

**NEHAMA LEIBOWITZ**

**NEW STUDIES IN VAYIKRA**  
**(Leviticus)**

Translated by  
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**Vol. I**

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2. Compare Rashi's comment on verse 12: "if he shall offer it as a thanksgiving", cited above, with Psalm 107. Note the different order of the four instances of the *hagomel* blessing in the Psalm and in Rashi:

<i>Psalm 107</i>	<i>Rashi Vayikra 7:12</i>
Desert travellers	Sea voyagers
Released prisoners	Desert travellers
After recovery from illness	Released prisoners
Sea voyagers	After recovery from illness (Lit., 'he who recovered etc.')

- a. Can you account for the change of order in Rashi?  
 b. Why are the first three in the plural and the last one in the singular in Rashi?
3. Further to Rashi's comment on v. 12 — "If he shall offer it as a thanksgiving":  
 Why does Rashi find it necessary to say: "If he offers it as thanksgiving for any miracle that happened to him", before enumerating the instances? (cf. *Rashi* on Psalm 100:1)
4. "Do good in Your favor to Zion, build the walls of Jerusalem. Then shall You be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt-offering and whole burnt-offering" (Ps. 51:20-21).

Ibn Ezra comments:

"Sacrifices of righteousness" refer to the peace-offerings; "burnt offering" refers to the daily and additional (*musaf*) sacrifices.

Why are the sin- and guilt-offerings not mentioned in this verse?

5. "If he shall offer it as thanksgiving (*al todah*), then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving (*al zevah hatodah*) unleavened cakes..." (7:12). Explain the difference, if any, between the two uses of *al*.

### THE PEACE-OFFERING (*SHELAMIM*)

ו כט המקריב את־זבח שלמיו לה' יביא את־קרבתו לה' מזבח שלמיו.  
 ז ל ידיו תביאנה את אשי ה'.

7:29

"He that offers his peace-offering to the Lord shall bring his offering to the Lord of the sacrifice of his peace-offering.

7:30

His own hands shall bring the offerings of the Lord made by fire"

The text of the peace-offering differs stylistically from that of the other offerings. Our commentators dwell on the salient points and nuances. The following is R. Ephraim of Lunshitz's comment in his *Keli Yakar*:

"And this is the law of the peace-offering, which he shall offer to the Lord" (7:11). The passage dealing with the peace-offering alone carries the phrase, "which he shall offer to the Lord". It is the offering which is not prompted by an omission or transgression.

"His own hands shall bring the offerings of the Lord made by fire" ... It is only in regard to the peace-offering that the Torah states that the owner shall bring it with "his own hands." If a king's subject wishes to appease his sovereign, he sends his gift through an emissary, as did Jacob who said: "I will appease him (Esau) with the present that goes before me, and afterwards I will see his face" (Gen. 32:21). But he who brings his king a gift as a token of respect, does so personally — with his own hands. Such is the difference between a

sin- and guilt-offering, due for offensive acts, and the burnt-offering, which brings atonement for sinful thoughts, on the one hand, and the peace-offering, on the other. The former, whose purpose is to allay God's anger, should not be brought personally, for this would be presumptuous, but rather sent through the office of the Kohen. Not so the peace-offering, which is a gift — that "his own hands shall bring".

There are also differences between the various categories of *shelamim* — peace-offerings, i.e., between the *todah* — thanksgiving-offering and the *neder* vowed or *nedavah* freewill peace-offerings. For the *korban todah* the Torah rules:

וּבֶשֶׁר זֶבַח תּוֹדַת שְׁלָמִיו כִּיּוֹם קָרְבָּנוֹ יֵאָכֵל. לֹא יֵנִיחַ מִמֶּנּוּ עַד-בֹּקֶר.

7:15

**"And the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace offering for thanksgiving shall be eaten the same day that it is offered; he shall not leave any of it until the morning"**

Our Sages explain that the sacrifice may be consumed during the following night, before daybreak. There are several opinions as to the reason.

Gersonides (Ralbag) offers the following peculiar gastronomic motive:

... the sacrificial meat is not to be eaten before nightfall, since it is stated thereafter, "He shall not leave any of it until the morning." Rather the time-limit is the end of the night, when the meat is tastier than afterwards.

Maimonides, in *The Guide for the Perplexed* Part III, 46, adduces another reason:

The offerings must all be perfect and in the best condition, in order that no one should slight the offering or treat it with contempt. The burnt-offering was flayed, and its inwards and legs, although they

were entirely burnt, had to be previously washed, in order that due respect should always be shown to the sacrifice. This object is constantly kept in view, and is often taught: "You say, The table of the Lord is polluted, and the fruit thereof, even his meat, is contemptible" (Mal. 1:12). For the same reason nobody uncircumcised, or unclean was allowed to partake of any offering; nor could any offering be eaten that had become unclean, or was left till after a certain time, or concerning which an illegal intention had been conceived. And it had also to be consumed in a particular place. Of the burnt-offering, which is entirely devoted to God, nothing at all was eaten. Those sacrifices which are brought for a sin, i.e., sin-offering and guilt-offering, must be eaten within the court of the Sanctuary (*Azarah*), and only on the day of their slaughtering and the night following, whilst peace-offerings, which are next in sanctity, being sacrifices of the second degree, may be eaten in the whole of Jerusalem, on the day they have been offered and on the following day, but not later. After that time the sacrifices would become spoiled, and be unfit for food (here vowed and freewill peace-offerings are meant).

An entirely different reason is suggested by the *Sefer haHinukh* (143):

Moreover, there is in this an allusion to our trust in God; a man should not begrudge himself his food and store it for the morrow, seeing that God commanded to utterly destroy sanctified meat after its time, when no creature — man or beast — is allowed to partake of it.

This view gains weight in the case of the thanksgiving-offering, offered for a miraculous experience. Thus, it was forbidden to keep the *manna* — that came down miraculously from Heaven — for the following day, in order to accustom the children of Israel to trust in God. Our Sages declare: "He who has bread in his basket, and says: 'what will I eat tomorrow?' has little faith in God" (*Sot.* 48b).

Abravanel considers this law in the social context (7:11):

The purpose of this (law of peace-offering) is to publicize the miracle. Seeing that he has only one day and one night for consuming his

sacrifice, the owner invites his relatives and friends to share his meal and joy. On being asked what motivated this feast, the host will recount the Divine wonders. But if the time for consuming thanksgiving peace-offering were two days and one night, as for other peace-offerings, the owner would not invite anyone for *in one house shall it be eaten* (Ex. 12:46) in two days and one night. But having an abundance of meat and bread in the house, and only one day and one night in which to eat it he will certainly invite many friends to share it, lest they despise him the next morning when they see him burning large quantities of the residue of his offering.

The *Ha'amek Davar* elaborates the details of the offering:

"Together with loaves of leavened bread shall he make his offering" (7:13). This implies that the leavened loaves constitute the main purpose of the offering. Hence the Torah adds: "these to be added to his peace-offering of thanksgiving" (end of v. 13) (*shelamav*), i.e., the loaves are to be added because it is *his* thanksgiving peace-offering.

The purpose of the thanksgiving-offering brought for a miraculous deliverance from danger, is to induce the owner *to recount God's merciful deeds*. Accordingly, whereas the loaves prescribed are several, the time limit for consuming the thanksgiving offering is the shortest (the day of the offering and the following night) of all the peace-offerings (whose time-limit is two days). This is designed to increase the number of participants in the feast on the day of the offering so that many people will learn of the miracle, and there will be four loaves for the priests... hence the leavened loaves constitute the principal part of the meal, for matzah, the bread of poverty, is not as digestible as leavened bread.

The end of this verse teaches that the leavened loaves are the essence, because it is the "peace-offering of his thanksgiving" — in gratitude for emerging from an adversity and regaining his well-being.

This also explains the repetition at the end of v. 13 — that the bread is "to be added to his peace-offering of thanksgiving," already stated in v. 12. It further sheds light on Psalm 116:17-19, as explained in this author's commentary *Harhev Davar*:

The Psalmist declares: "I will offer to You the sacrifice of thanksgiving, and I will call upon the Name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord in the presence of all His people, in the courts of the Lord's house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem." (Ps. 116:17-19) Why is he to pay his vows in the presence of all His people? How does this enhance the act? Surely God requires "to walk humbly with your God"? (Micah 6:8). The answer provided herein is that sharing the meal of the thanksgiving-offering with numerous guests will serve as an occasion for the public acknowledgement of God's providential lovingkindness.

This law which reduces the time allowed to consume an increased quantity of loaves and cakes, thus enhances the Divine miracle as well as neighborly love and human brotherhood. It fully justifies the term *shelamim* as interpreted by Rabbi Yehudah (see above): "He who offers *shelamim* (a peace-offering), brings *shalom* (peace) into the world.