

# Zera Shimshon

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## Chapter XXV: Tzav (Lev. 6:1–8:36)

Essay 4. The sacrifice that David desired to bring

**מִדְרָשׁ** יְלֻקוּט עַל פְּסוּק "זֶה קָרְבַּן אֶהְרֹן וּבְנָיו", אָמַר ר' אִידִי מִתְאַנֶּה הִנֵּה דָוִד לְקָרְבַּן נְשִׂאִים, הֲדָא הוּא דְכָתִיב "עֲלוֹת מִחִים אֲעֲלֶה-לָךְ", אִין לָךְ קָרְבַּן נְשִׂאִים בּוֹ פְּרִים אֵלִים עֲתוּדִים אֶלָּא קָרְבַּן נְשִׂאִים, הֲדָא הוּא דְכָתִיב "וּלְזֶבַח הַשְּׁלָמִים בְּקָר שְׁנַיִם" וְכוּ' עכ"ל.

There is a **midrash Yalkut** (Shimoni) **on the verse**, “**This is the offering that Aaron and his sons** shall offer to the L-rd on the occasion of his anointment: a tenth of an ephah of choice flour as a regular meal offering, half of it in the morning and half of it in the evening” (Lev. 6:13).

**Rabbi Idei said, David desired** [to build the Temple and to bring as an inaugural offering] **the offering of the tribal chiefs** in the Wilderness, **as it is written, “I offer up fattened burnt offerings to You**, with the odor of burnt rams; I sacrifice bulls and male goats, Selah” (Ps. 66:15). [Rabbi Idei explains that] **the only sacrifice that includes bulls, rams, and male goats, is the sacrifice of the chiefs, as it is written, “and for his peace-offering: two oxen**, five rams, five male goats, and five yearling lambs. That was the offering of Nahshon son of Amminadab” (Num. 7:17).

- Yalkut Shimoni 486:2<sup>1</sup>

Thus, we understand from David’s stated desire in Psalms, that the offering he wanted to bring was comparable to the one brought by the tribal chiefs in the Wilderness.

לָמָּה דָוִד הִנֵּה מִתְאַנֶּה דִּנְקָא לְקָרְבַּן נְשִׂאִים וְלֹא לְשׁוּם קָרְבַּן אַחֵר? וּלְפִי הַפְּשׁוּט יֵשׁ לְתַתּוּ שְׁתֵּי תִירוּצִים.

**Why did David desire [to bring] specifically the sacrifice of the chiefs and not some other sacrifice? According to the plain meaning, we can give two solutions.**

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<sup>1</sup> Th midrash also appears in Lev. Rabbah 8:3.

פסק הרמב"ם (בפרק ב' מהלכות מעשה הקרבנות), וכשם שהקריבו הנשיאים בתנופת המזבח דברים שאין כמותן לדורות, והקריבו בשבת, כך הנשיא מקריב לעתיד תנופתו בשבת. וכן קרבנות שהקריבו בימי עזרא הבאים מהשבי מילואים היו ואין נוהגים לדורות עכ"ל. ומטעם זה היה דוד מתאנה, שהרי בין במשכן בין לעתיד בין בימי עזרא הקריבו מילואים, אמןם בבית ראשון שפנה שלמה לא היו שם מילואים. ודוד שהיה רוצה לבנות בית המקדש כמו שאומר הכתוב, היה מתאנה לעשות גם הוא הקרבן של מילואים שהוא קרבן חדש ונחמד שאין דוגמתו לדורות.

First solution: **The Rambam ruled (the second chapter of Ma'aseh HaKorbanot):**

All of the measures of the accompanying offerings mentioned in the Book of Ezekiel, the listing of the sacrifices, and the order of service written there are all inauguration offerings and will not be practiced in generations to follow. Instead, the prophet commanded and outlined how the inauguration offerings will be brought at the time of the dedication of the altar at the time of the coming of the King Messiah when the Third Temple will be built.<sup>2</sup>

**Just as the chiefs offered sacrifices at the dedication of the Tabernacle—offerings that were not brought in coming generations—and they brought them on the Sabbath, so too, a chief in the future [for the Third Temple] will bring a dedication offering on the Sabbath, as explained there.<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the sacrifices of the people who returned [to Zion] from the [Babylonian] captivity in the days of Ezra<sup>4</sup> were inaugural offerings and will not be practiced in generations to come.**

- Mishneh Torah, Ma'aseh HaKorbanot, 2:14–15

**And for this reason, David was desirous, for whether in the Tabernacle, or in the future Third Temple, or in the days of Ezra returning to the Second Temple, they sacrificed inaugural offerings, but in the First Temple that Solomon built, there were no inaugural offerings that included bulls, rams, and male goats.<sup>5</sup> David, who had wanted to build the Temple, as the Scripture says, had desired to also make an inaugural sacrifice, which was a new sacrifice that had no precedent over the generations.**

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<sup>2</sup> Rashi on Menachot 45b understands Ezekiel's prophecy as referring to special sacrifices for the Second Temple, while the Rambam understands it as applying to the era of Messiah and the Third Temple.

<sup>3</sup> Ezek. 46:4, "The burnt offering which the chief presents to the L-rd on the Sabbath day shall consist of six lambs without blemish and one ram without blemish . . ."

<sup>4</sup> Ezra 8:35, "The returning exiles who arrived from captivity made burnt offerings to the G-d of Israel: twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs and twelve male goats as a purification offering, all this a burnt offering to the L-rd."

<sup>5</sup> I Kings 8:63, "Solomon offered 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep as sacrifices of well-being to the L-rd; thus the king and all the Israelites dedicated the House of the L-rd." II Chron. 7:4, "King Solomon offered as sacrifices 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep; thus the king and all the people dedicated the House of G-d." Thus, the dedication of the First Temple was a massive affair, but it did not list goats.

אי נמי, ידוע שאילו הנה דוד בונה הבית, לא הנה נחרב מעולם, וכדאמרין בגמרא בפרק קמא דסוטה משה דוד לא שלטו שונאיהם במעשה ידיהם. והנה אותו הבית בית האחרון, והנה טעון להיבוכו קרבן הנשיא המפורש ביהוקאל ולכן דוד הנה מתאנה להקריב זה הקרבן ולבנות הבית, ושהוא הנה המלך והנשיא והנה מקריב אותו הקרבן.

Second solution: **Alternatively, it's known that if David had built the Temple, it never would have been destroyed, and as it is said in the Gemara, in the first chapter of tractate Sotah (page 9a), the enemies of Moses and David did not rule over their achievements.** Thus, the Tabernacle that Moses built was never destroyed, and David's citadel was not destroyed by his enemies.

**This Temple would have been the final Temple;** it would have endured, and there would not have been a Second Temple or a future Third Temple. **It would have needed for its inauguration a sacrifice of the chiefs as explained in chapters 45–46 of Ezekiel, and therefore David was desirous to bring this sacrifice and to build the Temple, for he was the king and the chief and was the one bringing the sacrifice.**

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