

טעמו וראו

A taste of the
Rebbe's teachings

Parshat Vayikra

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How Many Times Could You Ask?

During the central prayer in Jewish tradition, the Amidah, we ask G-d for health, wealth and happiness. But why is it recited three times a day? Can't I suffice with once a day? And what if I lack nothing—what am I praying for?

In loving memory of
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Dedicated by his family

A. The Sacrifices: An Overview

Source 1 Leviticus 1:1-3, 9

G-d called to Moses, speaking to him from the Tent of Meeting. He said: Speak to the Israelites and tell them the following: When one of you brings an offering to G-d, the sacrifice must be taken from the cattle, sheep or goats. If the sacrifice is a Burnt Offering taken from the cattle, it must be an unblemished male. One must bring it of his own free will to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, before G-d.

The priest shall thus burn the entire animal on the altar as a completely burnt offering to G-d, an appeasing fragrance.

וַיִּקְרָא אֱלֹהִים מִשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּדְבֹר ה' אֵלָיו מֵאֵהָל מוֹעֵד לֵאמֹר: דַּבֵּר אֶל־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אָדָם כִּי־יִקְרִיב מִכֶּם קֹרְבָן לַה' מִזֶּה־הַבְּהֵמָה מִן־הַבָּקָר וּמִן־הַצֹּאן תִּקְרִיבוּ אֶת־קֹרְבַנְכֶם: אִם־עֶלְהָ קֹרְבָנוּ מִן־הַבָּקָר זָכָר תָּמִים יִקְרִיבוּ אֶל־פֶּתַח אֵהָל מוֹעֵד יִקְרִיב אֹתוֹ לְרִצְנוֹ לְפָנַי ה':

וְהִקְטִיר הַכֹּהֵן אֶת־הַכֹּל הַמִּזְבֵּחַ עָלָה אִשָּׁה רִיח־נִיחֹחַ לַה':

Source 2 Numbers 28:2-4

Instruct the Israelites and tell them: Be careful to offer My fire-offering food sacrifice to Me in its proper time as My appeasing fragrance. Tell them that the fire offering that they must offer to G-d shall consist of two yearling sheep without blemish each day as a regular daily Burnt Offering. Offer one sheep in the morning, and the second sheep in the evening.

צוֹ אֶת־בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אֶת־קֹרְבָנִי לְחֻמֵי לְאִשֵּׁי רִיח־נִיחֹחַ תִּשְׁמְרוּ לְהִקְרִיב לִי בְמוֹעֵדוֹ: וְאָמַרְתָּ לָהֶם זֶה הָאִשָּׁה אֲשֶׁר תִּקְרִיבוּ לַה' כִּבְשִׂים בְּנֵי־שָׁנָה תָּמִימִם שְׁנַיִם לַיּוֹם עָלָה תָּמִיד: אֶת־הַכֶּבֶשׂ אֶחָד תַּעֲשֶׂה בַבֹּקֶר וְאֶת הַכֶּבֶשׂ הַשֵּׁנִי תַעֲשֶׂה בַּיּוֹם הָעֶרְבִים:

Source 3 Leviticus 3:1

If one's sacrifice is a Peace Offering and it is from the cattle, he may offer either an unblemished male or an unblemished female before G-d.

וְאִם זֶבַח שְׁלָמִים קָרְבָּנוֹ אִם מִן הַבָּקָר הוּא מִקְרִיב אִם זָכָר אִם נְקֵבָה תָּמִים יִקְרִיבֵנוּ לִפְנֵי ה'.

Source 4 Leviticus 4:1-2

G-d spoke to Moses saying: Speak to the Israelites and tell them: If an individual commits an inadvertent sin by violating certain prohibitory commandments of G-d...

וַיְדַבֵּר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר. דַּבֵּר אֶל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵאמֹר נִפְשׁ כִּי תִחַטָּא בְּשִׁגְגָה מִכָּל מִצְוֹת ה' אֲשֶׁר לֹא תַעֲשִׂינָהּ וְעָשָׂה מֵאַחַת מֵהֵנָּה.

B. The Sacrifices of Our Day

Source 5 Piskei Teshuvos 219

Halachic authorities in recent generations have written that when someone experiences a miracle, he should recite Torah's passage about the thanksgiving offering; it is also customary to hold a feast with friends, relatives, Torah scholars and the poor, to tell over the miracle and to thank G-d for his kindness. As the verse states, "I thank G-d with all my heart in the presence of the upright congregation."

כתבו האחרונים מי שנעשה לו נס... וראוי לומר פרשת תודה... ונוהגים לעשות סעודה לאוהביו ומקורביו ולתלמידי חכמים ועניים בני טובים, ולספר הנס ולהודות להשי"ת בשעת הסעודה על חסדיו... ונאמר אודה ה' בכל לבב בסוד ישרים ועדה.

Source 6 Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, Tanya chap. 34

Throughout the day, when you are engaged in business, you can be an abode for G d by giving charity from the proceeds of your labor... Even if you donate only one fifth of your earnings, it elevates all the other four parts as well. As our sages famously taught, charity is equivalent to offering all the sacrifices. In sacrifices too, all living creatures were elevated to G-d through the offering of one animal, and so on.

גם שאר היום כולו, שעוסק במשא ומתן, יהיה מכוון לשבתו יתברך, בנתינת הצדקה שיתן מיגיעו... ואף שאינו נותן אלא חומש, הרי החומש מעלה עמו כל הארבע ידות לה', להיות מכוון לשבתו יתברך כנודע מאמר רבותינו זכרונם לברכה שמצות צדקה שקולה כנגד כל הקרבנות, ובקרבנות היה כל החי עולה לה' על ידי בהמה אחת, וכל הצומח על ידי עשרון סלת אחד כלול בשמן כו'.

Source 7 Rabbi Shneur Zalman of Liadi, Shulchan Aruch, Orach Chaim 89:1

The Men of the Great Assembly enacted the three daily prayers of the Amidah which were established by our forefathers. Two were obligatory: The morning and afternoon prayers, corresponding with the two Tamid offerings. The evening service was optional and represented the burning of the leftover sacrifices on the altar all night long. However, in our day, the evening service has been accepted by the entire Jewish people as an obligatory service.

אנשי כנסת הגדולה תיקנו להתפלל בכל יום שלשה תפלות של י"ח ברכות שהתפללו האבות וקבעו שתים מהן חובה שהן שחרית ומנחה כנגד ב' תמידין שהן חובה בכל יום ושל ערבית תקנו רשות כנגד איברים ופדרים שאם לא נתעכלו מבעוד יום הם קרבים והולכים כל הלילה אבל עכשיו כבר קבלוהו כל ישראל עליהם לחובה כמו שיתבאר במקומה.

>> The Rebbe

True Prayer is About Connection

Our sages said: "Prayers were established in the place of sacrifices." In the absence of the Holy Temple, when we cannot—and must not—offer sacrifices, the sages enacted prayer services to replace the offerings of the Temple. The morning prayers represent the *Tamid* offering of the morning, and the afternoon prayers represent the *Tamid* of the afternoon.

Accordingly, there must be a correlation between the meaning of sacrifices and the meaning of prayer. The Hebrew word for sacrifices, *korban*, comes from the word *kiruv*, which means closeness. The offering draws the person closer to G-d. This is also the idea of prayer. Although we ask G-d to provide us with our needs, such as wisdom, health, and sustenance, the true purpose of prayer is to develop a closer relationship with G-d than we

had a day earlier.

The *Tamid* offering (which corresponds with the daily prayers) was a Burnt Offering; the entire animal was burned on the altar. This teaches us that true closeness to G-d is only possible when we approach Him not for personal gain but for the sake of cleaving to Him, just as in the Burnt Offering, where the owners didn't receive a portion for themselves and didn't even have the benefit of giving a portion to the priests. Instead, the entire sacrifice was offered to G-d.

By way of example: if you invest in a relationship for certain benefits, whether money, honor, and so on, it is not a genuine relationship. You are concerned only with your own welfare, and moreover—you are exploiting the other person for your own goals. A true bond is only possible when it is not about your personal benefit but about a genuine desire to be close to the individual. For example, a parent's relationship with a child isn't about earning the child's respect or ensuring his support during the parent's old age. The connection is innate; it's a connection of love.

The same is true of our spiritual worship that is modeled after the *Tamid* offering. Our connection to G-d must be like a Burnt Offering. It's not about the benefit we will receive from observing Torah and its commandments. Rather, it is an expression of our innate desire to cleave to G-d.

True, through prayer we channel G-d's blessings for all our needs. Nonetheless, we approach the prayer itself as an opportunity to become closer to G-d—to be like a Burnt Offering, wholly for G-d.

Source 8 Maimonides, Laws of Repentance 10:4

The early sages declared: Should one say: "I will study Torah to become wealthy, to be called Rabbi, or to receive reward in the world-to-come"? The Torah states that the commandments are "to love G-d." Everything you do should be out of love.

אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים שְׁמָא
תֵּאמַר הֲרִינִי לְמַד תּוֹרָה בְּשִׁבִיל
שְׂאֵהָיָה עֲשִׂיר בְּשִׁבִיל שְׂאֵקָרָא
רַבִּי בְּשִׁבִיל שְׂאֵקָבֵל שְׂכָר בְּעוֹלָם
הֵבֵא. תִּלְמוּד לּוֹמֵר (דְּבָרִים י"ג)
"לְאַהֲבָה אֶת ה'". כֹּל מִה שְׂאֵתָם
עוֹשִׂים לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ אֲלֵא מֵאַהֲבָה.

The Sages also told us to desire His commandments and not the reward for His commandments.

Similarly, the great sages would tell their brightest students, “Do not be like servants who serve their master for the reward. Rather, since He is the Master, it is worthy to serve Him,” i.e., serve Him out of love.

וְעוֹד אָמְרוּ חֲכָמִים בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
חֲפֵץ מְאֹד וְלֹא בְּשִׂכָר
מִצְוֹתָיו.

וְכֵן הָיוּ גְדוּלֵי הַחֲכָמִים
מְצוּיִם לְנִבְוֵי תַלְמִידֵיהֶם
וּמְשָׁכְלֵיהֶם בְּיַחְוֹד אֶל תְּהִיָּה
כְּעֹבְדִים הַמְשֻׁמְשִׁים אֶת
הָרֵב וְכו' אֶלָּא מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהוּא
הָרֵב רְאוּי לְשִׁמְשׁוֹ כְּלוּמַר
עֲבָדוּ מֵאַהֲבָה:

C. In Darkness and in Light

>> The Rebbe

It Is Relevant During Hardship as Well

Torah states regarding the *Tamid*, “Offer one sheep in the morning, and the second sheep in the evening.”

You might assume that being a Burnt Offering—serving G-d in the most altruistic form—is only possible in the “morning,” when you in a state of illumination, i.e., when you are spiritually content, living according to Torah and its commandments, and when you are materially content, free of concerns and definitely free of hardship. At that stage, you will be able to make the decision to cleave to G-d and be like a Burnt Offering.

However, during the “evening,” when you feel that your situation is not as good as it should be—and that may indeed be the case—how could you pray to G-d as a Burnt Offering, ignoring your personal benefit for the sake of cleaving to G-d? Your first responsibility is to provide for yourself, your wife and children; only then will you have the freedom to worship G-d in an altruistic fashion.

This is the lesson from these verses—the *Tamid* offering must be offered both in the morning and at night. “Offer one sheep in the morning, and the second sheep in the evening.” The word *tamid* means constant; this must be our constant pursuit no matter our situation, whether in times of morning and illumination, or times of evening and darkness.

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