



Acharei

(after)

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:1-18:30

Ministering as Commanded

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:1-5

1 And YHWH spoke to Moshe, after the death of the two sons of Aharon, when they drew near before YHWH, and died;

2 and YHWH said to Moshe, "Speak to Aharon your brother, that he come not at all times into the set-apart place within the veil, before the mercy-seat which is upon the ark; that he die not; for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat.

3 This is what Aharon shall come into the set-apart place with, a young bull for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt-offering.

4 He shall put on the set-apart linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with the linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired; they are the set-apart garments; and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and put them on.

5 And he shall take of the congregation of the children of Israel two he-goats for a sin-offering, and one ram for a burnt-offering."

What is contained in this passage, when given some thought, can be quite unsettling. YHWH was giving the commandment that Aharon (and all his sons who would follow him and minister before YHWH in his place) could not come into the set-apart place just whenever they felt like going in there.

Apparently this is what Aharon's two sons had done. They had gone into the set-apart place without commandment.

Now please consider these passages.

Yeshua states that everything which He did, He did because the Father in Heaven commanded Him to do it.

Yochanan [John] 14:31

31 "but that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do."

Please notice that what Yeshua did was by commandment from our Heavenly Father. Actually, Yeshua did not do anything except those things which were a commandment from His Father in Heaven. This even included the words which He spoke.

Yochanan [John] 12:49-50

49 "For I spoke not from Myself; but the Father that sent Me, He has given Me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that His commandment is life eternal: the things therefore which I speak, even as the Father has said to Me, so I speak."

It is by doing His commandment (the complete Torah, especially hearing and obeying His Voice) that we have eternal life.

Should we not also do the same? That is, should we not also do only that which YHWH commands us to do? And if He has not commanded us to do it, then why would we do it?

Yochanan Bet [2nd John] 4, 6

4 I rejoice greatly that I have found (certain) of your children walking in truth, even as we received commandment from the Father.

6 And this is love, that we should walk after His commandments. This is the commandment, even as you heard from the beginning, that you should walk in it.

The truth of the matter is, that we have all received this very same commandment which Yeshua received from our Heavenly Father: that we are to walk in His commandments.

Kepha Alef [1st Peter] 2:21

For you have been called for this purpose; because Mashiach also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow His steps;

Let each one of us purposefully and fearfully choose to live in the same manner as Mashiach Yeshua lived – hearing and obeying His Voice in all matters, great and small!

Azazel

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:6-10

6 "And Aharon shall present the bull of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself, and for his house.

7 And he shall take the two goats, and set them before YHWH at the door of the tent of meeting.
8 And Aharon shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for YHWH, and one lot for Azazel.
9 And Aharon shall present the goat upon which the lot fell for YHWH, and offer him for a sin-offering.
10 But the goat, on which the lot fell for Azazel, shall be set alive before YHWH, to make atonement for him, to send him away for Azazel into the wilderness.”

Let us compare the Hebrew text of verse eight from above.

<p>8 And Aharon shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for YHWH, and one lot for Azazel.</p>	<p>(8) וְנָתַן אֶהָרֹן עַל שְׁנֵי הַשְּׂעִירִים גֹּרָלוֹת גֹּרָל אֶחָד לַיהוָה וְגֹרָל אֶחָד לְעִזָּאֵל :</p>
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Please note that one lot (גֹּרָל – go-ral) was for YHWH and the other lot (גֹּרָל – go-ral) was for Azazel (עִזָּאֵל – a-za-zel). It is the word (name) Azazel (עִזָּאֵל - azazel) that interests us at the moment.

When we understand what truly happened to this particular goat, then we have a pretty good idea of who this Azazel actually was.

The first goat to be chosen by goral (lot or lottery) was to be given to YHWH as a sacrifice for atonement. The second goat that was chosen by goral was to be cast down to Azazel with its sin. And how do we know that this goat was cast down?

Some translations actually translate the name of Azazel, not understanding that it is actually a proper name. In the Hebrew there is a strong parallel between the two phrases “one lot for YHWH” (גֹּרָל) (אֶחָד לַיהוָה) and “one lot for Azazel” (וְגֹרָל אֶחָד לְעִזָּאֵל).

So the question becomes, to what or to whom is this name referring?

On the Day of Yom Kippur, after the lots were cast and it was known which goat was for YHWH and which goat was for Azazel, the goat for Azazel would be led away, after the sins of the nation were placed upon it, and it would be taken out into the wilderness to a place which became known as Azazel, where the goat was cast down (to destruction) over a precipice and was dashed to pieces on the craggy rocks below.

Later in the history of Israel, after they came to be settled in the land and the temple was established in Jerusalem, the name Azazel came to be associated with one particular place. The International Bible

Encyclopedia places this mountain twelve miles east of Jerusalem at a place that was also called Beth Hadudu or Beth Hudedu.

As to the meaning of the name Azazel, it basically means “one who has separated himself from El.” This meaning is appropriate both for the goat and the place. The place then became associated with a demon who had caused mankind to separate themselves from Elohim, thus eventually and ultimately being associated with Satan himself. The original meaning does not seem likely that it could have been associated with one particular place as the Israelites moved from location to location outside the land while they wandered in the wilderness.

The parallel here is quite vivid as to what happens between the two goats, and what happens between those who are set-apart to YHWH, and those who are cast down to Satan.

Matithyahu [Matthew] 25:41

“Then shall He say also to them on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, You that are cursed into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels.’”

As the goat that is led away to Azazel and cast down to destruction, so also those who are not true believers in Yeshua (keeping His commandments – all of Torah and hearing and obeying His Voice) will also be cast down to destruction in the same place Satan was cast.

More Given – More Required

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:11-14

11 “And Aharon shall present the bull of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and shall make atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bull of the sin-offering which is for himself:

12 and he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar before YHWH, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil;

13 and he shall put the incense upon the fire before YHWH, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy-seat that is upon the testimony, that he die not;

14 and he shall take of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger upon the mercy-seat on the east; and before the mercy-seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times.”

The sin offering of the kohen gadol is much more costly than the sin offering for all the people. The kohen gadol’s sin offering is a bull, whereas the sin offering of the people is a goat. Why would this be so? Please consider the following Scripture.

Luqa [Luke] 12:48

“but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. And to whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom they commit much, of him will they ask the more.”

In this passage, Yeshua is teaching us that, to those to whom He gives more revelation knowledge, he will incur greater judgment. This seems to be so, because the more He entrusts us with, the more He expects from us, and rightly so!

Ya'aqov [James] 3:1

Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.

It is a serious and awesome responsibility to be a teacher of Israel! YHWH holds to a higher standard, those of us whom He sets apart to be teachers in Israel. We may not like that, but that is what Scripture plainly teaches. So, when we come to this section of our Torah portion this week, we see that the kohen gadol was required to give a very expensive sin offering for himself and his household.

This is basically, because he, as the spiritual leader of Israel, he should know better than to sin!

Atonement

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:15-19

15 "Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with his blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat:

16 and he shall make atonement for the set-apart place, because of the impurities of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, even all their sins; and so shall he do for the tent of meeting, that dwells with them in the midst of their impurities.

17 And there shall be no man in the tent of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the set-apart place, until he come out, and have made atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the assembly of Israel.

18 And he shall go out to the altar that is before YHWH, and make atonement for it, and shall take of the blood of the bull, and of the blood of the goat, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about.

19 And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and consecrate it from the impurities of the children of Israel."

There are several things here that stand out to us today. Please note that, in verse sixteen, the tent of meeting dwells in the midst of Israel's impurities. Then down in verse nineteen, we find that, part of the process that the kohen gadol goes through in making atonement for Israel, is that after he sprinkles blood on the mercy seat in the most set-apart place, he then is to go out to the altar that is before YHWH and sprinkle blood on it seven times to consecrate it from the impurities of the children of Israel.

Somehow, each time a sacrifice is done on this altar for Israel, their sin and guilt is placed upon the altar. Then once a year the kohen gadol is to cleanse this altar from all the impurities from the Nation.

Yeshua is our great Kohen Gadol (High Priest) and what He did was basically the same thing, only in the heavenly sanctuary.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 8:1-2

1 Now in the things which we are saying the chief point is this; we have such a High Priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

2 a Minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which YHWH pitched, not man.

Yeshua is our Kohen Gadol (High Priest), and as such, He did not enter into the sanctuary here in this realm (earth), but rather He entered into the heavenly sanctuary.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 9:11-12

11 But Mashiach having come a High Priest of the good things to come, through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation,

12 nor yet through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own Blood, entered in once for all into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption.

Please note that, while the kohen gadol here on earth was required to enter into the most set-apart place once a year, this is not so for Yeshua, our great High Priest. For He only needed to enter into the heavenly sanctuary one time for all of mankind; so great was His Blood that He offered.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 9:24-26

24 For Mashiach entered not into a set-apart place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of Elohim for us:

25 nor yet that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place year by year with blood not his own;

26 else must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once at the end of the ages has He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Yeshua put away sin by His own Blood. We should not treat this lightly, or as a common thing.

Yet, this is exactly what so many do today. They act as if it is no big deal to just live exactly how they want, doing whatever is right in their own eyes, and then they can come later and He will forgive them.

Let us all strive to do better than that, with His help and infilling Spirit!

Releasing Sin

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:20-22

20 "And when he has made an end of atoning for the set-apart place, and the tent of meeting, and the altar, he shall present the live goat;

21 and Aharon shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, even all their sins; and he shall put them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man that is in readiness into the wilderness;

22 and the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities to a solitary land; and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.”

We have discussed this above under the heading of Azazel. However, we need to see one additional thing here, and that is the putting away of sin.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 9:26

26 ... else must He often have suffered since the foundation of the world; but now once at the end of the ages has He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Yeshua our Mashiach, by shedding His own Blood for our sins, freed us from the penalty (law) of sin, which is death.

Romans 8:2

For the law of the Spirit of life in Mashiach Yeshua made me free from the law of sin and of death.

Now the choice that is before each and every one of us is to either walk in life (hearing and obeying His Voice) or to walk in death (not hearing and obeying His Voice). That is the choice that each one of us makes every single day, and every single moment, of every single day.

Which choice are you making?

Washing

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:23-28

23 “And Aharon shall come into the tent of meeting, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the set-apart place, and shall leave them there;

24 and he shall bathe his flesh in water in a set-apart place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt-offering and the burnt-offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people.

25 And the fat of the sin-offering shall he burn upon the altar.

26 And he that lets go the goat for Azazel shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

27 And the bull of the sin-offering, and the goat of the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the set-apart place, shall be carried forth without the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung.

28 And he that burns them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.”

After the kohen gadol makes atonement, then he is to change his clothes and wash his body in water. The other two priests are to wash their clothes and their bodies in water after completing their assigned tasks.

Please consider this passage of Scripture.

Marqa [Mark] 16:15-16

15 And He said to them, “You go into all the world, and preach the good news to the whole creation. 16 He that believeth and is immersed [washed] shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned.”

Yeshua basically gives us the command to go and wash those that would be clean. This physical washing of water of the body is to be symbolic of something much deeper in our being.

Titus 3:5

... not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Set-Apart Spirit,

Not only should we wash ourselves on the outside, but He also needs to wash us on the inside as well. He does this regenerating (giving new life) and renewing us, by giving us of His own Spirit when we come to Him in true repentance. The result of this is not only a renewing of our inner life, but also of our outward life. The life that we live in this world then becomes renewed, day by day, as we walk in His Spirit, doing and keeping His commandments.

Ephesians 5:26

26 ... that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,

This washing comes by hearing and obeying His Word (Voice).

Ma'aseh [Acts] 1:4-5

4 ... and, being assembled together with them, He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, said He, “You heard from Me:

5 for John indeed washed with water; but you shall be washed in the Set-Apart Spirit not many days hence.”

When He washes us clean on the inside, then we can truly keep and obey His Torah, all of it!

If He has not washed us clean on the inside, how can we truly keep and obey His Torah? In fact, if He has not washed us clean on the inside, how can we even want to truly keep and obey every single Torah commandment from our Father in Heaven?

Do you have a desire to keep and obey all of His Torah Commandments? Or do you shop around and only keep and obey those commandments that appeal to your fleshly nature?

Eternal Statute

Vayyiqra [Leviticus] 16:29-34

29 “And it shall be a statute forever to you; in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and shall do no manner of work, the home-born, or the stranger that sojourns among you;

30 for on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall you be clean before YHWH.

31 It is a Shabbat of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict your souls; it is a statute forever.

32 And the priest, who shall be anointed and who shall be consecrated to be priest in his father's stead, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen garments, even the set-apart garments;

33 and he shall make atonement for the set-apart sanctuary; and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar; and he shall make atonement for the priests and for all the people of the assembly.

34 And this shall be an everlasting statute to you, to make atonement for the children of Israel because of all their sins once in the year.” And he did as YHWH commanded Moshe.

YHWH has commanded His people that this statute concerning the two goat sacrifice is an eternal ordinance! We are all living in disobedience today because we are not doing this commandment!

“But we do not have a Temple,” you say. “Besides, did not Yeshua’s Blood take care of that so we would not have to do any more sacrifices?”

First, YHWH gave this commandment and He states that this commandment is eternal, which means that He commanded Israel to do this every single year forever and ever.

Second, Yeshua Himself stated that He did not come to do away with the Torah.

Matithyah [Matthew] 5:17

“Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to verify.”

While Yeshua’s Blood does indeed truly remove our sin far from us, this does not release us from our obligation as a member of His Kingdom to obey His commandments given to us in Torah!

In fact, what the forgiving and washing of our sins by His Blood actually does for us, is that it actually enables us to truly keep and obey His Torah; whereas, before this, we were unable to do it.

So what are we going to do to stop living in sin?

The prophets of old have prophesied that one day the tabernacle of David would be restored. It is instructive to us to note that David was the last king of Israel who reigned when the tabernacle was in use. After this his son Sh'lomo built a temple and the tabernacle was then no longer used.

One day, perhaps in our own lifetimes, this will come to pass. The question that each one of us will be faced with at that point is this: will I submit to all the Torah commandments of YHWH? Or, will I only do those that are convenient for me and throw out the rest? There are many today who are returning to YHWH who will not come all the way back to Him. There will be those who will stop short of the mark because they will reason within themselves that they are special and chosen and do not have to do a blood sacrifice. What they do not realize is that it is not about the sacrifices. YHWH has made this abundantly clear in the Tanak. Even though the commandments concerning the sacrificial system make up the majority of the commandments in the Torah, it is not about keeping the letter of the Torah, even as important as that is. What it is about is hearing and obeying His Voice. It is something to dwell upon and come to a true understanding now, for it will show what is truly in one's heart.

Proper Living for Today

When I look around at the believing part of the world today, I only see a bunch of individuals who are just basically doing their own things. I would expect to see this in the world at large! But seeing this among His people is a grievous sin.

The following passage seems to sum up this Torah portion exceptionally well. Please read it prayerfully, carefully, and thoughtfully. YHWH has much to say to us in this passage.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 10:19

19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the set-apart place by the blood of Yeshua, 20 by the way which He dedicated for us, a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh;

21 and having a great Priest over the house of Elohim;

22 let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience; and having our body washed with pure water,

23 let us hold fast the confession of our hope that it waver not; for He is faithful that promised;

24 and let us consider one another to provoke to love and good works;

25 not forsaking our own assembling together, as the custom of some is, but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as you see the day drawing near.

26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more a sacrifice for sins,

27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and a fierceness of fire which shall devour the adversaries.

28 A man that has set aside Moshe's Torah dies without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses;

29 of how much severe punishment, do you think shall he be judged worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of Elohim, and has counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unclean thing, and has done wrong to the Spirit of grace?

30 For we know him that said, "Vengeance belongs to Me, I will recompense." And again, "YHWH shall judge His people."

31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of El Chay [the living El].

May YHWH remove all of our willfulness and replace it with joyful submission to His will in all matters, both great and small, so that we may each live in a manner worthy of bearing His Name among the nations, so that they too may come to a full knowledge and understanding of the salvation that He has offered to all who will hear and obey His Voice through the Blood of Yeshua our Mashiach.

ABBA YHWH, please choose us to live righteously and fearfully before you, working diligently to build Your Kingdom here on earth, so that Your will may be done here as it is in Heaven; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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