



## Understanding the Parsha

Leviticus 1:1 –9

We will Learn how to

- 1) **interpret the main theme** (subject) of a **Parsha** (weekly reading from the Torah),
- 2) **make thematic connections to that Parsha** (study the Scriptures related by a common theme [subject], line upon line and precept upon precept)
- 3) **learn how to gain greater understanding of the Parsha we are looking at through its thematic connections to other portions of Scripture.**

## The Offerings of Parashat Vayikra and Tzav

This week we will compare and contrast the offerings listed in Parashat Vayikra and Parashat Tzav. Although the Torah may seem like it is repeating itself over and over, as you begin to study thematically, you will quickly learn that this repetition is for a good reason. If the Torah repeats a word, phrase, or sentence, then the different ways it is used will teach different lessons! Thematic analysis will help you uncover the wisdom Adonai is trying to show you. The power of thematic analysis will show itself as you begin to compare and contrast different portions of Scriptures that are linked thematically.

**I. First, quickly review Leviticus 1-5.** Let's write down how that sidra (portion) flows:

· Instructions concerning the w whole offering, or b burnt offering, or o Olah (עלה).

- Instructions concerning the m meal offering, or m minchah (מנחה).
- Instructions concerning the p peace offering, or s Sh'lamin (שלמים).
- Instructions concerning the s sin offering, or c chatah (חטאת).
- Instructions concerning the g guilt offering, or a asham (אשם).

**II. Next, let's put together our general outline of this week's sidra.**

**Leviticus 6:1-6** — Instructions concerning o olah offering.

**Leviticus 6:7-11** — Instructions concerning the m minchah offering.

**Leviticus 6:12-16**—Instructions concerning the m minchah offering to be made during the anointing ceremony of Aaron and his sons.

**Leviticus 6:17-23**—Instructions concerning the c chatah offering.

**Leviticus 7:1-10**—Instructions concerning the a asham offering and miscellaneous laws.

**Leviticus 7:11-27**—Instructions concerning the s Sh'lamin offering.

**Leviticus 7:28-38** — More instructions concerning the s Sh'lamin offering.

**Leviticus 8:1-36** —Instructions concerning the a anointing ceremony.

**At first when we look at these two portions of Scripture they seem to repeat themselves don't they. Let's begin to compare and contrast and see what we can learn.**

A. Right from the beginning we can figure out the difference between these two passages by seeing who they are talking to.

**Read Leviticus 1:1-2.** For the instructions of Parashat Vayikra, who are they given to? Circle one:

To the children of Israel                      To Aaron and his sons

**Now read Leviticus 6:1-2.** For the instructions of Parashat Tzav, who are they given to? Circle one

To the children of Israel                      To Aaron and his sons

**Thematically, how do these verses begin to contrast these two portions of Scripture?** Connect the themes with a line  
We now know that the instructions in each book were intended for two different groups of people;

Parashat Vayikra                                      is for Aaron and his sons.

Parashat Tzav    is to to all of Israel





Let's see if we can will confirm what we just learned — that the instructions of Parashat Vayikra are for the Israelites, and the instructions in Parashat Tzav are for the priests.

**Remembering the listing of the offerings we just went through, how are they different?** Circle one

They are not in the same order

They are in the same order

You are correct if you circled, “they are not in the same order”. The general order is the same except that the sh'lamim offering is last in Parashat Tzav instead of third as it is in Parashat Vayikra. Most people would not pay attention to this little detail; but, thematic analysis wants us to search for a reason for the difference! We can expect that the reason for the difference in the order will help us understand how the sidras are thematically different.

### 1. What was the reason for the order of the offerings given in Parashat Vayikra?

Match the offering with the reason:

The olah, minchah and sh'lamim were mandatory (you have to do them as commanded) offerings,

The chatat and asham were voluntary (to give freely from your heart) offerings .

**Does this go along with the opening statement in Leviticus 1:1-2?** YES NO

Yes it does. These instructions relate to the different kinds of offerings the Israelites may make; mandatory and voluntary. Even though instructions are given for the priests in Parashat Vayikra, the focus is on teaching the Israelites which offerings they can make, and how those offerings will effect their relationship with Adonai.

**Finding the reason for the order of the offerings in Parashat Tzav** — Let's see if we can uncover the reason for their order, which is different than the order of Parashat Vayikra.

**a. Read Parsha Leviticus 6:1-6** ◻ — About the olah, what is the theme of this Parsha?

The theme is about the b burning of the olah. It has to b burn completely, in a fire that burns c continually .

**For the olah**, describe the two things that are done to it after it was given as an offering?

It is totally consumed on the a altar . Then, its a ashes are removed to a holy place.

**b. Read Parsha Leviticus 6:7-11** ◻ — About the minchah, describe the two things that happen to it after it was given as an offering?

The altar consumes part of it and Aaron and his sons will e eat part of it.

c. Read Parsha Leviticus 6:17-23 ע — About the chatat, describe the two things that happen to it after it was given as an offering?

The altar consumes part of it and Aaron and his sons will e eat part of it.

d. Read Parsha Leviticus 7:1-10 ע — About the asham, describe the two things that happen to it after it was given as an offering?

The altar consumes part of it and Aaron and his sons will e eat part of it.

e. Read Leviticus 7:11-38 — About the sh'lamim, describe the two things that happen to it after it was given as an offering?

The altar consumes part of it, Aaron and his sons will e eat part of it, and the worshiper e eat part of it. (To eat is the same as to consume!)

### 3. What common theme is in all of these passages?

How the offering is C CONSUMED !

### Do you see a pattern concerning how they are consumed?

Yes. The **olah** is O אֵלֶּיךָ consumed by the fire.

The **minchah**, **chatat** and **asham** are consumed by the fire and the p priests.

The **sh'lamim** is consumed by the fire, priests and the e worshipper.

4. If we compare and contrast the sh'lamim offering to the other four offerings we will see two other differences which point out that Parashat Tzav is dealing mostly with rules about who eats the offerings.

### What is said about the olah, minchah, chatat and asham, that is not said about the sh'lamim?

They are said to be m מוֹסַף h קָדֹשׁ !

### What else sets the other four offerings apart from the sh'lamim?

The four offerings that are most holy can ONLY BE EATEN BY MALE P Priest IN A HOLY PLACE.

### But the sh'lamim can be eaten by: Circle who can eat the offering

the priest's family members                      the worshiper, his family and friends.                      an unclean person

Furthermore, they need not eat it in a holy place associated with the Mishkan.

IV. We learned in Parashat Vayikra that the book of Leviticus would focus on how Israel—each individual— can develop a relationship with Adonai through the service of the Mishkan. We must remember the main issue, which is **how can a sinful man draw near to a Holy God?** Again, THE REAL ISSUE taught in Leviticus is how one may draw near to Adonai. We already know that Israel HAD TO APPROACH ADONAI THROUGH BLOOD OFFERINGS/SACRIFICE. The Hebrew word for offering is corban (קָרְבָּן). This word, **corban**, is the Hebrew word for **offering** and is used a whole lot throughout Parashat Vayikra. For example,

the word translated **offering** in Lev 1:2, 10; 3:1 (and many others) is the Hebrew word **corban**. The root for the word offering/corban is קרב, which means coming near! That's right. Normally when we think of an offering, we think of the word **sacrifice**. Sacrifice makes us think of giving up something of value. But this IS NOT the primary theme of an offering as presented in the Scriptures. An offering is not about giving up something of value. **An offering is about drawing near to Adonai!** With this understanding, note that Parashat Vayikra mentions the word offering (קרבן) seven times in the first three verses alone! Now, see how many times the word offering (קרבן) is used in Parashat Tzav. Hardly at all!

A D O N A I Q W E R T  
 Y U I O P P T A E A S  
 D F G H J Z K P L Z X  
 X H C V A B P R N M N  
 L A K V J I H I G F A  
 C L D S H A Q S W E B  
 R O T S Y U I T O P R  
 L K R M T N G R E W O  
 Q O T V E M U S N O C  
 W O F F E R I N G J F

OFFERING  
 CORBAN  
 PRIEST  
 WORSHIPPER  
 OLAH  
 EAT  
 CONSUME  
 ADONAI  
 TZAV

