

# Maamarei Mordechai

הסבר לפי ממש פשוט

Parshas Vayikra 5786

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Hashem teaches Moshe about Korbanos.

וְשָׂטַט אֶת־בְּרוֹן הַבֶּקָר לִפְנֵי ה' וְהִקְרִיבוּ בְנֵי אֶהֱרֹן הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶת־הַדָּם וְזָרְקוּ אֶת־הַדָּם עַל־  
הַמִּזְבֵּחַ סָבִיב אֲשֶׁר־פֶּתַח אֹהֶל מוֹעֵד:

“And he shall slaughter the young cattle before Hashem, and the sons of Aharon shall bring close the blood and sprinkle the blood upon and around the mizbeach, that is in the entrance of the Ohel Moed.” (Vayikra 1:5).

The pasuk mentioned the blood twice. Blood appears to be an important part of the offering. Further, the Torah says, “Because the lifeforce of all flesh is in its blood, and I have given to you to put on the mizbeach to atone for your souls. Because blood is the life of the soul, and it atones.” (Ibid 17:11). From these pesukim it appears that Hashem requires blood to atone for sins. However, this is not the case.

There are many korbanos that the Torah authorizes. For sins, the Torah provides atonement through a chatos offering. There is a chatos when the kohen sins. (Vayikra 4:3). There is a chatos for the entire congregation sinning. (Ibid 4:13). There is one if the head of a shevet sins. (Ibid 4:22). And if anyone else from the populace sins, individually, there is a chatos offering. (Ibid 4:27). The Torah mentions blood as the atonement for these korbanos. (Ibid 4:5,16,25,30). However, should a person not be able to afford an animal, sheep (ibid 5:7), or even birds (ibid 5:11), then he shall bring a meal offering. And that meal offering, just plain flour, shall atone for him. (Ibid 5:13).

There is also more than one mincha (meal offering). There is the basic meal offering: choice flour, oil, and incense. (Ibid 2:1). This is taken unbaked, scooped out, and put on the mizbeach. (Ibid 2:2). The remainder goes to the kohanim to eat as they'd like. (Ibid 2:3). There is also the baked meal offering. (Ibid 2:4). There is the mincha cooked on a griddle. (Ibid 2:5). There is one presented in a deep pan. (Ibid 2:7). These are korbanos just like any other, no blood involved in their being accepted by Hashem.

The Yom Kippur service is full of atonement. The kohen gadol atones for himself and his household. (Ibid 16:6). The kohen gadol also effects atonement for the Kodosh itself (ibid 16:16), and for the mizbeach (ibid 16:18). The people also get atonement though the Azazel goat. (Ibid 16:10). All of these, true, do have a component of blood. The Azazel, though, while not slaughtered, is sent into the wilderness to wander and presumably die (and the Mishneh says, in the Second Beis HaMikdash times was thrown off a cliff, Yoma 6:6). However, it was not its blood that was sprinkled that offered the atonement. Furthermore, Yom Kippur itself effects atonement. (Ibid 16:30). No offerings, no blood, just the day itself. Atonement achieved without blood.

There are many things that atone for sins that are not korbanos. The half-shekel given yearly to the Mishkan/Mikdash (and nowadays to charity) atones for sins. Hashem instructs Moshe that each man shall give a chatzi shekel “each should give to atone for his soul.” (Shmos 30:12). When a plague was ravaging through Bnei Yisroel, Moshe told Aharon to put fire from the mizbeach on top of ketores and that will atone for the sins. (Bamidbar 17:11). That not only atoned for their sins but it ended the plague. (Ibid 17:13). Gifts of hekdesch also serve for atonement. When they brought back spoils from the war against Midyan, the soldiers gave spoils to the Mishkan. “We therefore bring these gifts as offerings to Hashem....to atone upon our souls.” (Ibid 30:50).

The word for atone is kaper. The word for covering has that root and that is כפרה kapores. Usually, מִכְסֶה michseh means covering. (Shmos 26:14). Kapores is used in specific situations. Hashem told Noach, “Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood...and you shall cover it, inside and out, with pitch.” (Bereishis 6:14). Both “cover it” and “pitch” have the root word kaper. The word for inside is mibayis which can also mean form the house. The pasuk can then be read, *make for yourself an ark....and you shall be atoned through it – for your household and the outside world – in atonement.* The entire exercise of Noach building the teva and going in it with his family and the animals was to serve as atonement for the world. It would not be totally destroyed. It would live on through him. He would come out atoned and the world would be atoned, as well. Atonement for the entire Yisroel people in Mitzrayim was effectuated through another teva – that which Moshe was placed in. (Shmos 3:3). Moshe was the messenger to save Klal Yisroel.

There is another important kapores. “And you shall make for it a covering of pure gold.” (Ibid 25:17). This was the kapores that covered the Aron HaEdus and that supported the cherubim. (Ibid 25:18). “And you shall place the kapores upon the Aron HaEdus in the Holy of Holies.” (Ibid 26:34). The culmination of the Yom Kippur service was this kapores. “And he shall place the ketores upon the fire before Hashem [inside the Kodesh HaKadashim], so that the cloud of ketores smoke shall cover the kapores.” (Vayikra 16:13). He also then sprinkles the blood upon the kapores. (Ibid 16:14). It is not just the Aron that was covered but the *kapores* specifically. It is the covering of the Aron that effects the kapra – the atonement. It stands there all the time providing atonement – just by being there. When it is covered in ketores and sprinkled with korban blood then it is Aron that effectuates the atonement. The solution hiding in plain sight.

Returning to the pasuk stating blood is the life of the soul (ibid 17:11), that is reason for why blood cannot be eaten. (Ibid 3:17). It is not the blood that atones. It is the fact that blood is the life of the soul, and that when one looks at it sprinkled on the mizbeach he or she would be reminded how important life is, and it will bring the korban offeror to repent. Repentance effects atonement. Not the blood but what the blood symbolizes to the person. Life is precious. Do not eat blood and do not shed blood. Do not die like the animal but repent and live. Korban Pesach blood was life in Mitzrayim. (Shmos 12:13).

Hashem has no desire to consume blood or to have his own creatures perish for the sake of other creations. The animals were put there as a reminder of the importance of life and to elicit repentance. However, Hashem does not desire blood. There are many other ways one can gain atonement and achieve closeness to Hashem.