

Triennial Torah Study – 3rd Year 30/06/2012



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Num 8		Job 19-21	Hebrews 9
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Separating the Levites for Tabernacle Duty (Numbers 8)

The system of sacrifices and offerings in the Old Testament often seems too complicated for us to grasp. Yet in this chapter another dimension is added—we see the Levites themselves being offered to God by Aaron as a wave offering—as if he lifts them up to present them to God for His acceptance. Indeed, waving overhead was the typical way of presenting something to God, who dwells above in heaven (compare Exodus 29:24, 26, 27; Leviticus 7:30, 34; 8:27, 29). We see that God does accept the Levites, stating that they are now His (Numbers 8:14).

Interestingly, the High Priest today, Jesus Christ, also “lifts” His servants—His priesthood the Church (see 1 Peter 2:5, 9)—to present them before God the Father as if a wave offering. We find this in Ephesians 2:4-7: “God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together [out of spiritual death and into God’s presence], and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus” (emphasis added).

Of course, “the ages to come” is what we are really waiting for, when we will be perfected and sinless and given God’s Kingdom. But we are “raised up” and “waved” before God for Him to accept us right now. And He does—thanks to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that covers our sins. We find this portrayed in the ceremony that took place in ancient Israel on the Feast of Pentecost, when two leavened loaves of the firstfruits of the wheat harvest were waved before God. These “wave loaves” represented God’s converted followers of Old and New Testament times, the “firstfruits” in God’s plan of salvation (compare Romans 8:23; James 1:18; Revelation 14:1-4; Hebrews 12:23). The leaven shows that these firstfruits are not yet perfect and still beset with sin (see Leviticus 2:11-12; 1 Corinthians 5:6-8; and highlights covering the grain offering in Leviticus 2). Yet the loaves were accepted because a sin offering was waved with them (see

Leviticus 23:16-20). The same is true today. When Christ presents His followers before the Father, His perfect sacrifice is presented with them—and they are accepted.

Returning to the Levites, there was a training period of five years, a sort of apprenticeship, for them before they assumed their full duties at age 30 (verse 24; 4:3). After age 50, it seems they went into a kind of semi-retirement with limited duties (8:25-26; 4:3).

The purpose of the laying on of hands, mentioned here, is to set someone apart for a specific purpose such as in ordinations and healings. The first mention of laying on of hands in the Scriptures is when Israel (Jacob) placed his blessing and name on Ephraim and Manasseh (Genesis 48:13). In this case of the Levites, we see representatives of all Israel laying on their hands to set the Levites apart for the special service of the tabernacle (verse 10). The laying on of hands, according to the book of Hebrews, is one of the basic doctrines of the Bible (6:12).

“For I Know That My Redeemer Lives, and...I Shall See God” (Job 19)

The words of Job’s friends do not bounce right off him. They wound him deeply—leaving him shattered—on top of what he’s already going through. His friends have wronged him with all their accusation and lack of pity and comfort (verses 1-3).

Job’s response to their using the disgrace of his disease to plead the case that he is guilty of sin is to say that God has wronged him (verses 5-6). Perhaps softening this accusation is the fact that the word translated “wronged” could also be rendered “overthrown,” as it is in the earlier King James Version and in Green’s Literal Translation. Either way, while it is true that God bears responsibility for what is happening to Job, Job’s understanding of what is occurring is gravely mistaken. Furthermore, as has already been stated, people in great suffering often blurt out things they don’t fully mean. The great God of perfect compassion understands.

Job goes on to relate more of his unrelenting sufferings—unable to comprehend why God would afflict him with these things. Verse 9 shows him stripped of glory and crown— demonstrating that Job was probably a king (see also Job 29).

In 19:20, after Job says, “My bone clings to my skin and to my flesh,” we see words that have become an idiom in the English language for a narrow escape: “I have escaped by the skin of my teeth” or, as it is more properly rendered in the earlier King James Version, “with the skin of my teeth.” The idea that a narrow escape is meant here is probably incorrect. In context, perhaps he is simply saying that of all his bones, his teeth alone do not cling to skin—as they have no skin. On the other hand, some see the skin of the teeth as meaning the gums—and that Job is saying that only his gums are unaffected by his illness. John Gill’s Exposition of the Entire Bible offers this intriguing possibility: “Some have thought that Satan, when he smote Job from head to feet with ulcers, spared his mouth, lips, and teeth, the instruments of speech, that he might therewith curse God, which was the thing he aimed at, and proposed to bring him to, by getting a grant from God to afflict him in the manner he did.”

Suffering as he does, having described his abandonment by friends and family (verses 13-19) and seemingly by God, he cries out from his isolation to his three visiting friends for pity (verses 21-22).

Then in verses 23-24 Job wishes that his words would be written down, engraved as a permanent record. His thought here was the same as in 16:18, where he asked that the earth not cover his blood when he died—that it would remain as a witness. Bildad had warned how death would remove the memory of Job from the earth (18:12). The amazing fact is that Job's words have remained for all time—preserved through this book of Job we are now reading.

Surprisingly, in the midst of his despair, we learn that Job is confident that God will not forget him. He looks forward to the far future when his “Redeemer”—the divine Kinsman who would buy him back from suffering and death and ultimately vindicate him—would at last stand on the earth (verse 25).

Job seems immediately to relate this to his own resurrection at that time. The NKJV says: “And after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God” (verse 26). The last clause here is disputed. As *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* notes, “The debate centers around whether it is ‘in the flesh’ or ‘apart from the flesh’ that Job [will have] this experience. The Hebrew could go either way” (note on verses 25-27). The Holy Scriptures translation by the Jewish Publication Society (JPS), renders it: “Then without my flesh shall I see God.” Many insist that the meaning here must be “in my flesh” because Job mentions his eyes then beholding God (verse 27), which is only possible with a body. The truth of the matter, however, is that it is possible to have a body that is not made of flesh. Indeed, 1 Corinthians 15 explains that the resurrection bodies of the saints will be composed of spirit, as “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (verse 50; compare verses 45, 49).

Yet there is another possible translation of this passage that does allow for “in my flesh”—and fits in context with Job's lamenting. Note it in the new JPS translation: “But I know that my Vindicator lives; in the end He will testify on earth—this, after my skin will have been peeled off. But I would behold God while still in my flesh, I myself, not another, would behold Him; would see with my own eyes” (verses 25-27, Tanakh). In other words, this translation sees Job as basically saying, “I know I will see God at the resurrection, but I would really like to face Him right now—to confront Him with my situation.”

Job ends in verses 28-29 with a warning to his friends. Rather than be all concerned with trying to establish the fact of his sin, they should be worried about their own wrong in how they are dealing with him. For they are right about one thing—a judgment is coming.

“I Have Heard the Rebuke that Reproaches Me” (Job 20)

Zophar now speaks for the second and last time. He “took Job's words, especially [Job's] closing words in 19:28-29, as a personal affront. Job had dared to assert that on Zophar's theory of retribution Zophar himself was due for punishment. To Zophar such could only happen

to the wicked. Zophar was the most emotional of the three; and he was not about to let Job's rebuke go unanswered, though in chapter 19 Job had earnestly pled for a withdrawal of their charges. Here he had nothing new to say to Job but said it with passion. The speech is full of terrifying imagery" (Expositor's Bible Commentary, note on verses 1-3).

Indeed, Zophar's speech is utterly scathing. Where Job had asked the earth to not cover his blood and stated that he had a witness in heaven (16:18-19), Zophar says that the earth would rise up against the wicked—meaning Job—and that heaven would reveal his sin. In fact, Zophar said that the wicked person would perish forever like his own dung (verse 7), which is buried in the earth.

It is staggering to witness the steeply escalating excoriation and threatening warnings in the speeches of Job's friends. As he scrapes at his painful boils and struggles in agony to understand what is happening to him, crying out to his friends ever more fervently for caring pity and comfort, they instead hammer and bludgeon him worse than before.

“Why Do the Wicked Live and Become Old?” (Job 21)

Job makes another attempt to answer his friends but believes they will just keep mocking him as they have been (verses 1-3). He responds to their notion that the wicked always get what they deserve in this life in short order with observations of just the opposite—that they usually seem to live out their lives pretty comfortably.

In verse 19, he anticipates a response of, “Well, at least their children will pay for what they've done.” But how, he asks, would that be justice when the wicked themselves are left unaffected—when they won't even know what their children are experiencing because they'll be dead? (verses 19-21).

The translation of verse 30 is disputed. In the New King James Version, the meaning seems to be that the wicked will ultimately get theirs on the final day of judgment—implying that most of them have smooth sailing until then. Yet other versions render this as the wicked being kept from any present day of judgment—being brought out in escape from current calamity.

In verse 22, Job seems to admit that he is not worthy or capable of instructing God on what is righteous and just, but he just has to question what God is thinking here. It is a hard matter, and Job thinks his friends are ridiculous for thinking they have it all figured out—especially when he is here shredding their arguments, showing their answers to be empty and false (verse 34).

In actuality, their arguments bore a kernel of truth. The apparently idyllic life of the wicked is often an outward façade. Sin does carry consequences in the here and now. Automatic penalties for faithlessness and disobedience are often at work in the lives of the wicked, denying them true happiness and fulfillment. However, Job's friends were completely mistaken in thinking that sinful living would result in almost immediate direct retribution from God. They also denied the obvious fact that the wicked did not live in constant terror and agony. And further, they were completely

wrong in their assumption that those who faithfully serve God never experience terror and agony except when they stumble and sin.

Hebrews Chapter 9

1 Now the first [covenant] indeed had regulations of worship and the earthly set-apart place. Right away we can note that Sha'ul is talking about the PRIESTHOOD, not the covenant. As anyone can plainly see – covenant was not in the original text – but was added. That is why it is in italics. So let us read it as it was written: “now the first indeed had regulations of worship and the earthly set-apart place.” What had regulations of worship? The priesthood. What had the earthly set-apart place? The priesthood, called out assembly, and the tabernacle. And then Shaul goes on to describe more of the earthly, made with hands, tabernacle.

2 For a Tent was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, and the table, and the showbread, which is called the Set-apart Place.

3 And after the second veil, the part of the Tent which is called Most Set-apart, 4 to which belonged the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that held the manna, and the rod of Aharon that budded, and the tablets of the covenant, 5 and above it the kerubim of esteem were overshadowing the place of atonement – about which we do not now speak in detail.

6 And these having been prepared like this, the priests always went into the first part of the Tent, accomplishing the services. The set apart place was entered into by the priests daily for themselves and the people, to fulfill the instructions of our Father. Has anything changed for today or should anything have changed for us today? Let's read some verses concerning this from the Messianic Writings.

Acts 3:2 “And a certain man, lame from his birth, was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the Set-apart Place which is called Yaphah (Beautiful or Lovely), to ask alms from those entering into the Set-apart Place.

Acts 5:42 “And daily in the Set-apart Place, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and bringing the Good News: Yeshua the Messiah!”

Acts 17:11 “Now these (Beroia) were more noble than those in Thessalonike, who received the word with great eagerness, and searched the Scriptures daily, if these [words] were so. We can liken the set apart place of the tent, as our inner man (person) where we are to daily light our spirit with Messiah to keep our lamps burning. The table of showbread – the nourishment of His Word daily to keep us on the right path. 7 But into the second part the high priest went alone once a year, not without blood, which he offered for himself and for sins of ignorance of the people, Here is a reading from the Torah concerning sins of ignorance and the loving instruction given on how to deal with this type of sin or missing the mark – which is ONLY shown to us by His Torah (Instructions and Guidance).

Numbers 15:15-28 “One law is for you of the assembly and for the stranger who sojourns with you – a law forever throughout your generations As you are, so is the stranger before Yehovah. One Torah and one right-ruling is for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you. And Yehovah spoke to Mosheh, saying, “Speak to the children of Yisra’el, and say to them, ‘When you come into the land to which I bring you, then it shall be, when you eat of the bread of the land, that you present a contribution to Yehovah. Present a cake of the first of your dough as a contribution – as a contribution of the threshing-floor you present it. Of the first of your dough you are to give to Yehovah a contribution throughout your generations. And when you sin by mistake, and do not do all these command which Yehovah has spoken to Mosheh, all that Yehovah has commanded you by the hand of Mosheh, from the day Yehovah gave command and onward throughout your generations, then it shall be, if it is done by mistake, without the knowledge of the congregation, that all the congregation shall prepare one young bull as a burnt offering, as a sweet fragrance to Yehovah, with its grain offering and its drink offering, according to the right-ruling, and one male goat as a sin offering. Then the priest shall make atonement for all the congregation of the children of Yisra’el, and it shall be forgiven them, for it was by mistake. And they shall bring their offering, an offering made by fire to Yehovah, and their sin offering before Yehovah, for their mistake. And it shall be forgiven all the congregation of the children of Yisra’el and the stranger who sojourns in their midst, because all the people did it by mistake.

And if a being sins by mistake, then he shall bring a female goat a year old as a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for the being who strays by mistake, when he sins by mistake before Yehovah, to make atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

8 the Set-apart Spirit signifying this, that the way into the Most Set-apart Place was not yet made manifest while the first Tent has a standing,

The sons of Israel and the mixed multitude at this time knew that what they were doing, how they were doing it, and when they were doing it – was a pattern of that which was in heaven! Father had already given the pattern to Mosheh and Mosheh gave the pattern to the assembly. So much of what they were doing, they were doing through faith and faith alone. They were doing it – because Father said to do it. The first part of the tent (the Set-apart place) was entered daily by the priests. They went in and they went out, taking care of the lighting of the menorah, the table of shewbread, the incense. But this Most Set-apart Place, they knew was different because the of “special” instructions that went along with being able to ‘enter into it.’ A perfect ‘mystery’ of the gift The Messiah.

9 which was a parable for the present time in which both gifts and slaughters are offered which are unable to perfect the one serving, as to his conscience,

“..... as to his conscience,” why does Shaul separate out these specific words? We will see below in the next verse that he will explain that much of the rituals that the mediators (earthly priests) went through for service, were to obtain cleansing/sanctification of the “bodies” — the vessels for service. The administration and administrators were pictures of what is in the

heavens, the throne room and the tabernacle. 10 only as to foods and drinks, and different washings, and fleshly regulations imposed until a time of setting [matters] straight.

In the wilderness tabernacle and thereafter – a teaching and picture had to be accomplished. The teachings, doings, and pictures had to answer questions like: who is Yehovah? what is He like? What does He require of us? What does He consider unrighteousness? What does He call clean or unclean? What is His heart? These teachings and pictures rested upon the shoulders of the priests until the occasion of restoration of the true heavenly picture of Messiah as High Priest would come to pass. The entire NATION were to be priests if we remember, but transgression happened.

11 But Messiah, having become a High Priest of the coming good [matters], through the greater and more perfect Tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, 12 entered into the Most Set-apart Place once for all, not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood, having obtained everlasting redemption. 13 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the defiled, sets apart for the cleansing of the flesh,

Clearly, Sha'ul re-affirms the necessity of the Instructions from Yehovah concerning the requirement of cleansing of our flesh in verse 13. The blood of bulls and goats, the ashes of the red heifer, sprinkling of the ashes mixed with water onto those who had been in contact with the dead did cleanse the flesh. These instructions were given by our Creator and He declared that they did cleanse us, so that we could approach Him and not be destroyed by His Holiness.

14 how much more shall the blood of the Messiah, who through the everlasting Spirit offered Himself unblemished to Elohim, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living Elohim? “Renewing of the mind.....” 15 And because of this He is the Mediator of a renewed covenant, so that, death having taken place for redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, those who are called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance.

Clearly we see that the Aharonic and Levitical Priesthood were mediating THE covenant between Yehovah and us in all the earthly vessels as instructed through Mosheh, and Messiah is mediating the covenant, THE SAME COVENANT that is now in fleshly vessels! 16 For where a covenant is, it is necessary for the death of the covenanted one to be established. 17 For a covenant over those dead is firm, since it is never valid while the covenanted one is living.

Beloved, this is why it is a “Blood” Covenant. 18 Therefore not even the first [covenant] **remember, we are still talking about the priesthood or type of mediation here, don't get fooled*** was instituted without blood.

19 For when, according to Torah, every command had been spoken by Mosheh to all the people, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, 20 saying, “This is the blood of the covenant which Elohim commanded you.” 21 And in the same way he sprinkled with blood both the Tent and all the vessels of the service. 22 And, according to the Torah, almost all is cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. 23 It was necessary, then, that the copies of

the heavenly ones should be cleansed with these, but the heavenly ones themselves with better slaughter [offerings] than these.

24 For Messiah has not entered into a Set-apart Place made by hand – figures of the true – but into the heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of Elohim on our behalf, 25 not that He should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters into the Set-apart Place year by year with blood not his own.

Yom HaKippurim, Day of Atonement or Coverings. We are privileged to rehearse this day each and every year according to the instructions given to us by Yehovah in Leviticus chapter 23. It is a rehearsal to prepare us for a very, very important time and day coming to us in the future. To obey the instruction is to be blessed. In doing this – we prepare for our deliverance when our Messiah comes. 26 For if so, He would have had to suffer often, since the foundation of the world. But now He has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the offering of Himself. 27 And as it awaits men to die once, and after this the judgment, 28 so also the Messiah, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, shall appear a second time, apart from sin, to those waiting for Him, unto deliverance.