

Torat HaKorban

Guide for a Biblically inspired practice of Meditative Prayer and Worship
Beit B'rachot topical series by Yo'el Berkowitz, 5.5 hours

Outline introduction:

Part 1; The Question of Worship

- Ancient Near-Eastern conception of worship; distinguishing between idolatry and covenant worship
- The ritual of worship in the "shadow-copy" of the heavenly sanctuary; The Exodus - Hebrews understanding

Part 2; The Father's House of Prayer and the Alter of God's Name

- The throne-room where God sits as righteous Judge, hearing the prayers of His people
- Worship expressed through sacrifice, sacrifice facilitating prayer
- Torat HaKorban; The instruction of "drawing near" as a "Living Sacrifice", the Leviticus 1-9 understanding

Part 3; "Meditate on this Torah Day and Night"

- Practical application in daily meditative-prayer for transfiguration by the renewal of the mind (Romans 12:1-2)
 - Applying the science of God's creation of the mind-body unity
- Korban-meditations of testimony and covenantal bond; Psalm 92
- Korban-meditations of revelation and discipleship; The Aronic-Benediction of Numbers 6:22-27
- Korban-meditations of forgiveness and cleansing; Psalm 51
- Korban-meditations of healing and vitality; "Messiah in me"

Part 1

The Question of Worship

- Start by recognising personal presuppositions, and personal values
 - What does the word mean to you?
 - Is it important to you? If so, why?

- Do you expect it of others? If so, why?
- How do you assume worship is, or should be, practiced?
 - When, and where?
- What does the word mean in your language?
- Oxford Dictionary
 - as a noun
 1. the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity: worship of the Mother Goddess | ancestor worship.
 - religious rites or ceremonies, constituting a formal expression of reverence for a deity: the church was opened for public worship.
 - great admiration or devotion shown towards a person or principle: the worship of celebrity and wealth.
 - archaic honour given to someone in recognition of their merit.
 2. [as title] (His/Your Worship) mainly British used in addressing or referring to an important or high-ranking person, especially a magistrate or mayor: we were soon joined by His Worship the Mayor.

(Worshipful) *British* used in titles given to justices of the peace and to certain old companies or their officers: *the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths*.

ORIGIN:

Old English weorthscipe ‘worthiness, acknowledgement of worth’

Worship in the Ancient Near East

- When and why did human beings develop the notion of worship?
 - Is Genesis 4 an indication? Is worship intrinsic to humanity?
 - In the Bible, and other ancient Near-Eastern writings, we observe that intrinsic to the practice of worship was the concept and ritual of sacrifice. That the practice of sacrifice facilitated the act or prayer, or communication with the divine.

The Action of Worship: Ritual

- What are rituals?
- What are the functions of rituals? Why are they important?
- What are the problems of rituals?

- Rituals as dramatised story-telling
 - Stories to both ask and answer fundamental questions
- The fundamental questions:
 - Who and what are we?
 - Where do we live - what *is* the nature of what surrounds us here?
 - How did we get here?
 - What are the natural obstacles?
 - How did our ancestors survive? How do we survive and thrive?

The answers motivating, maintaining and consisting of “worship”
- Ritual sacrifice, and alters - appropriation of a story containing a series of stories for personal interaction with the divine
- Magical priests, servants of the gods and kings
 - Oxford Dictionary: the power of apparently influencing events by using mysterious or supernatural forces. ORIGIN

late Middle English: from Old French *magique*, from Latin *magicus* (adjective), late Latin *magica* (noun), from Greek *magikē (tekhnē)* ‘(art of) a magus’: magi were regarded as magicians.

 - Magus

noun (plural **magi**)

a member of a priestly caste of ancient Persia.

 - a sorcerer.

ORIGIN

Middle English: via Latin and Greek from Old Persian *maguš*.
- Note in relation to the Gospel’s Nativity:

“Wise men from the East”; The priestly class, a symbiotic relationship with the ruling class

 - Training in the art of writing - the literate class
 - Education in the sciences including mathematics and astrology - prophetic reading of omens
 - Wisdom - advisers of the ruler, act or cease from action
- Kings and high priests
 - Kings as either god-men or sons of the gods where to embody Dumuzu of fertility and have sexual relations with shrine prostitutes
- Palaces and Temples
 - Mesopotamian land was largely owned and controlled by the Temples.
- The ritual of worship and the authority to rule

- Power of character; divinise character, emulate the supreme deities
 - social hierarchy; become the image and likeness aspired by the populace
- Responsibility to the community of people depends on:
- Responsibility to the cosmos; maintain cosmic order, restrain natural disasters
 - Continue to maintain peace and prosperity by becoming part of the divine cosmic order in the after-life
- Divine Law givers

Paul's evaluation: Romans 1:21...

What is the difference between Biblical worship and idolatry?

- What did the Biblical people of Israel, in relation to the nations surrounding her, believe concerning worship?
 - Make no graven-image “pesel” פסל Exodus 20, yet in Exodus 34 Moses is instructed to chisel “pesal” פסל two tablets, onto-which God engraves His Name lived-out by the people's living by the Ten Commandments engraved on the two tablets, becoming the “living image” of God rather than mankind engraving a life-less idol of God to worship
- **Idolatry vs. Covenant**
 - Idolatry is characterised by worship aimed at pleasing the deity so to attain a blessing, or to appease the deity's anger so to attain a blessing
 - Covenant is by definition a legally binding (protected) relationship
 - What is the appropriate motivation in worship identified in covenant vocabulary:
 - Ahava אהבה “love”
 - Hesed חסד “Covenant Faithfulness” (often translated as “loving kindness”)
 - What is the anticipated response from God?

- God's Hesed, covenant faithfulness, results in His giving the promised blessings (Ahavah), or covenant discipline for our lack of Hesed
- What does God in the Bible instruct His faithful not to do, *yet still do*, while worshiping within the confines of covenant?
 - Sacrifice, note Leviticus 17
 - Holy Sex
 - Deuteronomy 23:17 “None of the daughters of Israel shall be a cult prostitute קדושה (holy one), and none of the sons of Israel shall be a cult prostitute קדוש (holy one).”
 - Some of Songs? Restricted to metaphor only
 - Divination and magic
 - “The practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown present by supernatural means”
 - “The power of apparently influencing events by using mysterious or supernatural forces”, adjective: “having or apparently having supernatural powers”
- What about...
 - Prophesy?
 - Word's of knowledge and wisdom?
 - Prayer for success and healing?

Ephesians 1:4

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”

Worship, Sacrifice and Prayer

In the Bible we observe that intrinsic to the practice of worship was the concept and ritual of sacrifice. And that the practice of sacrifice facilitated the act of prayer.

Leviticus 1-7 Torat HaKorban; the Instruction of the “drawing near”

Leviticus 1:1 The Lord called Moses and spoke to him from the tent of meeting, saying, 2 “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, When any one of you brings an offering to the Lord...”

- From within Israel, addressed to Adam אדם - human being “earthling”
- “Brings” - יקריב יקרִיב (verb)
- “Offering” קורבן korban (noun)
 - “Near” קרב
 - Genesis 25:22 “...and the sons wrestled **within** her...”
- Draw near to where? What? To Whom?
 - From where is God calling to Moses?
 - Ex. 25:8 And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell within them. 9 Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it. 25:40 And see that you make them after the pattern for them, which is being shown you on the mountain.

The Heavenly Tabernacle and its “Shadow”

- Hebrew 8:5 “...They serve in a copy, a shadow of the heavenly things...
 - Exodus 31 The Spirit of God and Betzelel בצלאל = b’ - “in”, tzel - “shadow”, el - “god”
 - Ephesians 2:6 “...And God raised us up with Messiah and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus...”

The Heavenly Priesthood

- Exodus 19 “...Kingdom of Priests...”
 - High Priest?
- Hebrews 6:19-7-8 from Psalm 110
 - “...having become a high priest forever after the order of Melchizedek...”
 - Genesis 14-15 “Do not fear, I am your shield...”
 - Joshua 10 “Do not be afraid...”
 - 1 Samuel 17 David and Goliath in the Elah Valley (Azekah)
 - Matthew 22:41... “who’s son is the Anointed One (the Messiah)...”
- On what principle has become priest?
 - 9 One might even say that Levi himself, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, 10 for he was still in the loins of his ancestor when Melchizedek met him.
 - 12 For when there is a change in the priesthood, there is necessarily a change in the law as well. 13 For the one of whom these things are

spoken belonged to another tribe, from which no one has ever served at the altar.

- 16 who has become a priest, not on the basis of a legal requirement concerning bodily descent, but by the power of an **indestructible life**.
- 17 For it is witnessed of him (in Psalm 110),
 “You are a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek.”
- 8:2 a minister in the holy places, in the true tent that the Lord set up, not man.
- 4 Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all, since there are priests who offer gifts according to the law. 5 They serve a copy and shadow of the heavenly things. For when Moses was about to erect the tent, he was instructed by God, saying, “See that you make everything according to the pattern that was shown you on the mountain.”