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INSTITUTE שלום הרטמן

Responding to Change-Lessons from Tisha B'Av

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Ideas for Today

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Sarah's current research explores the use of emotions as legal categories in rabbinic literature. Her work puts classical Jewish legal thought into conversation with contemporary Anglo-American legal theory, a research interest which she developed as a fellow at Cardozo Law School's Consortium in Jewish Studies and Legal Theory.

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1. Bavli Berachot 32b

מיום שחרב בית המקדש נפסקה חומת ברזל בין ישראל לאביהם שבשמים, שנאמר :
”ואתה קח לך מחבת ברזל ונתת אותה קיר ברזל בינך ובין העיר”.

From the time the Temple was destroyed, an iron wall has cut Israel off from its Father in Heaven, as it is said, "And you, take an iron plate and place it as an iron wall between yourself and the city" (Ezek. 4).

2. Types of Offerings (קרבתות = *qorbanot*) in the Book of Leviticus and Their Religious Functions

Gift offerings (the Torah describes each of these as an *isheh* = “a gift.”)

- עולה = *olah* = “whole offering,” “that which goes up”
 - ⇒ All the meat is burned on the altar; sometimes, the skin of the animal goes to the Cohanim as a fee.
 - ⇒ Symbolizes God’s **transcendence** and human humility and submission
- מנחה = *minḥah* = “gift offering,” “grain offering”
 - ⇒ Some of the grain is burned on the altar, and the rest goes to the Cohanim as a fee.
 - ⇒ human dependence and affection towards God?
- זבח השלמים = *zevah ha-shelamim* = “well-being offering,” “peace offering”
 - ⇒ Three subtypes:
 - § תודה = *todah* = “thanksgiving offering,” “gratitude offering”
 - § נדר = *neder* = “vow offering,” “votive offering”
 - § נדבה = *nedavah* = “voluntary offering,” “freewill offering”
 - ⇒ Choice cuts are burned on the altar; some cuts go to the Cohanim as a fee; most of the meat is consumed by the person who brings the offering and his or her family and guests.
 - ⇒ Symbolizes God’s **immanence** and Israel’s deep connected with God; עמואל — “God is with us,” God as part of our community

Rituals that cleanse (the Torah never describes any of these an *isheh* = “a gift.”)

- חטאת = *hattat* = “purification ritual,” “sin offering”
 - ⇒ Blood of the animal is sprinkled on the altar or other parts of the sanctuary. Some parts of the animal are burned on the altar, other parts are burned outside the sanctuary. Some meat consumed by the Cohanim, unless Cohanim themselves are the people bringing the animal to perform the ritual.
 - ⇒ **Purifies** the altar and other parts of the sanctuary from contamination due to Israelites’ sin or impurity.
- אשם = *asham* = “reparation ritual”
 - ⇒ Similar (identical?) to the *hattat*; seems to purify altar and other parts of sanctuary, and makes amends for taking God’s property.

These categories are laid out in Leviticus 1–5 and elaborated on in Leviticus 6–7. For an especially helpful overview of Leviticus’ categorization of the *qorbanot*, see Baruch Schwartz’s commentary on these chapters of Leviticus in *The Jewish Study Bible* published by Oxford University Press. See especially pages 206 and 211–12 of the first edition (published in 2004), or pages 195 and 201 of the second edition (published in 2014).

3. Bavli Berachot 17a

רב ששת כי הוה יתיב בתעניתא, בתר דמצלי אמר הכי: רבון העולמים, גלוי לפניך בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, אדם חוטא — ומקריב קרבן. ואין מקריבין ממנו, אלא חלבו ודמו, ומתכפר לו. ועכשיו ישבתי בתענית ונתמעט חלבי ודמי, יהי רצון מלפניך שיהא חלבי ודמי שנתמעט כאילו הקרבתי לפניך על גבי המזבח, ותרצני.

R. Sheshet, when he was fasting, would say the following after his prayers: "Master of the Universe, it is known before You that at the time the Temple stood, a man would sin and bring an offering, and nothing but the fat and blood would be offered from it, and it would atone for him. And now I have fasted and my fat and blood have been diminished. May it be Your will that my diminished fat and blood be [considered] as though I offered them before You on the altar, and may they find me favor."

4. Bavli Sukkah 49b

גדול העושה צדקה יותר מכל הקרבנות, שנאמר: "עשה צדקה ומשפט נבחר לה' מזבח".

One who performs acts of charity is greater than all of the sacrifices, as it is written: "To perform charity and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than an offering" (Proverbs 21:3)

5. Bavli Berachot 26

רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא אמר: תפלות אבות תקנום. רבי יהושע בן לוי אמר: תפלות כנגד תמידין תקנום. תניא כוותיה דרבי יוסי ברבי חנינא, ותניא כוותיה דרבי יהושע בן לוי. תניא כוותיה דרבי יוסי ברבי חנינא: אברהם תקן תפלת שחרית, שנאמר: "וישכם אברהם בבקר אל המקום אשר עמד שם", ואין "עמידה" אלא תפלה, שנאמר: "ויעמד פינחס ויפלל". יצחק תקן תפלת מנחה, שנאמר "ויצא יצחק לשוח בשדה לפנות ערב", ואין "שיחה" אלא תפלה, שנאמר "תפלה לעני כי יעטף ולפני ה' ישפך שיחו". יעקב תקן תפלת ערבית, שנאמר: "ויפגע במקום וילן שם", ואין "פגיעה" אלא תפלה, שנאמר: "וואתה אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה ואל תשא בעדם רנה ותפלה ואל תפגע בי" ותניא כוותיה דרבי יהושע בן לוי: מפני מה אמרו תפלת השחר עד חצות — שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד חצות. ורבי יהודה אומר: עד ארבע שעות שהרי תמיד של שחר קרב והולך עד ארבע שעות. ומפני מה אמרו תפלת המנחה עד הערב — שהרי, תמיד של בין הערבים קרב והולך עד הערב. רבי יהודה אומר: עד פלג המנחה, שהרי תמיד של בין הערבים קרב והולך עד פלג המנחה. ומפני מה אמרו תפלת הערב אין לה קבע — שהרי אברים ופדרים שלא נתעכלו מבערב, קרבים והולכים כל הלילה. ומפני מה אמרו של מוספין כל היום — שהרי קרבן של מוספין קרב כל היום.

R. Yose son of R. Hanina said: Prayers were instituted by the Patriarchs. R. Yehoshua ben Levi said: Prayers were instituted according to the daily offerings. There is a teaching that supports R. Yose son of R. Hanina, and there is a teaching that supports R. Yehoshua ben Levi.

There is a teaching that supports R. Yose son of Rabbi Hanina: Abraham instituted the shacharit (morning) prayer, as it is written: "And Abraham rose early in the morning to the place where he had stood" (Genesis 19:27). "Standing" (amidah) means nothing other than prayer, as it is written: "And Pinehas stood up and prayed" (Psalms 106:30). Isaac instituted the mincha (afternoon) prayer, as it is written: "And Isaac went out to converse in the field toward evening" (Genesis 24:63). "Conversation" means nothing other than prayer, as it is written: "'A prayer of the afflicted when he is faint and pours out his conversation before the Lord" (Psalms 102:1). Jacob instituted the evening prayer, as it is stated: "And he encountered [vayifga] the place and he slept there" (Genesis 28:11). "Encounter" means nothing other than prayer, as it is written: "And you, do not pray on behalf of this nation and do not raise on their behalf song and prayer, and do not encounter Me" (Jeremiah 7:16).

There is a teaching that supports R. Yehoshua ben Levi: Why did the sages say that the morning prayer may be recited until noon? Because the daily morning offering may be sacrificed until noon... And why did the sages say that the afternoon prayer may be recited until the evening? Because the daily afternoon offering is sacrificed until the evening... And why did they say that the evening prayer is not fixed? Because the limbs and fats that were not consumed before the evening were offered continuously throughout the entire night. And why did the sages say that the additional prayer may be recited all day? Because the additional offering is brought throughout the entire day.