offering consisted of two yearling lambs, one offered in the morning and one in the evening. The morning burnt offering, with its accompanying grain offering and libation, were the first offerings placed on the altar of burnt offerings each day. The evening burnt offering and its accompaniments were the final offerings each day. The evening offering was left burning on the altar during the night. First thing in the morning, the ashes of the previous day’s sacrifices were removed and new firewood was added. Although the same altar was used for other sacrifices during the day, it was logical to provide instructions for tending the altar at this point, because public worship began and concluded each day with the burnt offering.

In this *parashah*, we can see why the book is thought to be a manual for *kohanim*. How the *kohen* carries out his part of the sacrificial service is the focus of most of the text.

Neḥama Leibowitz suggests that chapters 1–5 are addressed to the Israelite public. Therefore, they begin with voluntary offerings (*olah*, *minḥah*, and *sh’lamim*) and continue with those that apply only to certain individuals in certain circumstances (e.g., the purification offering of the *kohen*). Chapters 6–7 are directed to the officiating priests. For that reason, the sequence of offerings is changed, beginning with the offerings that have the highest degree of sanctity (“most holy”) and continuing with those of a lesser level of sanctity.

CHAPTER 6

2. Command Aaron . . . This is the ritual of the burnt offering The Talmud reads the He-

brew word *torat* (“ritual of”) as “Torah for”: “In our day, the study of Torah takes the place of bringing animal offerings” (BT Men. 110a). If so, then why command Aaron? Because Aaron might be reluctant to tell the people that the study of Torah is equivalent to bringing sacrifices. That would make the role of the *kohanim* less prominent, as it would present the people with an alternative form of worship (Hatam Sofer).

the fire on the altar is kept going on it The last Hebrew word can also be read “within him” (instead of “on it”). This prompted the comment that the fire on the altar must be paralleled by a fire in the heart of the officiating priest, whose enthusiasm for the sacred nature of the work must never be lost. The congregation, for its part, must recognize its responsibility to see that the enthusiasm and dedication of the clergy are never extinguished.

³The priest shall dress in linen raiment, with linen breeches next to his body; and he shall take up the ashes to which the fire has reduced the burnt offering on the altar and place them beside the altar. ⁴He shall then take off his vestments and put on other vestments, and carry the ashes outside the camp to a pure place. ⁵The fire on the altar shall be kept burning, not to go out: every morning the priest shall feed wood to it, lay out the burnt offering on it, and turn into smoke the fat parts of the offerings of well-being. ⁶A perpetual fire shall be kept burning on the altar, not to go out.

⁷And this is the ritual of the grain offering: Aaron's sons shall present it before the LORD, in front of the altar. ⁸A handful of the choice flour and oil of the grain offering shall be taken from it, with all the frankincense that is on the grain offering, and this token portion shall be turned into smoke on the altar as a pleasing odor to the LORD. ⁹What is left of it shall be eaten by Aaron and his sons; it shall be eaten as unleavened cakes, in the sacred precinct; they shall eat it in the enclosure of the Tent of Meeting. ¹⁰It shall not be baked with leaven; I have given it as their portion from My gifts; it is most holy,

4. take off his vestments The priestly vestments were to be worn only in the sanctuary precincts (Exod. 28:43).

outside the camp to a pure place Called "the ash heap" in 4:12. The spot near the eastern side of the altar where the ashes were dumped is called "the place for the ashes" in 1:16.

6. perpetual fire . . . on the altar, not to go out The requirement to keep the fire burning at all times is also implied in verse 2. Perpetual fire expressed the Israelites' devotion to God by showing that they were attendant on Him at all times in the sanctuary.

3. The first act of the *kohen* every morning is to put on ordinary clothes and remove the ashes of the previous night's sacrifice. This ensures that he never forgets his link to the ordinary people who spend their days

הַבֶּקֶר וְאֵשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תּוֹקֵד בּוֹ: ³ וְלִבְשׁ
הַבְּהֵן מִדּוֹ בָד וּמִכְנָסֵי־בָד יִלְבֹּשׂ עַל־
בְּשָׂרוֹ וְהָרִים אֶת־הַדָּשָׁן אֲשֶׁר תֹּאכַל
הָאֵשׁ אֶת־הָעֵלָה עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְשָׂמוּ אֶצֶל
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ: ⁴ וּפָשַׁט אֶת־בְּגָדָיו וְלִבְשׁ בְּגָדִים
אַחֲרִים וְהוֹצִיא אֶת־הַדָּשָׁן אֶל־מַחוּץ
לַמַּחֲנֶה אֶל־מְקוֹם טָהוֹר: ⁵ וְהָאֵשׁ עַל־
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תּוֹקֵד־בּוֹ לֹא תִכָּבֶה וּבַעַר עָלֶיהָ
הַפֶּהָן עֲצִים בְּבֶקֶר בְּבֶקֶר וְעֶרְבָה עָלֶיהָ
הָעֵלָה וְהִקְטִיר עָלֶיהָ חֻלְבֵי הַשְּׁלָמִים:
⁶ אֵשׁ תָּמִיד תּוֹקֵד עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ לֹא
תִכָּבֶה: ט

⁷ וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הַמִּנְחָה הַקָּרֵב אֹתָהּ בְּנֵי־
אַהֲרֹן לִפְנֵי יְהוָה אֶל־פְּנֵי הַמִּזְבֵּחַ:
⁸ וְהָרִים מִמֶּנּוּ* בְּקִמְצוֹ מִסֹּלֶת הַמִּנְחָה
וּמִשְׁמְנָהּ וְאֵת כָּל־הַלְבָּנָה אֲשֶׁר עַל־
הַמִּנְחָה וְהִקְטִיר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ רִיחַ נִיחֹחַ
אֶזְרָתָהּ לִיהוָה: ⁹ וְהִנּוּחַתָּה מִמֶּנּוּ
יֹאכְלוּ אֹהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו מִצֹּת תֹּאכַל בְּמְקוֹם
קֹדֶשׁ בַּחֲצַר אֹהֶל־מוֹעֵד יֹאכְלוּהָ: ¹⁰ לֹא
תֹאפֶה חֶמֶץ חֻלְקֶם נָתַתִּי אֹתָהּ מֵאֲשֵׁי

v. 8. סבירין ומטעין "ממנה"

THE GRAIN OFFERING (*minḥab*)

(vv. 7–11)

For the preparation and presentation of this offering, see Lev. 2.

9. eaten by Aaron and his sons An important element not stressed in chapter 2: Participation of the priests is indispensable to the efficacy of this ritual.

enclosure of the Tent of Meeting The tabernacle had an enclosed courtyard (e.g., see Exod. 27:9–19, 35:17), an arrangement later duplicated at the temple in Jerusalem. This sacred area, here and in verse 19, is called "courtyard" (*hatzer*); usu-

in mundane pursuits (*Simḥah Bunem*). Why were the ashes treated with such reverence? It symbolizes the idea that what was holy yesterday must be treated with respect today as well.

like the purification offering and the reparation offering. ¹¹Only the males among Aaron's descendants may eat of it, as their due for all time throughout the ages from the LORD's gifts. Anything that touches these shall become holy.

¹²The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹³This is the offering that Aaron and his sons shall offer to the LORD on the occasion of his anointment: a tenth of an *ephah* of choice flour as a regular grain offering, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening, ¹⁴shall be prepared with oil on a griddle. You shall bring it well soaked, and offer it as a grain offering of baked slices, of pleasing odor to the LORD. ¹⁵And so shall the priest, anointed from among his sons to succeed him, prepare it; it is the LORD's—a law for all time—to be turned entirely into smoke. ¹⁶So, too, every grain offering of a priest shall be a whole offering: it shall not be eaten.

קֹדֶשׁ קְדָשִׁים הוּא פְּחֻטָּאת וְכֹאֲשֵׁם: ¹¹כָּל־זָכָר בְּבִנְי אֹהֶרֶן יֹאכְלֶנָה חֶק־עוֹלָם לְדֹרֹתֵיכֶם מֵאִשֵּׁי יְהוָה כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־יִגַע בָּהֶם יִקְדָּשׁ: פ

שְׁנֵי ¹²וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ¹³זֶה קָרְבַּן אֹהֶרֶן וּבָנָיו אֲשֶׁר־יִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה בְּיוֹם הַמִּשְׁחָ אֹתוֹ עֲשִׂירֶת הָאֶפֶה סֹלֶת מִנַּחֵה תָמִיד מִחֻצֵיתָהּ בַּבֹּקֶר וּמִחֻצֵיתָהּ בָּעֶרֶב: ¹⁴עַל־מַחְבֹּת בִּשְׂמֵן תַּעֲשֶׂה מְרֻבֶּכֶת תְּבִיאֶנָה תְּפִינִי מִנַּחֵת פִּתִּים תִּקְרִיב רִיח־נִיחֹח לַיהוָה: ¹⁵וְהִכֹּהֵן הַמֹּשִׁיחַ תַּחֲתָיו מִבָּנָיו יַעֲשֶׂה אֶתְּךָ חֶק־עוֹלָם לַיהוָה כָּלִיל תִּקְטֹר: ¹⁶וְכָל־מִנַּחֵת כֹּהֵן כָּלִיל תִּהְיֶה לֹא תֹאכַל: פ

ally it is referred to as “the entrance of the Tent of Meeting” (*petah ohel mo-ed*), which included a large part of the courtyard.

11. Only the males among Aaron's descendants Any foods brought for sacrifices could be eaten only by the priests themselves. Other food-stuffs collected for their support and other forms of priestly revenue could be used to feed their families.

due Hebrew: *hok* (fem. *hukkah*), which signifies a law ordained by written statute. By extension, it connotes one's lawful share or amount, a rightful due.

Anything that touches these shall become holy The condition of holiness, unlike that of impurity, was not regarded as contagious. Thus it would be better to translate: “Anyone who is to touch these must be in a holy state.” Only consecrated persons may have contact with sacrificial materials. This notion reinforces the opening of the verse: Only Aaronide priests may partake of the sacrifices. An act of consecration is required.

12. ephah See Comment to Exod. 16:36.

THE GRAIN OFFERING OF THE
HIGH PRIEST (vv. 12–16)

13. offering Hebrew: *korban*; see *D'rash* to 1:2.

on the occasion of his anointment The rite of anointing (unction), described in 8:10ff., was essential to the status of the High Priest. The altar, too, was anointed.

regular Hebrew: *tamid*, used for the most part to characterize regular daily offerings.

16. every grain offering of a priest Every offering of grain brought by a priest on his own behalf, or on behalf of the priesthood, in expiation or as a voluntary offering, was to be burned entirely on the altar. This affirms the rule that priests could benefit only for services undertaken on behalf of other Israelites, not on their own behalf. When the offering served only the priests themselves, the usual share of the priests had to be surrendered to God.

10. The purification offerings and the reparation offerings are called “most holy.” A greater degree of holiness is ascribed to the person who has struggled with sin and overcome it than to the person who never has been tempted.

11. only the males Most Conservative synagogues have extended the honor and respon-

sibility of serving as religious officiants, rabbis, and cantors, to women as well.

13. as a regular grain offering The daily grain offering of the High Priest taught the poor not to be ashamed of their grain offering, which was the same size. It also taught the High Priest humility (Abravanel).

¹⁷The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ¹⁸Speak to Aaron and his sons thus: This is the ritual of the purification offering: the purification offering shall be slaughtered before the LORD, at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered: it is most holy. ¹⁹The priest who offers it as a purification offering shall eat of it; it shall be eaten in the sacred precinct, in the enclosure of the Tent of Meeting. ²⁰Anything that touches its flesh shall become holy; and if any of its blood is spattered upon a garment, you shall wash the bespattered part in the sacred precinct. ²¹An earthen vessel in which it was boiled shall be broken; if it was boiled in a copper vessel, [the vessel] shall be scoured and rinsed with water. ²²Only the males in the priestly line may eat of it: it is most holy. ²³But no purification offering may be eaten from which any blood is brought into the Tent of Meeting for expiation in the sanctuary; any such shall be consumed in fire.

וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ¹⁸ דַּבֵּר אֶל־אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל־בָּנָיו לֵאמֹר זֹאת תּוֹרַת הַחֲטָאת בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר תִּשְׁחַט הָעֹלָה תִשְׁחַט הַחֲטָאת לִפְנֵי יְהוָה קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים הוּא: ¹⁹ הַכֹּהֵן הַמַּחֲטֵא אֹתָהּ יֹאכְלֶנָּה בְּמָקוֹם קֹדֶשׁ תֹּאכַל בַּחֲצֵר אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד: ²⁰ כָּל אֲשֶׁר־יִגַע בַּבְּשָׂרָה יִקְדָּשׁ וְאֲשֶׁר יִזֶּה מִדָּמָה עַל־הַבְּגָד אֲשֶׁר יִזֶּה עָלֶיהָ תִכָּבֵס בְּמָקוֹם קֹדֶשׁ: ²¹ וְכִלִּי־חָרָשׁ אֲשֶׁר תִּבְשַׁל־בּוֹ יִשָּׁבֵר וְאִם־בְּכִלֵי נְחֹשֶׁת בְּשָׁלָה וּמִרְקַב וְשִׁטָּף בַּמַּיִם: ²² כָּל־זָכָר בְּכַהֲנַיִם יֹאכַל אֹתָהּ קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים הוּא: ²³ וְכֹל־חֲטָאת אֲשֶׁר יוּבָא מִדָּמָה אֶל־אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לְכַפֵּר בַּקֹּדֶשׁ לֹא תֹאכַל בָּאֵשׁ תִּשְׂרָף: פ

7 This is the ritual of the reparation offering: it is most holy. ²The reparation offering shall

וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת הָאֲשָׁם קֹדֶשׁ קֹדָשִׁים הוּא: ² בְּמָקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִשְׁחַטוּ אֶת־הָעֹלָה יִשְׁחַטּוּ

THE PURIFICATION OFFERING
(*battat*) (6:17–23)

18. The burnt offering (*olah*) was to be slaughtered at the northern side of the altar (1:11). Here we are informed that this rule also applies to the purification offering.

most holy The purification offering is in the category of offerings that are “most sacred” (*kodesh kodashim*). This category, first encountered in 2:3, is mentioned in 6:10; it recurs in 6:22 and in 7:6.

19. enclosure of the Tent of Meeting The entire courtyard is sacred. See Comment to 6:9.

20. Anything that touches its flesh shall become holy Rather, anyone who is to touch its flesh must be in a holy state. See Comment to 6:11.

blood . . . spattered upon a garment Part of the blood of the purification offering was to be placed on the horns of the altar and the rest poured down its side, as ordained in 4:25. Should any sacrificial blood stain a garment, that garment must be laundered, because it would be improper for any of this blood to be used for anything other than its ordained purpose.

21. An earthen vessel in which it was boiled shall be broken

Earthenware, being more porous than metal, absorbs particles of the flesh boiled in it. Some of the sacrificial flesh very likely would remain in the vessel. Such flesh would constitute “leftovers of the sacrifice” (*notar*), forbidden for consumption according to 7:15–17. If other foodstuffs were subsequently boiled in the same vessel, the forbidden sacrificial particles would contaminate the rest. To prevent this, the earthenware vessel had to be broken, because there was no possible way to purify it.

23. This rule refers to the priestly *hattat* as set forth in 4:1–12, to the rites prescribed in 8:17 for the investiture of the priests, and to the *Yom Kippur* ritual in chapter 16.

THE REPARATION OFFERING (*asham*) (7:1–10)

1. ritual of the reparation offering The procedures specified in verses 1–6 for the “reparation offering” (*asham*) correspond to those already mandated for the purification offering in 6:17.

be slaughtered at the spot where the burnt offering is slaughtered, and the blood shall be dashed on all sides of the altar. ³All its fat shall be offered: the broad tail; the fat that covers the entrails; ⁴the two kidneys and the fat that is on them at the loins; and the protuberance on the liver, which shall be removed with the kidneys. ⁵The priest shall turn them into smoke on the altar as a gift to the LORD; it is a reparation offering. ⁶Only the males in the priestly line may eat of it; it shall be eaten in the sacred precinct: it is most holy.

⁷The reparation offering is like the purification offering. The same rule applies to both: it shall belong to the priest who makes expiation thereby. ⁸So, too, the priest who offers a man's burnt offering shall keep the skin of the burnt offering that he offered. ⁹Further, any grain offering that is baked in an oven, and any that is prepared in a pan or on a griddle, shall belong to the priest who offers it. ¹⁰But every other grain offering, with oil mixed in or dry, shall go to the sons of Aaron all alike.

¹¹This is the ritual of the sacrifice of well-being that one may offer to the LORD:

¹²If he offers it for thanksgiving, he shall offer together with the sacrifice of thanksgiving un-

אֶת־הָאֶשֶׁם וְאֶת־דָּמּוֹ יִזְרֹק עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב: ³ וְאֵת כָּל־חֲלָבּוֹ יִקְרִיב מִמֶּנּוּ אֶת הָאֵלֶיָּהּ וְאֶת־הַחֲלֵב הַמְכַסֶּה אֶת־הַקָּרֶב: ⁴ וְאֵת שְׁתֵּי הַכְּפָלִית וְאֶת־הַחֲלֵב אֲשֶׁר עֲלֵיהֶן אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַכְּסָלִים וְאֶת־הַיִּתְּרֹת עַל־הַכְּבֵד עַל־הַכְּפָלִית יִסְרֹנָה: ⁵ וְהִקְטִיר אֹתָם הַכֹּהֵן הַמִּזְבֵּחַהּ אֲשֶׁה לַיהוָה אֲשֶׁם הוּא: ⁶ כָּל־זָכָר בְּכֹהֲנִים יֹאכְלֵנוּ בְּמִקְוֹם קָדוֹשׁ יֹאכֵל קָדֹשׁ קִדְשִׁים הוּא: ⁷ כַּחֲטָאת כָּאֲשֶׁם תּוֹרָה אַחַת לָהֶם הַכֹּהֵן אֲשֶׁר יִכְפָּרֵבּוּ לוֹ יִהְיֶה: ⁸ וְהַכֹּהֵן הַמִּקְרִיב אֶת־עֹלֹת אִישׁ עֹר הָעֹלָה אֲשֶׁר הַקְרִיב לַכֹּהֵן לוֹ יִהְיֶה: ⁹ וְכָל־מִנְחָה אֲשֶׁר תֵּאָפֶה בַּתֹּנֹר וְכָל־נֶעֱשְׂהָ בַּמְרַחֶשֶׁת וְעַל־מַחֲבֹת לַכֹּהֵן הַמִּקְרִיב אֹתָהּ לוֹ תִּהְיֶה: ¹⁰ וְכָל־מִנְחָה בְּלוּלָה־בְּשֶׁמֶן וְחֲרֻבָּה לְכָל־בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן תִּהְיֶה אִישׁ כְּאָחִיו: ^פ

וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב לַיהוָה: ¹¹ וְזֹאת תּוֹרַת זֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב לַיהוָה: ¹²

אִם עַל־תּוֹדָה יִקְרִיבֶנּוּ וְהַקְרִיב אֶל־זֶבַח הַתּוֹדָה חֲלוֹת מִצּוֹת בְּלוּלֹת בְּשֶׁמֶן

7. it shall belong to the priest who makes expiation thereby Sacrifices of expiation eaten by the priests are actually their property.

8. The officiating priest, in most cases, could keep the hide as his own and profit from its value.

9–10. Verse 9 speaks of offerings prepared in an oven, in a pan, or on a griddle, all of which belong to the officiating priest. Verse 10 speaks of other offerings that belong to all priests. These verses are saying, in effect, that the parts of the grain offerings due to the priests are to go to the officiants at these rites.

THE SACRIFICE OF WELL-BEING
(*zevah ha-sh'lamim*) (vv. 11–34)

11. As in chapter 3, this section uses the term *sh'lamim* in a general sense, referring to all sacrifices of the *zevah* type.

12. for thanksgiving For expressing one's gratitude to God for deliverance from danger or misfortune.

sacrifice of thanksgiving Hebrew: *zevah todah*, which refers here to the animal sacrifice ordained in chapter 3: a sheep or a goat of either gender. The ritual first considers the preparation

CHAPTER 7

12. An individual brings an offering of thanksgiving (*todah*) in response to having been

spared from disaster, which produces probably one of the most profound emotions that person will ever know. The Talmud (BT Ber. 54b) identifies the circumstances in which a person

leavened cakes with oil mixed in, unleavened wafers spread with oil, and cakes of choice flour with oil mixed in, well soaked. ¹³This offering, with cakes of leavened bread added, he shall offer along with his thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being. ¹⁴Out of this he shall offer one of each kind as a gift to the LORD; it shall go to the priest who dashes the blood of the offering of well-being. ¹⁵And the flesh of his thanksgiving sacrifice of well-being shall be eaten on the day that it is offered; none of it shall be set aside until morning.

¹⁶If, however, the sacrifice he offers is a votive

and disposition of the grain offerings of both unleavened and leavened cakes that accompanied the animal sacrifice, a matter not taken up elsewhere in Leviticus. It then deals with the animal sacrifice itself, the basic information for which is in chapter 3.

13. No leaven may be placed on the altar of burnt offerings (Lev. 2:11). Thus only the unleavened cakes are offered on the altar, not the leavened cakes.

with . . . added . . . along with Hebrew: *al*; literally, “on.” This preposition occurs twice in this verse, where it means “in addition to.”

14. one of each kind as a gift to the LORD Sacrificial procedures in biblical Israel, and in the ancient Near East generally, often dictated that the offering first be presented to the deity for acceptance, at which time it belonged entirely to

וּרְקִיקֵי מִצֹּת מִשְׁחִים בְּשֶׁמֶן וְסֹלֶת
מְרֻבֶּכֶת חֹלֶת בְּלוּלֹת בְּשֶׁמֶן: ¹³ עַל-חֹלֶת
לָחֶם חֲמִץ יִקְרִיב קֶרְבָּנוֹ עַל-זֶבַח תּוֹדֹת
שְׁלָמָיו: ¹⁴ וְהִקְרִיב מִמֶּנּוּ אֶחָד מִכָּל-קֶרְבָּן
תְּרוּמָה לַיהוָה לִכְהֹן הַזֹּרֵק אֶת-יָדָם
הַשְּׁלָמִים לוֹ יִהְיֶה: ¹⁵ וּבִשְׂרֵר זֶבַח תּוֹדֹת
שְׁלָמָיו בְּיוֹם קֶרְבָּנוֹ יֹאכַל לֹא-יִנְיַח מִמֶּנּוּ
עַד-בֹּקֶר:

וְאִם-נִדְרָר | אֹו נִדְבָה זֶבַח קֶרְבָּנוֹ בְּיוֹם

that deity. Only then did the deity grant portions of the offering to the priests and, occasionally, to the donors as well. Consequently, even in this case, in which no part of the leavened grain offering was placed on the altar, it could be considered as an offering to the Lord.

15. The flesh must be eaten on the day the altar sacrifice is made. If not consumed then, it must be burned. This is yet another difference between the thanksgiving sacrifice (*todah*) and other *sh'lamim* sacrifices.

16. Except in the case of a thanksgiving offering (*todah*), the flesh of *sh'lamim* sacrifices may be eaten until the third day, a rule also stated in 19:5–8. There were no restrictions regarding where the donor of a *sh'lamim* could eat his or her portion of the offering, so long as no person in an impure state partook of the flesh (v. 19).

should bring a *todah*: when one has safely completed a dangerous journey, recovered from illness, been released from confinement, or survived other dangers. The custom continues to this day in the *Gomel* blessing offered in the synagogue, during the Torah reading, by a worshiper who has avoided or survived misfortune. The talmudic text states that people “need” (*tzrikhin*) to bring a *todah* rather than “are obliged” to bring one, perhaps to suggest that the grateful individual brings the *todah* to fulfill a psychological need rather than to meet a religious obligation.

15. Several commentators connect the requirement that the *todah* be eaten on the day it is offered and on the following evening to the fact that it is brought in response to a

miracle in the life of the donor. Abravanel says that if it must be consumed in a single day, the owner will invite more people to share it, thus publicizing the miracle more widely. “On being asked what prompted this feast, the host will recount some good fortune and the divine wonder it represents.” We should have confidence that each new day will produce its own miracle. Therefore, the feast celebrating a miraculous event should be confined to one day and not extended into the next. Tomorrow will bring its own miracle (Yitzhak Meir Alter of Ger). “In time to come, there will be no sacrifices except for the offering of thanksgiving, and there will be no prayers except for prayers of thanksgiving” (Lev. R. 9:7).

or a freewill offering, it shall be eaten on the day that he offers his sacrifice, and what is left of it shall be eaten on the morrow. ¹⁷What is then left of the flesh of the sacrifice shall be consumed in fire on the third day. ¹⁸If any of the flesh of his sacrifice of well-being is eaten on the third day, it shall not be acceptable; it shall not count for him who offered it. It is an offensive thing, and the person who eats of it shall bear his guilt.

¹⁹Flesh that touches anything impure shall not be eaten; it shall be consumed in fire. As for other flesh, only he who is pure may eat such flesh. ²⁰But the person who, in a state of impurity, eats flesh from the LORD's sacrifices of well-being, that person shall be cut off from his kin. ²¹When a person touches anything impure, be it human impurity or an impure animal or any impure creature, and eats flesh from the LORD's sacrifices of well-being, that person shall be cut off from his kin.

²²And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²³Speak to the Israelite people thus: You shall eat no fat of ox or sheep or goat. ²⁴Fat from animals that died or were torn by beasts may be put to any use, but you must not eat it. ²⁵If anyone eats the fat of animals from which gifts may be made to the LORD, the person who eats

הַקָּרִיבוֹ אֶת־זִבְחוֹ יֵאָכַל וּמִמֶּחֳרָת
וְהַנּוֹתֵר מִמֶּנּוּ יֵאָכַל: ¹⁷ וְהַנּוֹתֵר מִבֶּשֶׂר
הַזֶּבֶחַ בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי בְּאֵשׁ יִשְׂרָף: ¹⁸ וְאִם
הָאָכַל יֵאָכַל מִבֶּשֶׂר־זֶבֶחַ שְׁלָמִיו בַּיּוֹם
הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לֹא יִרְצֶה הַמִּקְרִיב אֹתוֹ לֹא
יִחָשֵׁב לוֹ פְּגוּל יִהְיֶה וְהִנֵּפֶשׁ הָאֲכָלָת
מִמֶּנּוּ עֲוֹנָה תִּשָּׂא:

¹⁹ וְהַבֶּשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר־יִגַע בְּכֹל־טְמֵא לֹא יֵאָכַל
בְּאֵשׁ יִשְׂרָף וְהַבֶּשֶׂר כָּל־טְהוֹר יֵאָכַל
בֶּשֶׂר: ²⁰ וְהִנֵּפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־תֹּאכַל בְּשׂוֹר מִזֶּבֶחַ
הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר לַיהוָה וְטִמְאַתּוֹ עָלָיו
וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמִּיהָ: ²¹ וְנִפְשׁ
כִּי־תִגַע בְּכֹל־טְמֵא בְטִמְאַת אָדָם אוֹ
בְּבִהְמָה טְמֵאָה אוֹ בְּכֹל־שֶׁקֶץ טְמֵא וְאָכַל
מִבֶּשֶׂר־זֶבֶחַ הַשְּׁלָמִים אֲשֶׁר לַיהוָה
וְנִכְרְתָה הַנֶּפֶשׁ הַהוּא מֵעַמִּיהָ: פ

²² וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ²³ דַּבֵּר
אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר כָּל־חֵלֶב שׂוֹר
וְכֶשֶׂב וְעִז לֹא תֹאכְלוּ: ²⁴ וְחֵלֶב נִבְלָה
וְחֵלֶב טְרֵפָה יַעֲשֶׂה לְכֹל־מְלֹאכָה וְאָכַל
לֹא תֹאכְלוּהוּ: ²⁵ כִּי כָל־אֲכָל חֵלֶב מִן־
הַבִּהְמָה אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב מִמֶּנָּה אִשָּׁה לַיהוָה

freewill offering Hebrew: *n'davah*, which also serves as a general term for many types of voluntary contributions to the sanctuary. Like the *todah*, it expresses gratitude to God and is often mentioned together with the vow (*neder*).

18. Because the sacrificial meat was left uneaten for an improper length of time, the sacrifice itself was not efficacious. In this verse, the penalty for eating flesh remaining from the *sh'lamim* sacrifice after the third day is stated merely as "bearing one's guilt," whereas in 19:5–8 the same offense brings on the penalty of being cut off from the religious community.

19. Beginning with this verse, the text deals more explicitly with the subject of impurity, a concern particularly relevant to the *sh'lamim*, be-

cause parts of it were handled by ordinary Israelites outside the sanctuary.

23. You shall eat no fat See Comment to 3:3.

24. Fat from animals that died An animal torn by beasts (*t'refah*) and the carcass of a dead animal (*n'velah*) are forbidden in their entirety (Exod. 22:30, Lev. 17:15). Hence, any part of such an animal would also be forbidden. It is likely that this seemingly superfluous rule was included here for emphasis, to reinforce the ban on eating organ fat (*heilev*) (see 3:16).

25. from which gifts may be made This clarifies the provisions of verse 23. The *heilev* of large and small cattle is forbidden, because such animals are of the kind offered as sacrifices.

it shall be cut off from his kin. ²⁶And you must not consume any blood, either of bird or of animal, in any of your settlements. ²⁷Anyone who eats blood shall be cut off from his kin.

²⁸And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²⁹Speak to the Israelite people thus: The offering to the LORD from a sacrifice of well-being must be presented by him who offers his sacrifice of well-being to the LORD: ³⁰his own hands shall present the LORD's gifts. He shall present the fat with the breast, the breast to be elevated as an elevation offering before the LORD; ³¹the priest shall turn the fat into smoke on the altar, and the breast shall go to Aaron and his sons. ³²And the right thigh from your sacrifices of well-being you shall present to the priest as a gift; ³³he from among Aaron's sons who offers the blood and the fat of the offering of well-being shall get the right thigh as his portion. ³⁴For I have taken the breast of elevation offering and the thigh of gift offering from the Israelites, from their sacrifices of well-being, and given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons as their due from the Israelites for all time.

³⁵Those shall be the perquisites of Aaron and the perquisites of his sons from the LORD's gifts, once they have been inducted to serve the LORD as priests; ³⁶these the LORD commanded to be given them, once they had been anointed, as a due from the Israelites for all time throughout the ages.

29–30. The donor of the *sh'lamim* had to personally participate in the presentation of the offering. Because nonpriests could not actually place sacrifices on the altar—indeed, they were banned from the adjacent area—the rite of “presentation” (*t'nufah*) afforded them some measure of participation in sacrifices of lesser sanctity such as this one.

30. the breast to be elevated as an elevation offering before the LORD The offering was

וּנְכַרְתָּהּ הַנֶּפֶשׁ הָאֲכָלֶת מֵעַמִּיהָ: ²⁶ וְכָל־
דָּם לֹא תֹאכְלוּ בְּכָל מוֹשְׁבֹתֵיכֶם לְעוֹף
וְלַבְּהֵמָה: ²⁷ כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ אֲשֶׁר־תֹאכַל כָּל־
דָּם וּנְכַרְתָּהּ הֵנֶפֶשׁ הִיא מֵעַמִּיהָ: פ

²⁸ וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל־מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר: ²⁹ דַּבֵּר
אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר הַמִּקְרִיב אֶת־זֶבַח
שְׁלָמָיו לַיהוָה יָבִיא אֶת־קָרְבָּנוֹ לַיהוָה
מִזֶּבַח שְׁלָמָיו: ³⁰ יָדָיו תְּבִיאֶינָה אֶת אֲשֵׁי
יְהוָה אֶת־הַחֶלֶב עַל־הַחֹזֶה יְבִיאֵנוּ אֶת
הַחֹזֶה לְהַנִּיף אֹתוֹ תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה:
³¹ וְהִקְטִיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַחֶלֶב הַמִּזְבֵּחַ
וְהָיָה הַחֹזֶה לְאַהֲרֹן וּלְבָנָיו: ³² וְאֵת שׁוֹק
הַיָּמִין תִּתְּנוּ תְּרוּמָה לַכֹּהֵן מִזִּבְחֵי
שְׁלָמֵיכֶם: ³³ הַמִּקְרִיב אֶת־דָּם הַשְּׁלָמִים
וְאֶת־הַחֶלֶב מִבְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן לוֹ תִּהְיֶה שׁוֹק
הַיָּמִין לְמִנְחָה: ³⁴ כִּי אֶת־חֹזֶה הַתְּנוּפָה
וְאֵת | שׁוֹק הַתְּרוּמָה לְקַחְתִּי מֵאֵת
בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל מִזִּבְחֵי שְׁלָמֵיהֶם וְאֶתֶּן אֹתָם
לְאַהֲרֹן הַכֹּהֵן וּלְבָנָיו לְחֶק־עוֹלָם מֵאֵת
בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

³⁵ וְזֹאת מִשְׁחַת אַהֲרֹן וּמִשְׁחַת בָּנָיו מֵאֲשֵׁי
יְהוָה בְּיוֹם הַקָּרִיב אֹתָם לְכַהֵן לַיהוָה:
³⁶ אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה לָתֵת לָהֶם בְּיוֹם מִשְׁחוֹ
אֹתָם מֵאֵת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל חֶקֶת עוֹלָם
לְדוֹרָתָם:

raised up, in dedication to God. “Elevation offering” here is the designation for *t'nufah*, derived from the verb *benif* (lift, raise).

31. the priest shall turn the fat into smoke The priest was entitled to take the breast and the right thigh of the sacrificial animal only after God's share of the offering (i.e., the fatty portions) had been burned on the altar.

34. the thigh of gift offering See Comment to 7:14.

³⁷Such are the rituals of the burnt offering, the grain offering, the purification offering, the reparation offering, the offering of ordination, and the sacrifice of well-being,³⁸with which the LORD charged Moses on Mount Sinai, when He commanded that the Israelites present their offerings to the LORD, in the wilderness of Sinai.

8 The LORD spoke to Moses, saying: ²Take Aaron along with his sons, and the vestments, the anointing oil, the bull of purification offering, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread; ³and assemble the whole community at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. ⁴Moses did as the LORD commanded him. And when the community was assembled at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, ⁵Moses said to the community, “This is what the LORD has commanded to be done.”

⁶Then Moses brought Aaron and his sons forward and washed them with water. ⁷He put the

זאת התורה לעלה למנחה ולחטאת ולאשם ולמלוואים ולזבח השלמים: ³⁸אשר צוה יהוה את-משה בהר סיני ביום צותו את-בני ישראל להקריב את-קרבניהם ליהוה במדבר סיני: פ

ח רביעי וידבר יהוה אל-משה לאמר: ²קח את-אהרן ואת-בניו אתו ואת הבגדים ואת שמן המשחה ואת פר החטאת ואת שני האילים ואת סל המצות: ³ואת כל-העדה הקהל אל-פתח אהל מועד: ⁴ויעש משה כאשר צוה יהוה אתו ותקהל העדה אל-פתח אהל מועד: ⁵ויאמר משה אל-העדה זה הדבר אשר-צוה יהוה לעשות: ⁶ויקרב משה את-אהרן ואת-בניו וירחץ אתם במים: ⁷ויתן עליו את-הכֹּהֵן

SUMMARY (7:35–38)

37. Such are the rituals All of the rituals set forth in chapters 6–7.

the offering of ordination This probably refers to the grain offering burned on the altar by

the High Priest, prescribed in 6:12–16. The ordination rites are presented in chapters 8–9.

38. This verse asserts that in the wilderness of Sinai, the Israelites already had worshiped God with sacrifices.

THE INITIATION OF FORMAL WORSHIP (8:1–9:24)

Chapters 8 and 9 offer a detailed description of the religious celebrations that mark the beginning of formal worship in ancient Israel. The origin of Israelite worship was of great importance to the priesthood because of the formidable role priests occupied in this area of Israelite life.

CONSECRATION OF PRIESTS AND TABERNACLE (8:1–36)

2. anointing oil See Exod. 30:22–25.

3. assemble the whole community The ac-

tual place of assembly was in the outer section of the courtyard, not directly in front of the tent. Only priests were permitted to advance beyond the altar of burnt offerings, which stood in the courtyard about halfway between the outer gate and the entrance to the tent proper.

6. washed them with water Washing is a universal feature of religious ritual. Beyond the obvious hygienic advantages of water, its use in ritual also serves as symbolic purification.

7. The High Priest wore a total of eight vest-

37. Such are the rituals Hebrew: *zot ha-torah*; Menaḥem Mendel of Kotzk reads “This is the Torah,” and then renders the offerings by their root meanings: “the Torah leads some people to *olah* (rising higher) and

minḥah (generosity), but leads other people to *ḥattat* and *asham* (feelings of guilt).” The summary list concludes with *sh’lamim*, even as so many Jewish prayers, including the *Amidah*, the priestly benediction, and the *Kaddish*, con-

tunic on him, girded him with the sash, clothed him with the robe, and put the ephod on him, girding him with the decorated band with which he tied it to him. ⁸He put the breastpiece on him, and put into the breastpiece the Urim and Thummim. ⁹And he set the headdress on his head; and on the headdress, in front, he put the gold frontlet, the holy diadem—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁰Moses took the anointing oil and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was in it, thus consecrating them. ¹¹He sprinkled some of it on the altar seven times, anointing the altar, all its utensils, and the laver with its stand, to consecrate them. ¹²He poured some of the anointing oil upon Aaron’s head and anointed him, to consecrate him. ¹³Moses then brought Aaron’s sons forward, clothed them in tunics, girded them with sashes, and wound turbans upon them, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁴He led forward the bull of purification offering. Aaron and his sons laid their hands

וַיַּחְגֹּר אֹתוֹ בְּאַבְנֵיט וַיִּלְבַּשׁ אֹתוֹ אֶת־
הַמְעִיל וַיִּתֵּן עָלָיו אֶת־הָאֶפֶד וַיַּחְגֹּר אֹתוֹ
בַּחֹשֶׁב הָאֶפֶד וַיִּאֲפֹד לוֹ בּוֹ: ⁸*וַיִּשֶׂם עָלָיו
אֶת־הַחֹשֶׁן וַיִּתֵּן אֶל־הַחֹשֶׁן אֶת־הָאוּרִים
וְאֶת־הַתְּמִיּוֹת: ⁹וַיִּשֶׂם אֶת־הַמִּצְנֶפֶת עַל־
רֹאשׁוֹ וַיִּשֶׂם עַל־הַמִּצְנֶפֶת אֶל־מֹול פָּנָיו
אֶת צִיץ הַזָּהָב נֹזֵר הַקֹּדֶשׁ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה
יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה:

¹⁰וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת־שֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וַיִּמְשַׁח
אֶת־הַמִּשְׁכָּן וְאֶת־כָּל־אֲשֵׁר־בּוֹ וַיִּקְדָּשׁ
אֹתָם: ¹¹וַיִּזּוּ מִמֶּנּוּ עַל־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ שֶׁבַע
פְּעָמִים וַיִּמְשַׁח אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־כָּל־
כֵּלָיו וְאֶת־הַכִּיֹּר וְאֶת־כַּנּוֹ לְקִדְשָׁם:
¹²וַיִּצַק מִשֶׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה עַל רֹאשׁ אַהֲרֹן
וַיִּמְשַׁח אֹתוֹ לְקִדְשׁוֹ: ¹³וַיִּקְרַב מֹשֶׁה
אֶת־בְּנֵי אַהֲרֹן וַיִּלְבָּשֵׂם כִּתְנֹת וַיַּחְגֹּר
אֹתָם אַבְנֵיט וַיַּחְבֹּשׁ לָהֶם מִגְבָּעוֹת כַּאֲשֶׁר
צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה:

חמישי ¹⁴ וַיִּגִּשׁ אֶת פַּר הַחֹטְאֹת וַיִּסְמְךְ אַהֲרֹן

v. 8. חצי התורה בפסוקים

ments, four of which were unique to him (see Exod. 28 and 39).

8. breastpiece Made of wool and linen, with gold threads woven into the fabric, and 12 gem stones were set into the cloth, with the name of a different tribe of Israel engraved on each stone.

Urim and Thummim These were flat stones used for the casting of lots. The act of casting lots was the only form of divination permitted in ancient Israelite official worship, which normally objected to the use of omens for predicting the future.

9. headdress Ordinary priests wore turbans; only the High Priest wore the royal headdress.

10–12. In these verses we read of two parallel acts: the consecration of Aaron, the High Priest, and the consecration of the altar and the tabernacle with its vessels. Both were accomplished by the same means—anointing with the same oil. In this way Aaron, too, became a sacred vessel.

13. After the sons of Aaron were robed, the sacrifices of ordination commenced.

14. Large cattle were used in purification offerings when the entire community, or the High Priest in particular, were affected.

clude with *shalom* “peace,” the ultimate blessing.

CHAPTER 8

12. anointed him, to consecrate him The verb translated as “anointed” (*va-yimshah*) is related to the noun *mashi-ah* (messiah), which originally meant “anointed one.” It referred to a priest, and later to a king, who

had been consecrated for special responsibility. Throughout the Bible, it refers only to a human priest or king. The prophets’ vision of the Messiah was of a good and benevolent king who would earn peace and prosperity for the people by serving God wholeheartedly (see Isa. 11:1–9). Biblical and Rabbinic Judaism as a rule did not conceive of the Messiah as a superhuman redeemer.

upon the head of the bull of purification offering, ¹⁵and it was slaughtered. Moses took the blood and with his finger put some on each of the horns of the altar, purifying the altar; then he poured out the blood at the base of the altar. Thus he consecrated it in order to make expiation upon it.

¹⁶Moses then took all the fat that was about the entrails, and the protuberance of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat, and turned them into smoke on the altar. ¹⁷The rest of the bull, its hide, its flesh, and its dung, he put to the fire outside the camp—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁸Then he brought forward the ram of burnt offering. Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the ram's head, ¹⁹and it was slaughtered. Moses dashed the blood against all sides of the altar. ²⁰The ram was cut up into sections and Moses turned the head, the sections, and the suet into smoke on the altar; ²¹Moses washed the entrails and the legs with water and turned all of the ram into smoke. That was a burnt offering for a pleasing odor, a gift to the LORD—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²²He brought forward the second ram, the ram of ordination. Aaron and his sons laid their hands upon the ram's head, ²³and it was slaughtered. Moses took some of its blood and put it on the ridge of Aaron's right ear, and on the thumb of his right hand, and on the big toe of his right foot. ²⁴Moses then brought forward the sons of Aaron, and put some of the blood on the ridges of their right ears, and on the thumbs of their right hands, and on the big toes of their

וּבָנָיו אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־רֹאשׁ פֶּרֶ הַחֹטָאֵת :
 וַיִּשְׁחָט וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁה אֶת־הַדָּם וַיִּתֵּן
 עַל־קַרְנוֹת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב בְּאֶצְבָּעוֹ וַיַּחֲטֵא
 אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וְאֶת־הַדָּם יָצַק אֶל־יְסוֹד
 הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּקְדְּשֵׁהוּ לְכַפֵּר עָלָיו :

וַיִּקַּח אֶת־כָּל־הַחֶלֶב אֲשֶׁר עַל־הַקֶּרֶב
 וְאֵת יִתְרַת הַכֶּבֶד וְאֶת־שְׁתֵי הַכְּלִיֹּת
 וְאֶת־חִלְבֵהֶן וַיִּקְטֹר וַיִּקְטֹר מִשָּׁה הַמִּזְבֵּחַ :
 וְאֶת־הַפֶּר וְאֶת־עֵרוֹ וְאֶת־בְּשָׂרוֹ וְאֶת־
 פְּרָשׁוֹ שָׂרָף בְּאֵשׁ מִחוּץ לַמַּחֲנֶה כַּאֲשֶׁר
 צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת־מֹשֶׁה :

וַיִּקְרָב אֶת אֵיל הָעֹלָה וַיִּסְמְכוּ אֹהֲרֵן
 וּבָנָיו אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־רֹאשׁ הָאֵיל :
 וַיִּשְׁחָט וַיִּזְרַק מִשָּׁה אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־
 הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב :²⁰ וְאֶת־הָאֵיל נָתַח
 לְנִתְחָיו וַיִּקְטֹר מִשָּׁה אֶת־הָרֹאשׁ וְאֶת־
 הַנִּתְחִים וְאֶת־הַפָּדֶר :²¹ וְאֶת־הַקֶּרֶב
 וְאֶת־הַפְּרָעִים רָחַץ בַּמַּיִם וַיִּקְטֹר מִשָּׁה
 אֶת־כָּל־הָאֵיל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עֲלֵה הוּא לְרִיח־
 נִיחֹחַ אֲשֶׁה הוּא לַיהוָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה
 אֶת־מֹשֶׁה :

וַיִּקְרָב אֶת־הָאֵיל הַשְּׁנִי אֵיל הַמְּלֹאִים
 וַיִּסְמְכוּ אֹהֲרֵן וּבָנָיו אֶת־יְדֵיהֶם עַל־רֹאשׁ
 הָאֵיל :²³ וַיִּשְׁחָט וַיִּקַּח מִשָּׁה מִדָּמּוֹ וַיִּתֵּן
 עַל־תְּנוּפֵה אֹזֶן־אֹהֲרֵן הַיְמָנִית וְעַל־בֶּהֶן יְדּוֹ
 הַיְמָנִית וְעַל־בֶּהֶן רִגְלוֹ הַיְמָנִית :²⁴ וַיִּקְרָב
 אֶת־בָּנֵי אֹהֲרֵן וַיִּתֵּן מִשָּׁה מִן־הַדָּם עַל־
 תְּנוּפֵה אֹזְנָם הַיְמָנִית וְעַל־בֶּהֶן יָדָם

15. he consecrated it in order to make expiation upon it Expiatory sacrifices required an altar.

18–21. The function of this sacrifice was to evoke a favorable response from God before making an approach with other sacrifices.

23. blood... Aaron's right ear Dabbing sacrificial blood on certain extremities of the body is essentially a rite of purification. In this manner

Aaron and his sons were purified as they entered into their new status.

24. the rest of the blood Moses dashed against every side of the altar This is similar to what occurred during the covenantal ceremony at Sinai (Exod. 24:6–8). In the ordination of the priests, the sacrificial blood served a dual function. It purified the priests and also bound them in a covenant of service to God in the tabernacle.

right feet; and the rest of the blood Moses dashed against every side of the altar. ²⁵He took the fat—the broad tail, all the fat about the entrails, the protuberance of the liver, and the two kidneys and their fat—and the right thigh. ²⁶From the basket of unleavened bread that was before the LORD, he took one cake of unleavened bread, one cake of oil bread, and one wafer, and placed them on the fat parts and on the right thigh. ²⁷He placed all these on the palms of Aaron and on the palms of his sons, and elevated them as an elevation offering before the LORD. ²⁸Then Moses took them from their hands and turned them into smoke on the altar with the burnt offering. This was an ordination offering for a pleasing odor; it was a gift to the LORD. ²⁹Moses took the breast and elevated it as an elevation offering before the LORD; it was Moses' portion of the ram of ordination—as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰And Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood that was on the altar and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his vestments, and also upon his sons and upon their vestments. Thus he consecrated Aaron and his vestments, and also his sons and their vestments.

³¹Moses said to Aaron and his sons: Boil the flesh at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and eat it there with the bread that is in the basket of ordination—as I commanded: Aaron and his sons shall eat it; ³²and what is left over of the flesh and the bread you shall consume in fire. ³³You shall not go outside the entrance of the Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the

הַיְמָנִית וְעַל-בִּהֶן רִגְלָם הַיְמָנִית וַיִּזְרוּק מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַדָּם עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב: ²⁵ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הַחֵלֶב וְאֶת-הָאֵלֶיָּהּ וְאֶת-כָּל-הַחֵלֶב אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַקֶּרֶב וְאֵת יִתְרֵת הַכֶּבֶד וְאֶת-שְׁתֵּי הַכְּלָיִת וְאֶת-חֵלְבֵהֶן וְאֵת שׁוֹק הַיְמִינִי: ²⁶ וּמִסַּל הַמִּצּוֹת אֲשֶׁר לִפְנֵי יְהוָה לָקַח חֶלֶת מִצָּה אַחַת וְחֶלֶת לֶחֶם שֶׁמֶן אַחַת וְרִקִּיק אֶחָד וַיִּשֶׂם עַל-הַחֲלָבִים וְעַל שׁוֹק הַיְמִינִי: ²⁷ וַיִּתֵּן אֶת-הַכֹּל עַל כַּפְּי אַהֲרֹן וְעַל כַּפְּי בָנָיו וַיִּנָּף אֹתָם תְּנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה: ²⁸ וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֹתָם מֵעַל כַּפֵּיהֶם וַיִּקְטֶר הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עַל-הָעֹלָה מִלְּאִים הֵם לְרִיחַ נִיחֹחַ אֲשֶׁה הוּא לַיהוָה: ²⁹ וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה אֶת-הַחֹזֶה וַיְנַיֶּפְהוּ תְנוּפָה לִפְנֵי יְהוָה מֵאֵיל הַמִּלְּאִים לְמֹשֶׁה הִיָּה לְמִנְחָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה:

³⁰ וַיִּקַּח מֹשֶׁה מִשֶּׁמֶן הַמִּשְׁחָה וּמִן-הַדָּם אֲשֶׁר עַל-הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וַיִּזֶּוּ עַל-אַהֲרֹן עַל-בְּגָדָיו וְעַל-בָּנָיו וְעַל-בְּגָדֵי בָנָיו אֶת-אַהֲרֹן אֶת-בְּגָדָיו וְאֶת-בְּגָדֵי בָנָיו אֹתוֹ:

³¹ וַיֹּאמֶר מֹשֶׁה אֶל-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל-בָּנָיו בְּשֹׁלוֹ אֶת-הַבָּשָׂר פָּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד וְשֶׁם תֹּאכְלוּ אֹתוֹ וְאֶת-הַלֶּחֶם אֲשֶׁר בַּסַּל הַמִּלְּאִים כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי לֵאמֹר אַהֲרֹן וּבָנָיו יֹאכְלֵהוּ: ³² וְהַנּוֹתֵר בַּבָּשָׂר וּבַלֶּחֶם בָּאֵשׁ תִּשְׂרְפוּ: ³³ וּמִפְתַּח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד לֹא תֵצְאוּ שְׁבַעַת יָמִים עַד יוֹם מְלֵאת יְמֵי מִלְּאֵיכֶם בִּי

27. all these Included here among the parts of the sacrifice burned on the altar was the thigh, which belonged to the priests (Lev. 7:32). In the rites of ordination, the priests surrendered their own portion to God, because it would have been improper for them to benefit from what was offered on their own behalf. Moses, however, received his portion.

30. A mix of anointing oil and sacrificial blood was sprinkled on Aaron and his sons and on their vestments. This completed their ordination.

31. Moses instructed Aaron and his sons on how to dispose of Moses' own portion of the sacrifice. It was vital to the efficacy of the ordination sacrifice that the priests actually partake of it.

33. The priests were not inside the tent but,

day that your period of ordination is completed. For your ordination will require seven days. ³⁴Everything done today, the LORD has commanded to be done [seven days], to make expiation for you. ³⁵You shall remain at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting day and night for seven days, keeping the LORD's charge—that you may not die—for so I have been commanded.

³⁶And Aaron and his sons did all the things that the LORD had commanded through Moses.

rather, near its entrance, in the inner section of the tabernacle courtyard. They were not to leave this sanctified area for seven days, to avoid contact with anything or anyone impure.

שְׁבַעַת יָמִים יִמְלֵא אֶת־יְדֵכֶם: ³⁴ כַּאֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה צִוְּהָ יְהוָה לַעֲשׂוֹת לְכַפֵּר עֲלֵיכֶם: ³⁵ וּפְתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד תִּשְׁבּוּ יוֹמָם וּלְיָלֵה שְׁבַעַת יָמִים וּשְׁמֵרְתֶם אֶת־מִשְׁמֶרֶת יְהוָה וְלֹא תִמּוּתוּ כִּי־כֵן צִוִּיתִי: ³⁶ וַיַּעַשׂ אֶהֱרֹן וּבָנָיו אֵת כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים אֲשֶׁר־צִוְּהָ יְהוָה בְּיַד־מֹשֶׁה: ט

35. the LORD's charge To follow the instructions given on this occasion.

33. seven days These days parallel the seven days of Creation. The existence of the tabernacle and its capacity to atone for human sinfulness and imperfection make it possible for an imperfect world to survive in the sight of a just God. The Midrash emphasizes that "if

God demands absolute justice, there can be no world. If God desires a world, there cannot be absolute justice" (Lev. R. 10:1).

36. As is often true, the *parashah* concludes on a positive note—in this case, by highlighting the priests' faithful obedience to God.

הַפְּטָרָה לַשַּׁבָּת הַגָּדוֹל

HAFTARAH FOR SHABBAT HA-GADOL

MALACHI 3:4–24

This *haftarah* contains God's promise to the people in the period after the rebuilding of the Temple in 516–15 B.C.E. The prophet announces that sacrificial offerings will again be favorably received by God, as in ancient times. First, however, God will contend with the nation's breach of moral and ritual law and bring sinners to judgment. Hope lies in repentance and in observance of the Torah. God's call to the people through Malachi, the healing mission of Elijah, and the teaching of Moses all show God's continual concern for reconciliation and human welfare.

Restoration is the recurrent theme of this *haftarah*: the restoration of acceptable offerings in the Temple (3:4), the repair of the Covenant through repentance (v. 7), the renewal of trust in divine justice (v. 18), and the reconciliation of parents and children (v. 24). Most of these statements include variations of the verb *shuv* (turn, return). Presumably, a crisis of trust in God's just providence has perverted the people's soul, leading to callous indifference in the moral and cultic realms. The *haftarah* is thus pervaded by a deep sense of estrangement from the right order of things, whether in the family, in society, or in the divine-human relationship.

In a rebuke that precedes the *haftarah*, the people are quoted as saying that "All who do evil are good in the sight of the LORD." Indeed, they mockingly jibe, "Where is the God of justice [*mishpat*]?" (Mal. 2:17). In response, God comes to redress the cause of *mishpat* (judgment) in verse 3:5, in which the literal "bring to judgment" is understood as "to contend against you." God will also attend to the sense of the God-fearers that "It is useless to serve God" (v. 14). Actions have consequences. If the people repent and serve God fully, they will receive the riches of heavenly blessing. Otherwise, they will be blasted to ash—root and branch. So deep is the people's resistance that God finally announces He will send His prophet

Elijah to renew their hearts. This unilateral act is proof of God's love of Jacob (announced at the beginning of the collected prophecies of Malachi).

This is Malachi's message of hope. The framers of the biblical canon, placing Malachi as the last of the prophets, believed it to be a final prophetic word to those for whom Scripture teaches divine truth.

RELATION OF THE *HAFTARAH* TO THE CALENDAR

The phrase *shabbat ha-gadol* (the great Sabbath) is a fixed formulation of rabbinic liturgy, found in the Grace after Meals in the special supplication for *Shabbat* (beginning *r'tzei*). In that context, it emphasizes the special holiness of each *Shabbat*. The term also traditionally designates the *Shabbat* before *Pesah*. Its meaning in this setting is uncertain, which has elicited much speculation.

One likely explanation for the choice of Mal. 3:4–24 as the *haftarah* for *Shabbat ha-Gadol* is the old tradition that the future redemption will occur on *Pesah*, the prototype of redemption (BT RH 11a). Because the *haftarah* could be construed to herald God's great day, it is to be proclaimed in hope and in warning before the festival itself. The term *shabbat ha-gadol* would then simply be a shorthand designation for saying that on this *Shabbat* the *haftarah* proclaiming the final "great" (*gadol*) day is read. This is very much like the formulation *Shabbat Shuvah*, which is one way to designate the *Shabbat* before *Yom Kippur*, when the theme of repentance (*t'shuvah*) is stressed through a *haftarah* selection beginning with the word *shuvah* (repent; Hos. 14:2).

The *haftarah's* focus on the tithe obligations would have reinforced the rabbinic selection. Indeed, according to the Mishnah, "on Passover

(the people) are judged with respect to (their) produce” (M RH I:2). Because the law required tithes from agricultural produce gathered before *Pesah*, recitation of the *haftarah* on the *Shabbat* before the festival would duly warn the people to fulfill their obligations to God and to the poor, and thus merit divine favor in the ensuing year. Our custom of charitable giving (*ma-ot hittim*) at this time, ini-

tiated so that the needy would have grain for *matzah*, continues the relationship between philanthropy and piety at the *Pesah* season. The *haftarah* thus signals that gifts have a divine dimension. From this perspective, *Shabbat ha-Gadol* calls attention to an ultimate or “great” accountability that all creatures bear for the resources of the earth and the sacred task of their redistribution.

3⁴Surely the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem shall be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of yore and in the years of old. ⁵But [first] I will step forward to contend against you, and I will act as a relentless accuser against those who have no fear of Me: Who practice sorcery, who commit adultery, who swear falsely, who cheat laborers of their hire, and who subvert [the cause of] the widow, orphan, and stranger, said the LORD of Hosts.

⁶For I am the LORD—I have not changed; and you are the children of Jacob—you have not ceased to be. ⁷From the very days of your fathers you have turned away from My laws and have not observed them. Turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you—said the LORD of Hosts. But you ask, “How shall we turn back?” ⁸Ought man to defraud God? Yet you are defrauding Me. And you ask, “How have we been defrauding You?” In tithe and contribution. ⁹You are suffering under a curse, yet you go on defrauding Me—the whole nation of you. ¹⁰Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, and let there be food in My House, and thus put Me to the test—said the LORD of Hosts. I will surely open the floodgates of the sky for you and pour down blessings on you; ¹¹and I will banish the locusts from you, so that they will not destroy the yield

ג ⁴וְעִרְבָה לַיהוָה מִנְחַת יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלַם כִּימֵי עוֹלָם וּבְשָׁנִים קְדָמֵינוּת: ⁵וְקִרְבַּתִּי אֵלֵיכֶם לְמִשְׁפָּט וְהִיִּיתִי אֶעֱד מִמְהֵר בְּמִכְשָׁפִים וּבְמִנְאָפִים וּבְנִשְׁבָּעִים לְשָׁקֵר וּבְעֹשֵׂי שְׂכָר־שְׂכִיר אֶלְמָנָה וַיִּתְּנוּ וּמִטִּי־גֵר* וְלֹא יִרְאוּנִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:

⁶כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה לֹא שָׁנִיתִי וְאַתֶּם בְּנֵי־יַעֲקֹב לֹא כָלִיתֶם: ⁷לְמִימֵי אֲבֹתֵיכֶם סִרְתֶּם מִחֻקִּי וְלֹא שְׁמַרְתֶּם שׁוּבוּ אֵלַי וְאֲשׁוּבָה אֵלֵיכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת וְאַמַּרְתֶּם בְּמֶה נָשׁוּב: ⁸הֲיִקְבַּע אָדָם אֱלֹהִים כִּי אַתֶּם קֹבְעִים אֹתִי וְאַמַּרְתֶּם בְּמֶה קֹבְעֵנוּךְ הַמַּעֲשֵׂר וְהַתְרוּמָה: ⁹בְּמֶאֱרָה אַתֶּם נֹאֲרִים וְאַתִּי אַתֶּם קֹבְעִים הֲגוֹי כָלוּ: ¹⁰הֲבִיאוּ אֶת־כָּל־הַמַּעֲשֵׂר אֶל־בֵּית הָאוֹצָר וַיְהִי טָרֶף בְּבֵיתִי וּבְחֻנוּנֵי נֶאֱבָאֵת אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת אִם־לֹא אֶפְתַּח לָכֶם אֶת אַרְבּוֹת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהִרִיקְתִּי לָכֶם בָּרֶכֶה עַד־בְּלִי־דֵי: ¹¹וְגַעַרְתִּי לָכֶם בְּאֹכֵל וְלֹא־יִשְׁחַת לָכֶם אֶת־פְּרֵי הָאֲדָמָה וְלֹא־

5. v. י' במקום ה'

Malachi 3:5. Who practice sorcery Condemnation of witches and false oaths and of the abuse of widows, orphans, and strangers finds echoes in Exod. 22:17,19–21.

7. Turn back to Me, and I will turn back to you Malachi’s exhortation assumes the people’s ability to respond to God’s initiative.

of your soil; and your vines in the field shall no longer miscarry—said the LORD of Hosts. ¹²And all the nations shall account you happy, for you shall be the most desired of lands—said the LORD of Hosts.

¹³You have spoken hard words against Me—said the LORD. But you ask, “What have we been saying among ourselves against You?”

¹⁴You have said, “It is useless to serve God. What have we gained by keeping His charge and walking in abject awe of the LORD of Hosts? ¹⁵And so, we account the arrogant happy: they have indeed done evil and endured; they have indeed dared God and escaped.” ¹⁶In this vein have those who revere the LORD been talking to one another. The LORD has heard and noted it, and a scroll of remembrance has been written at His behest concerning those who revere the LORD and esteem His name. ¹⁷And on the day that I am preparing, said the LORD of Hosts, they shall be My treasured possession; I will be tender toward them as a man is tender toward a son who ministers to him. ¹⁸And you shall come to see the difference between the righteous and the wicked, between him who has served God and him who has not served Him.

¹⁹For lo! That day is at hand, burning like an oven. All the arrogant and all the doers of evil shall be straw, and the day that is coming—said the LORD of Hosts—shall burn them to ashes and leave of them neither stock nor boughs.

16. those who revere the LORD Hebrew: *yir-ei YHVH*. Used as a technical designation for those who revere God’s name (3:20), in contradistinction to those who despise it (1:6). They shall be vindicated on the day of judgment (3:20–21). Presumably, this refers to a group of particularly pious people.

19. the day that is coming References to the future “day” of judgment punctuate the prophet’s speech (3:2, 17, 19, 21, 22, 23). A complex scenario is envisaged, dominated by the advent of an angelic messenger, the admonition of sins, the in-

תִּשְׁבֹּל לְכֶם הַגֶּפֶן בַּשָּׂדֶה אָמַר יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת: ¹² וְאִשְׁרוּ אֶתְכֶם כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם כִּי־
תִּהְיוּ אֶתֶם אֶרֶץ חֲפֹץ אָמַר יְהוָה
צְבָאוֹת: ס

¹³ חֲזַקוּ עָלַי דְּבַרְיֵכֶם אָמַר יְהוָה וְאִמַּרְתֶּם
מִה־נִּדְבַרְנוּ עֲלֶיךָ: ¹⁴ אִמַּרְתֶּם שׁוֹא עֵבֶד
אֱלֹהִים וּמִה־בְּצַע כִּי שָׁמְרָנוּ מִשְׁמֵרְתּוֹ
וְכִי הִלְכְנוּ קְדֻרָנִית מִפְּנֵי יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת:
¹⁵ וְעַתָּה אֲנַחְנוּ מֵאֲשֵׁרִים וְזֵדִים גַּם־נִבְנוּ
עֲשֵׂי רָשָׁעָה גַם בָּחֲנוּ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּמְלְטוּ:
¹⁶ אִזּוּ נִדְבְּרוּ יִרְאֵי יְהוָה אִישׁ אֶל־
רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּקְשֹׁב יְהוָה וַיִּשְׁמַע וַיִּכְתֹּב סֵפֶר
זְכָרוֹן לְפָנָיו לִירְאֵי יְהוָה וּלְחֹשְׁבֵי שְׁמוֹ:
¹⁷ וְהָיוּ לִי אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת לַיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר
אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה סִגְלָה וְחִמְלָתִי עֲלֵיהֶם
כְּאֲשֶׁר יַחְמֹל אִישׁ עַל־בְּנוֹ הָעֶבֶד אֹתוֹ:
¹⁸ וְשִׁבְתֶּם וְרֵאִיתֶם בֵּין צְדִיק לְרָשָׁע בֵּין
עֶבֶד אֱלֹהִים לְאֲשֶׁר לֹא עֲבָדוּ: ס

¹⁹ כִּי־הִנֵּה הַיּוֹם בָּא בְעַר פְּתַנּוֹר וְהָיוּ
כָּל־זֵדִים וְכָל־עֹשֵׂה רָשָׁעָה קֵשׁ וְלֹהֵט
אֶתֶם הַיּוֹם הַבֹּא אָמַר יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵעֹזֵב לָהֶם שָׂרֵשׁ וְעֵנֶף: ²⁰ וְזָרְחָה

terventions of Elijah, the fiery purgation of sinners, the vindication of the pious, and the visible distinction between the righteous and evildoers. This scenario was variously explicated and ordered by medieval Jewish commentators, in light of other biblical and Rabbinic evidence. In turn, the images were understood in either literal or figurative terms. The prophet Malachi was himself the heir to a long tradition of this rhetoric, produced in a period of more than 300 years and in various patterns.

²⁰But for you who revere My name a sun of victory shall rise to bring healing. You shall go forth and stamp like stall-fed calves, ²¹and you shall trample the wicked to a pulp, for they shall be dust beneath your feet on the day that I am preparing—said the LORD of Hosts.

²²Be mindful of the Teaching of My servant Moses, whom I charged at Horeb with laws and rules for all Israel.

²³Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD. ²⁴He shall reconcile parents with children and children with their parents, so that, when I come, I do not strike the whole land with utter destruction.

Lo, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before the coming of the awesome, fearful day of the LORD.

24. He shall reconcile parents with children
The language is difficult. The act of reconciliation here is literally “restore the heart” (*heshiv lev*). Different meanings of the preposition translated “with” (*al*), however, make it an open question whether the prophet envisions the reconciliation

לְכֶם יִרְאֵי שָׁמַי שְׁמֵשׁ צְדָקָה וּמִרְפָּא
בְּכַנְפֵיהָ וַיֵּצֵאתֶם וּפְשָׁתֶם כְּעֶגְלֵי מִרְבֵּק:
²¹וְעִסְוֹתֶם רְשָׁעִים כִּי־יְהִיו אֶפֶר תַּחַת
כַּפּוֹת רַגְלֵיכֶם בַּיּוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי עֹשֶׂה אָמַר
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת: פ
²²וּזְכְּרוּ תוֹרַת מֹשֶׁה עַבְדִּי אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִי
אוֹתוֹ בְּהַרְבֵּ עַל־כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל חֻקִּים
וּמִשְׁפָּטִים:
²³הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלַח לְכֶם אֶת אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּבִיא
לְפָנַי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא:
²⁴וְהִשִּׁיב יָב־אָבוֹת עַל־בָּנִים וְלֵב בָּנִים
עַל־אָבוֹתָם פֶּן־אָבּוֹא וְהִפִּיתִי אֶת־הָאָרֶץ
חֵרֶם:

[הִנֵּה אֲנֹכִי שֹׁלַח לְכֶם אֶת אֱלֹהֵי הַנְּבִיא
לְפָנַי בּוֹא יוֹם יְהוָה הַגָּדוֹל וְהַנּוֹרָא: *]

end. במסורת הקריאה נשנה הפסוק לפני האחרון

of parents “with” their children or “along with” them. In the first case, divine wrath will be forestalled by intergenerational reconciliation; in the other, both generations together will return to God.