

"And the Lord God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden to serve it and keep it" — these are the sacrifices, as it is said (Ex. 3, 12): "You shall serve God on this mountain"; and (Num. 28, 2): "My offering of my bread for a fire offering, a sweet savour, you shall keep to offer me in its season".

Said R. Assi, Why do children begin their studies from *Torat Kohanim* and not from *Bereshit*? But children are pure and the sacrifices are pure. Let the pure come and occupy themselves with the pure.

"And Abraham said. O Lord God; How shall I know that I will inherit it?" R. Hiyya b. R. Hannina said: Not as one who casts doubt, but he meant, By what merit? God answered: By the means of the atonements with which I shall provide your children. "Take me a heifer of three-years-old, and a she-goat of three-years old and a ram of three-years old, a turtle-dove and young pigeon": He showed him all the atonements. i.e. the sacrifices.

ר' חייא ב' ר' חננין

(Bereshit Rabbah 44, 17)

what conclusion do we draw from this?

See also: סו' - כתובות 20.

(2)

למה לי ויב-ובחיקם יאמר יי
שבצתי עלות אילים ונולב מריאים
זים פרים וקבשים ועתודים לא חפצתי:
כי חלאו לראות פני
מי-בקש זאת מנדכם רלס חצרי:
לא חוטיפו חביא מנחת-שנא קטרת חועכה היא לי
חדש ושבת קרא מקרא
לא-אובל און ועצרה:
חודשיכם ומועדיכם שגאה נפשי
היו עלי לטרח נלאיתי נשא:

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me? saith the Lord;

I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts;

and I delight not in the blood of bullocks or lambs or of he-goats.

When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hand to trample My courts? Bring no more vain oblations; it is an offering of abomination unto Me;

new moon and sabbath, the holding of convocations —

I cannot endure iniquity along with solemn assembly.

Your new moons and your appointed seasons My soul hateth; they are a burden unto Me.

(Isaiah 1, 11—14)

ויאמר שמואל

הוסיף ליי בעלות וקבשים בשמץ בקול יי
הנה שמץ מנחה טוב להקשיב מנולב אילים:

And Samuel said,

Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifice as in hearkening to the voice of the Lord?

Behold to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken than the fat of rams.

(1 Sam. 15, 22)

כי חוסי ונפצתי ולא-ובח
ודעו אלוהים מעלות:

For I desire mercy and not sacrifice

and the knowledge of God rather than burnt-offerings.

(Hosea 6, 6)

שגאתי מאסתי חגיגתם ולא ארים בעצרתכם:
כי אם-מעלותי עלות ומקובותיכם לא ארצה
ושלם מריאותיכם לא אביט:
הטר מעלי חמון שרין
וחמרת נבליך לא אשקע:
ויגל כמים משפט ואצקה כנול איתן:

I hate, I despise your feasts, and I will take no delight in your solemn assemblies.

Yea, though ye offer Me burnt-offerings and your meal-offerings, I will not accept them;

neither will I regard the peace-offerings of your fat beasts.

Take thou away from Me the noise of thy songs,

and let Me not hear the melody of thy psalteries.

But let justice well up as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.

(Amos 5, 21—24)

(2)

what conclusion do we draw from these פסוקים?

How does it contradict the conclusion of (1)

A certain Gentile asked Rabbi Akiva: Why do you celebrate the festivals? Did not the Holy One blessed be He say thus to you: "Your new moons and your festivals My soul hateth"? Rabbi Akiva answered him: If He had said, "My new moons and My festivals My soul hateth" you would have been right. But what He said was, "Your festivals and your new moons..."

(Bamidbar Rabbah)

How is this a solution to the above contradiction?

It is impossible to go suddenly from one extreme to the other; the nature of man will not allow him suddenly to discontinue everything to which he has been accustomed. Now God sent Moses to make (the Israelites) a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex. 19, 6) by means of the knowledge of God. Cf.: "Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord is God" (ibid. 5, 39). The Israelites were commanded to devote themselves to His service; cf.: "and to serve Him with all your heart" (ibid. 11, 13); "and you shall serve the Lord your God" (Ex. 23, 25); "and ye shall serve Him"

(Deut. 13, 5). But the general mode of worship in which the Israelites were brought up, consisted in sacrificing animals in temples containing images, to bow down to those images, and to burn incense before them. It was in accordance with the wisdom and plan of God, as displayed in the whole Creation, that He did not command us to give up and to discontinue all these modes of worship; for to obey such a commandment would have been contrary to the nature of man, who generally clings to that to which he is used; it would in those days have made the same impression as a prophet would make at present if he called us to the service of God and told us in His name, that we should not pray to Him, not fast, not seek His help in time of trouble; that we should serve Him in thought, and not by any action. For this reason God allowed these rituals to continue; He transferred to His service that which had formerly served as a worship of created beings, and of things imaginary and unreal, and commanded us to serve Him in the same manner; viz., to build unto Him a temple; cf.: "And they shall make unto Me a sanctuary" (Ex. 25, 8); to have the altar erected to His name; cf.: "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto Me" (ibid. 20, 21); to offer the sacrifices to Him; cf.: "If any man of you bring an offering unto the Lord" (Lev. 1, 2), to bow down to Him and to burn incense before Him. He has forbidden us to do any of these things to any other beings.

By this Divine plan the traces of idolatry were blotted out, and the truly great principle of our faith, the Existence and Unity of God, was firmly established; this aim was achieved without deterring or confusing the minds of the people by the abolition of the service to which they were accustomed and which alone was familiar to them.

I know that you will at first thought reject this idea and find it strange; you will put the following question to me in your heart: How can we suppose that Divine commandments, prohibitions, and important acts, which are fully explained, and for which certain seasons are fixed, should not have been commanded for their own sake, but only for the sake of some other thing; as if they were only the means which He employed for His primary end? What prevented Him from making His primary end a direct commandment to us, and to give us the capacity of obeying it? Those precepts which in your opinion are only the means and not the end would then have been unnecessary. Hear my answer, which will cure your heart of this disease and will show you the truth of that which I have pointed out to you.

There occurs in the Law a passage which contains exactly the same idea; it is the following: "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt; but God led the people about, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea", etc. (Ex.

13, 17). Here God led the people about, away from the direct road which He originally intended, because He feared they might meet on that way with hardships too great for their ordinary strength; He took them by another road in order to achieve His original aim. In the same manner God refrained from prescribing what the people by their natural disposition would be incapable of obeying, and gave the above-mentioned commandments as a means of securing His chief object, viz., to spread a knowledge of Him (among the people), and to cause them to reject idolatry.

It is contrary to man's nature that he should suddenly abandon all the different kinds of Divine service and the different customs in which he has been brought up, and which have been so general, that they were considered as a matter of course; it would be just as if a person trained to work as a slave with mortar and bricks, or similar things, should interrupt his work, clean his hands, and at once fight with real giants. It was the result of God's wisdom that the Israelites were led in the wilderness till they acquired courage. For it is a well-known fact that the rough conditions of desert travel, produce tough fighters, whilst the reverse (soft conditions) is the source of faint-heartedness; besides, another generation rose during the wanderings that had not been accustomed to degradation and slavery. All the travelling in the wilderness was regulated by Divine commands through Moses; cf.: "At the commandment of the Lord they rested, and at the commandment of the Lord they journeyed".

In the same way the sacrificial portion of the Torah was prompted by Divine wisdom, according to which people are allowed to continue the kind of worship to which they have been accustomed, in order that they might acquire the true faith, which is the chief object (of God's commandments).

Since the sacrificial service is not the primary object (of the commandments about sacrifice), whilst supplications, prayers, and similar kinds of worship are nearer to the primary object, and indispensable for obtaining it, a great difference was made in the Law between these two kinds of service. The one kind, which consists in offering sacrifices, although the sacrifices are offered to the name of God, has not been made obligatory for us to the same extent as it had been before. We were not commanded to sacrifice in every place, and in every time, or to build a temple in every place, or to permit any one who desires to become a priest and to sacrifice. On the contrary, all this is prohibited unto us. Only one temple has been appointed, "in the place which the Lord shall choose" (Deut. 12, 26); in no other place is it allowed to sacrifice; cf.: "Take heed to myself, that thou offer not thy burnt-offerings in every place that thou seest" (ibid. 5, 13); and only the members of a particular family were allowed to officiate as priests. All these restrictions served to limit this kind of worship, and keep it within those bounds within which God did not think it necessary to abolish sacrificial service altogether. But prayer and supplication can be offered everywhere and by every person. The same is the case with the commandment of *zizit* (Num. 15, 38); *mezuzah* (Deut. 6, 9; 11, 20); *tefillin* (Ex. 13, 9, 16); and similar kinds of Divine service.

Accordingly, the Prophets frequently reprove their fellow-men for being over-zealous and exerting themselves too much in bringing sacrifices; the prophets thereby proclaimed that sacrifices were not essential, and God does not require them. Samuel therefore said, "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord" (1 Sam. 15, 22)? Isaiah exclaimed, "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord" (Isa. 1, 11); Jeremiah declared: "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings or sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey My voice".

22N7's objections

102(1) - 22N7 misunderstood

⑦ How is this עֲצָנָה a זֶמֶן for פָּנִיָּה?

"דבור אל בני ישראל ויקחו לי תרומה... ועשית את המזבח עצי שטים" - וכל ענין המזבח והשולחן והמזבח והקדשים והאווהל והיריעות וכל כלי המשכן - מפני מה? אמרו ישראל לפני הקב"ה: ריבוננו של עולם, מלכי גויים יש להם אוהל ושולחן ומזבח ומקטר קטורת, וכן הוא תכסיס מלכות, כי כל מלך צריך לכך; ואתה וזאת מלכנו, וזאלנו, מושענו - לא יהיו לפניך תכסיסי מלכות, עד שיודיע לכל באי עולם כי אתה הוא המלך? אמר לוהם: בני, אתם בשר ודם צריכים לכל זה, אבל אני איני צריך, כי אין לפני לא אכילה ולא שתיה, ואני צריך מאור, ועבדי יוכיחו, כי השמש והירח מאירים לכל העולם ואני משפיע עליהם מאורי, ואני אשגיח עליכם לטובה נזכות אבותיכם. אמרו ישראל לפני הקב"ה: ריבוננו של עולם, אין אנוהו מבקשים את האבות - כי אתה אבינו, כי אברהם לא ידענו וישראל לא יכירנו" (ישעיה סג, טו). אמר להם הקב"ה: אם כן, עשו מה שאתם חפצים, אלא עשו אותם כאשר אני מצווה אתכם... שנאמר: "ועשו לי מקדש... ועשה את המזבוח... ועשית שולחן... ועשית מזבח מקטר קטורת".

"Speak unto the children of Israel that they bring Me an offering... and thou shalt make an altar of acacia wood". The whole matter of the candleabra, the table, the altar, the boards, the tent and the curtains and all the vessels of the Tabernacle - what were they for? Said Israel before the Holy One Blessed be He: Lord of the Universe! The kings of the nations, they have their tent, table, candlesticks and incense burner. Such are the trappings of sovereignty. For every king has need of such things. Should not Thou, our King, Redeemer and Saviour, therefore be equipped with the trappings of sovereignty, to make known to all the denizens of the world that Thou art the King?

Said He to them: Children! You who are flesh and blood have need of all this, but as for Me, I need it not, since before Me there is neither eating nor drinking. I have no need of light, as My servants prove. For the sun and moon give light to the whole world and I enrich them with My light and I shall watch over you for good, in virtue of the merits of your forefathers.

Israel thus replied to the Holy One: Lord of the Universe! We seek not the forefathers. "For Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not" (Isaiah 63, 16). Said the Holy One... to them: If so, make that which you desire, but make them as I command you... as it is said: "And make for Me a sanctuary... and

לכך צריך ה' אלהים
objects to עֲצָנָה
and considers it erroneous.

(1) Why is it objectionable?

(2) How does the following עֲצָנָה clear away the objection?

⑤

משל לבן מלך שלבו גם עליו והיה למד לאכול נבלות וטרפות. אמר להמלך: זה יהיה חריר על שולחני ומצמנו הוא נזיר.

It may be compared to a king's son who was addicted to carrion and forbidden meats. Said the king: *He shall always eat at my table* and soon get out of the habit.

(Vayikra Rabbah)

⑧ explanation of עֲצָנָה follows.

The view is not even referred to here that the aim of the sacrifices was to prevent idolatry. What the Israelites are commanded here is merely to partake only of the meat of sacrifices. The Midrash does not belittle the importance of sacrifices. On the contrary, they are given an important place in the precepts of Judasim. The worshipper who partakes of the sacrifice sits at the table of the Lord.

① Bring this עֲצָנָה as a זֶמֶן for פָּנִיָּה. How?

איש איש כי ישוט... רבי פנחס בשם ר' לוי אומר: משל לבן מלך שלבו היה גם עליו והוא למד לאכול נבלות וטרפות. אמר המלך: "אכלם על שולחני חריר ומצמנו הוא נזיר". כך לפי שהיו ישראל להוטים אחרי ע"ו והיו מגיאים קרבנותיהם לשעירים באסור... אמר הקב"ה: יהיו מקריבים קרבנותיהם לפני באוהל מועד והם נפרשים מע"ו. הה"ד: "איש איש אשר ישוט..."

"What man soever there be that killeth an ox..." (Leviticus 17, 3). R. Pinhas said in the name of R. Levi: It may be compared to a king's son who was addicted to carrion and forbidden meats. Said the king: *Let him partake of them always at my table*, and he will soon get out of the habit. So it was with Israel. They had a passion for idolatry and brought their sacrifices to the satyrs, in defiance of God's law. Said the Holy One blessed be He: *Let them sacrifice their offerings in the Tent of Meeting and they will give up idolatry.*

② A brief word from פָּנִיָּה

Only Noah who had seen the total destruction of a corrupt world, from which he was miraculously delivered, fully appreciated that his life was wholly dependent on Divine grace. He gave expression to this feeling through the means of an animal sacrifice. The blood on the altar symbolises the human soul. Noah wished to indicate that man belonged both body and soul to God "in whose hand is the soul of every living thing and the spirit of all human flesh."

The real significance of the sacrifice may be gauged from Abraham's offering. He had withstood nine Divine trials and was confronted by the severest - the sacrifice of his only son, whose life was dearer to him than his own. After he displayed his readiness and implicit obedience to the Divine behest, he was bidden to offer a substitute. This clearly indicates that the animal sacrifice symbolises complete surrender to the will of the Almighty. Fear of God implies whole-hearted obedience to His dictates. "Now I know that thou art a Godfearing man, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from Me" (Genesis 22, 12).

Korban — A Sacrificial Worship

The study of human worship shows that the sacrifice of animals is practiced among all races of man. It became a part of his lifestyle. With very few exceptions, this worship tamed man of a method of reaching spiritual planes. The heathen world practiced sacrificial worship through licentious rites, immoral and cruel ways. Their doctrines were irrational, steeped in demonology and magic.

In absolute contrast, we read the book of Leviticus which banishes everything cruel and unholy from the sacrificial rites. Moreover, the efficacy of a Korban is consummated with the atonement for sins committed unwillingly. The impact of the Korban focuses on the Sanctuary by the spiritual axis around which life revolved. The Temple was the spiritual fortress where man poured out his heart, and the Korban served as an empirical instrument to awaken him to his duties to G-d and fellow man. The term Korban, signifies L'Karev, to create a rapprochement between Israel and their Heavenly Father, not just through meditation but also with a personal involvement which stirred the senses to religious commitment. Indeed the various types of Korbanot regulate every sphere of life to sublime ethical conduct. The Korban Olah (burnt offering)

expressed self-surrender to G-d's will. The Korban Shelamini (peace offering), demonstrated man's gratitude for G-d's bounty and mercy. The Korban Chatat (sin offering), depicts sorrow for having erred and the Viduy and Teshuva (confession) shows firm resolution to reconcile one's faults. Furthermore, the congregational sacrifices taught the vital lesson of the interdependence of all of Klal Israel. It revived in each one the conscientious commitment to his nation. A sinner who did not repent his iniquities brought the entire nation to a state of impurity and desecration. Individual defilement weakened the morals and consecration of all the members of the Klal.

Maimonides (Hilchot Meilah Per. 1) classifies sacrifices as among the Chukim — laws transcending human intellect and the necessity to justify the concept of Korbanot as superfluous. He strengthens his theory by quoting Al Yaharsu La'alot El Hashem, Pen Yifrotz Bam (Gen. 19:24). Man should not claim a high mountain lest he awaken G-d's wrath. Maimonides states that the Torah specifically warns us to observe first the Chukim and then Mishpatim as stated "Ushmartem Et Chukotai V'et Mishpatai." On the other hand, in his Moreh (Guide to Perplexed Chalek 3), Maimonides advocates a rationalistic view for Korbanot in general, declaring that the sacrificial rites were ordained as an accommodation to a people who lived among idolatrous neighbors and the purpose was to wean them away from debased religious rites which were common practice among the nations. Indeed in Perek 46, Maimonides justifies his contention stating that animals were regarded as the gods of many nations: sheep were the gods of Egypt,

goats the gods of Kasdim, cattle the gods of Hindus. Subsequently, G-d commanded His nation to obliterate the ancient doctrines they were inhibited with for so long and pursue spiritual worship based on purity.

Machmanides refers to Maimonides' assertions as Divrei Havay (statements outside the realm of reality). He questions the theory regarding Adam, Noach, Hebel and others prior to any idolatrous cults. Did Bilaam sacrifice to G-d, in the context of Maimonides? If so, why did G-d respond to him? Nachmanides presents a more symbolic explanation to Korbanot, according to Kabbalah: Sacrifices have a mysterious effect on the heavenly spheres. According to the Psikat (ordinary explanation), the sinner has forfeited his life to G-d by committing an iniquity. But G-d, by His gracious provision, permits him to substitute his guilt or transfer his iniquities to the Korban. By the various Avodot done to the sacrifice and through sincere atonement, he reaches expiration.

Eben Ezra seems to advocate Nachmanides' point of view. However, Abarbanel finds support for Maimonides' view by quoting the Midrash of Rabbi Levi (M.R. Lev. 22) "A king noticed that his son was wont to eat of the meat of animals that had died by themselves (Nevelot-terefot) or those that had been torn by beasts. So the king said — "let him eat at my table and he will rid himself of that gross habit." The Israelites were sunk in Egyptian idolatry, and were wont to offer sacrifices to the demons. Therefore G-d said "Let them offer their sacrifices before Me at the Tabernacle and they will be weaned away from idolatry and thus be

saved." (See Rabbi Hoffman in his introduction to Sefer Vayikra, refuting Abarbanel's support to Maimonides). Haggaon Bal Meshech Chochma, presents a compromise between Maimonides and his adversaries. Maimonides' justification refers to those sacrifices brought prior to the erection of the sanctuary of Bamot, as having no permanent sanctification, just to wean Am Israel away from the universal cults. However, the sacrifices at Temple worship, had higher spiritual goals which brought man to spiritual ascention. As King David (Ps. 51-18, 19) stated referring to the bamot — "Ki Lo Tachpotz Zevach Vaetna Olah Lo Tirtzu" — For thou delightest not in sacrifice else would I give it. Thou hast no pleasure in burnt offering." But referring to the Temple — "Et Zion Tivneh Chomot Yerushalayim, Az Tachpotz Zivchi Zedek" — The sacrifices of G-d are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, O G-d Thou will not despise."

Rabbi Yitzchok Arama understood Korbanot in the context of man showing gratitude and devotion and his willingness to "give" to other. There is that innate feeling in man to share his lot with fellow man and sacrifice enhances that endeavor. The Maharal declares that korbanot show man's surrender to G-d and total confidence in Him. Other commentaries see sacrifice as a "newness" of man, discharging his guilt and becoming a "new" man.

As a result of the sacrifices of Am Israel in a sanctifying manner, no other people ever attained a higher concept of G-d and a better appreciation of the vital significance of holiness in the life of man and his nation in the history of mankind.