

April 3, 2020

Parashat Tzav

Taught By:

Leviticus 6:1-8:36

Daliya & Masa



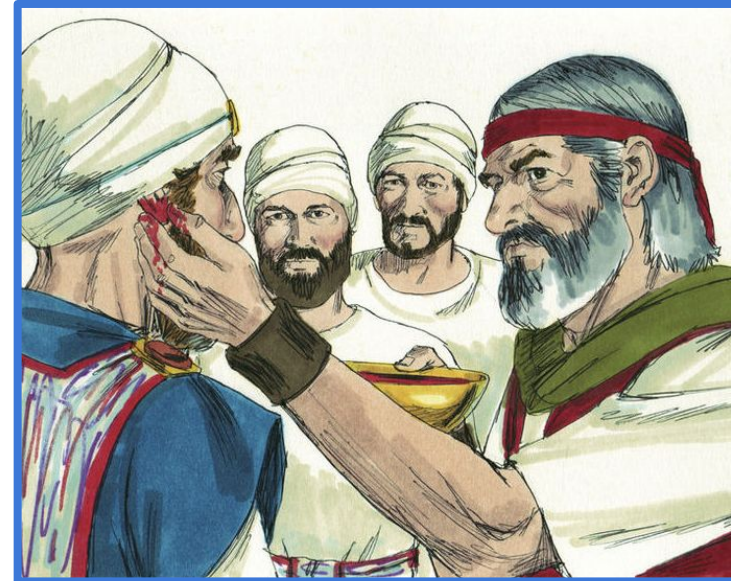
SUMMARY

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)



DALIYA: I think even though G'd doesn't want blood as part of the sacrifices, maybe *Moshe* is putting it on his brother and *Aharon's* sons to teach them that part of their holy work as *kohanim* is to remember NOT TO WASTE things.

MASA: Maybe putting blood on parts of the right half of their bodies is a way of saying that half of their bodies are dedicated to gratitude and to serving G'd. The other half of their bodies has no blood on it because they are still human beings with their own lives.

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?

DALIYA: Maybe G'd wanted to give them a hint of what would happen in the future--at *Hanukkah*. G'd wanted to give them a preview of a miracle that they would not get a chance to see. It gives us a lot to talk about, and I like talking. The main message is miracles can happen anywhere at any time. This is an important message because it gives them hope.

MASA: I love the teaching of the *Shnay luchos ha-brit* who taught that the flame on the altar needs to burn at all times to remind us that “all the destructive waters in the universe do not have the power to extinguish the flame of Torah, the flame of love.” For a Jewish person, studying Torah and love are the two things in life that are most amazing and inspire people.

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?

DALIYA: Maybe animals that died of natural causes were not healthy, so if we were to eat animals that died of natural causes, we might catch whatever disease they had.

MASA: Maybe G'd doesn't want us to think of violence when we are eating and doesn't want us to enjoy food that comes from animals that have suffered a lot. This reminds me of the Noah story where G'd destroyed the world when the land was filled with violence.

