

Kriyat HaTorah Companion

Questions Raised in Each Aliya

Vayikra

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Italics indicate author's comments

Aliya 1 | 1:1-13

Examine verse 1:1.

How can we connect the end of Shemot with the beginning of Vayikra? Why does this book start with a calling to Moshe?

The **Ramban**, **Rashbam** & the **Netziv** suggest that Moshe could not approach the *Mishkan* without this calling. We are left off at the end of Shemot with Moshe & Aharon waiting for the invitation to come into the *Mishkan*. The **Sforno** suggests that there were similarities between the cloud resting on Mt. Sinai and the cloud that rested on the *Mishkan*. Moshe was invited to the cloud on Mt. Sinai and so he waited to be invited by the *Mishkan*, too. The **Chizkuni** points out that the verse does not say who called out to Moshe, indicating that this is a continuation of the end of Shemot.

Aliya 2 | 1:14-2:6

Examine verse 1:14.

Why do we limit bird sacrifices to these two species? What are the limits taught about these birds in this verse?

Rashi & the **Ibn Ezra** suggest that the turtledoves were to be fully grown adults and the doves were to be young since the verse calls them "*Bnei Yonah*". The **Ramban** suggests that one can easily raise either of these birds in one's backyard, and do not need to be "hunted" to capture them for sacrifice. The **Tur Ha'Aruch** suggests that the turtledove was chosen because these birds are monogamous and won't mate with others, even if a mate has died. The young dove is also chosen because it has not reached sexual maturity and remains for a prolonged time in the nest before exploring the world.

Aliya 3 | 2:7-16

Examine verses 2:7-8.

What is the purpose of these offering? What vessel is used to offer this sacrifice?

Rashi suggests that this was a deep frying pan (*think deep dish pizza*) and therefor the contents of the pan did not get fully cooked in the fire of the altar. The **Ibn Ezra** suggests that this vessel was simply a frying pan and its contents were unusal because it was fried. The **Ralbag** explains that this was a pan that had a thick lip around it. This kept the contents of the pan doughy and not completely cooked. The **Chizkuni** suggests that this may be referring to the *Omer* offering. The **Torah Temimah** draws our attention to the **Talmud Zevachim 119b** that includes the *Omer* in this verse because of the extra 'vav' at the beginning of the verse.

Aliya 4 | 3:1-17

Examine verse 3:1-2.

What is the purpose of the Korban Shelamim? What does its name mean or refer to?

Rashi explains that this sacrifice brings peace and is therefore known by the word for peace. The **Chizkuni** suggests that this is a sacrifice one would bring to achieve restitution for a vow or promise. Therefore, this sacrifice is known by the Hebrew word relating to payment for something. The **Bekhor Shor** points out that this sacrifice is unique in that every "involved party" benefits from this sacrifice. The altar, the sacrificer, and the Kohen all get some part of this sacrifice and therefore they all 'partake' in this sacrifice together. The **Maharal** suggests that this is the 'complete' sacrifice (due to everyone's participation); thus the name relates to the Hebrew word for 'complete'.

Aliya 5 | 4:1-26

Examine verse 4:2.

Which Mitzvot is the Torah speaking of here? Why is the word Nefesh used in this verse?

Rashi suggests that this parameter refers only to the unintentional violation of a sin that would incur the punishment of *Karet* if it were violated willfully. **Ibn Ezra** agrees with **Rashi** but extends this to include whether someone was born Jewish or was a convert. The **Da'at Zkenim** suggests that *Nefesh* refers to the animalistic section of our soul. It is only possible for human beings to err in their observance of the *Mitzvot* through the animalistic section of their souls. The name *Adam* would refer to the entire being, and an unintentional sinner does not sin with his entire being, including his *Yetzer Tov*.

Aliya 6 | 4:27-5:10

Examine verse 4:27.

Why does the verse begin with a conditional statement ('ve'im')? What does the conclusion of the verse indicate?

The **Ohr HaChaim** suggests that the opening of the verse connects it with the prior laws regarding the sin of a leader. The **Chizkuni** suggest that the key to this entire verse is the self-awareness of the sinner. Only if the sinner becomes aware of his inadvertent sin do the *halachot* of this verse become relevant. The **Kedushat Levi** suggests that the language of this verse speaks to the arrogance of a sinner. The perspective of the verse is written from Heaven. A person is not a sinner, but rather distanced from Heaven by performing this sin.

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Aliya 7 | 5:11-26

Examine verse 5:11.

Why does this verse conclude describing what status of offering this person is bringing? Is it not obvious?

Rashi suggests that this final statement of the verse creates parameters for the sacrifice. It would be arrogant to embellish this sacrifice with oil. **Rabbeinu Bahya**, when addressing why these sacrifices are called "*oleh veyored*", suggests that the sinner brings a sacrifice according to his current economic status and not in accordance with his economic status at the time of sinning. *Perhaps the requirement to bring a sin offering is not punitive, and thus is commensurate with current economic status. The sin offering is meant to create a repentant environment for the sinner.*