

# Parashat Tzav

Leviticus 6:1-8:36

April 3, 2020



## SUMMARY

*Parashat Tzav* describes sacrifices again, but this time it focuses on the role of the *kohanim*, the priests.

The *kohanim* are commanded to keep the fire of the altar always burning. (6:5-6) There will be “closeness gifts” or sacrifices in the morning, afternoon, and evening. People will also make “closeness gifts” to G!d when they want to say “I’m sorry” or “thank you.”

G!d gives us a rule that we are not allowed to eat fat from animals that died of natural causes or that were killed by another animal, but we are allowed to use these animals for other things. (7:24) We are also reminded not to eat the blood of an animal. (7:26-27)

God tells *Moshe* to prepare *Aharon*, the *mishkan*, and *Aharon’s* sons for holy service. This includes washing *Aharon* and his sons, dressing them in ritual clothing, and pouring olive oil on *Aharon* and the *mishkan*. During the ceremony of ordination, when *Aharon* and his sons officially become *kohanim* dedicated to serving G!d, *Moshe* makes sacrifices on the altar. Some of the blood is placed on the right ear, right thumb, and right big toe of *Aharon* and his sons. (8:22-24)

### From Our Commentators:

#### Shnei Luchot HaBrit on Leviticus

6:6

כל מיים רעים שבעולם לא יוכלו  
לכבות את אש האהבה, אלא תמיד  
תוקד על המזבח לא תכבה:

... [A]ll the destructive waters in the universe do not have the power to extinguish the flame of love (referring to Torah), rather, it will burn on the sacrifice site and not be extinguished.”

### FOR DISCUSSION:

- 1) Why would *Moshe* prepare *Aharon* and *Aharon’s* sons to offer “closeness gifts” (sacrifices) in the *mishkan* by putting blood from a sacrifice on their right ears, right thumbs, right big toes?
- 2) In Leviticus 6:5-6 the *Torah* repeats, “The fire at the sacrifice site is to be kept burning on it. It must not go out!” The *kohen* is to put wood on the fire every morning. Why might the *Torah* repeat that the fire that burns up the Israelites’ “closeness gifts” (sacrifices) to G!d should never go out?
- 3) In this *parasha* we are taught that we are not allowed to eat the fatty parts of animals that have died of natural causes or that have been killed by other animals. What do you think G!d might be teaching us by giving us this rule?