Drawing Near To HaShem

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[Two Altars 1](#_Toc440211038)

[Intentional Sin 3](#_Toc440211039)

[The Name 4](#_Toc440211040)

[Korban = Tefillah 5](#_Toc440211041)

In this [study](study.html) I would like to examine the Torah method for drawing near to [HaShem](hashem.html). In [Hebrew](hebrew.html) there is no direct translation for the English word, *offering* or *sacrifice*. The closest approximation is the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word *korban* - קרבן. But the word korban has none of the associations of pain entailed in giving up something of value. Loss is not the emphasis. In fact, *Korban* is related to the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word “karev - to be near.” A *korban* is an offering through which a person seeks to draw near to [HaShem](hashem.html). For our forefathers, dedication of a perfect animal as a sacrificial offering did not evoke feelings of pain or regret over a diminished flock. On the contrary, the [one](one.html) who dedicated a *korban* found a greater reward in a closer, more powerful [connection](connection.html) to [HaShem](hashem.html) and the [community](community.html). In bringing a korban, what was given, paled in comparison to what was gained.

Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch wrote on this topic:

“It is most regrettable that we have no word which really reproduces the idea which lies in the expression ‘korban.’ The unfortunate use of the term ‘sacrifice’ implies the giving of something up that is of value to oneself for the benefit of another, or of having to do without something of value, ideas which are not only absent from the nature and idea of a korban but are diametrically opposed to it....

KAREV (the root of korban) means to approach, to come near, and so to get into a close relationship with somebody. This at once most positively gives the idea of the object and purpose of the process of KORBAN as the attainment of a higher sphere of life ... the (person) [desires](needs.html) that something of himself should come closer to God, that is what his KORBAN is ...”[[1]](#footnote-1)

The Maharal[[2]](#footnote-2) suggests a similar idea. The devastating effect of [sin](sin.html) is that it draws man away from [HaShem](hashem.html). The purpose of the korban, as indicated by its [name](name.html), is to snatch him from the clutches of [sin](sin.html), and to bring he back to [HaShem](hashem.html). Just like korbanot (plural of korban), writes the Maharal, Torah exists in this [world](worlds.html) in order to bring man closer to [HaShem](hashem.html), to help man bridge the seemingly infinite gap between him and the Divine. Torah provides man with a taste of the [spiritual](physical.html) [world](worlds.html), and thus allows whoever engages in it to, at least partially, leave the realm of the [physical](physical.html) and cling to the [spiritual](physical.html). A person who engages in Torah [study](study.html), especially in the [study](study.html) of korbanot, achieves similar (and maybe even greater) results as the man who brings korbanot.

# [Two](two.html) Altars

Our houses have [two](two.html) ‘altars’, the bed and the dining table. The [Bet HaMikdash](mikdash.html), The House of the Holy [One](one.html), also has [two](two.html) altars, the Ark of the [Covenant](covenant.html) and the brazen altar. The [two](two.html) altars of the [Temple](temple.html) correspond to the [two](two.html) ‘altars’ in our homes. Our dining table is equivalent to the brazen altar and our beds correspond to the Ark of the [Covenant](covenant.html). As our beds are in an inner room, so too is the Ark in an inner room. As the dining table is where we consume [food](food.html), so too is ‘[food](food.html)’ consumed on the brazen altar.

Thus, the common dining table is likened to the holy altar! On a purely superficial level the correlation is inferred on the basis of simple [physical](physical.html) similarities. As described by the Prophet Ezekiel, both altar and table approximate each other in design, dimensions and materials.

***Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 41:22*** *The altar,* [*three*](three.html) *cubits high, and the length thereof* [*two*](two.html) *cubits, was of wood, and so the corners; the length thereof and the walls thereof, were also of wood; and he said unto me: “This is the table that is before the Lord.”*

However their similitude in form is extended by R. Yohanan and Resh Lakish to indicate a similitude in function, both serving the role of [atonement](atonemen.html).

***Chagigah 27a*** *For it is written: The altar,* [*three*](three.html) *cubits high, and the length thereof* [*two*](two.html) *cubits, was of* [*food*](food.html)*, and so the corners; the length thereof and the walls thereof, were also of wood; and he said unto me: ‘This is the table that is before the Lord’[[3]](#footnote-3). — [The verse] begins with the altar and ends with the table! R. Johanan and Resh Lakish both explain: At the* [*time*](time.html) *when the* [*Temple*](temple.html) *stood, the altar used to make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for a person; now a person’s table makes* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for him.*

As a result of the comparison of the altar to the table, the Rama[[4]](#footnote-4) writes that it is a [mitzva](cmds613.html) to have salt on the table, *“*for the table is like the altar, and the [eating](eating.html) like a *korban*.*”* The Rama makes a critical observation by comparing the [food](food.html) [eaten](eating.html) to the actual sacrifice, for really it is these *“*active*”* components which define the their respective structures through their function; that is to say, [food](food.html), in the case of the table, and *korban*, in the case of the altar.

Notice in these next [two](two.html) passages that the korbanot are called “[food](food.html)”:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 3:11-12*** *And the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall burn it upon the altar: [it is] the* [*food*](food.html) *of the offering made by* [*fire*](fire.html) *unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. And if his offering [be] a goat, then he shall offer it before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 3:14-16*** *And the* [*two*](two.html)[*kidneys*](body.html)*, and the fat that [is] upon them, which [is] by the flanks, and the caul above the* [*liver*](body.html)*, with the* [*kidneys*](body.html)*, it shall he take away. And the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall burn them upon the altar: [it is] the* [*food*](food.html) *of the offering made by* [*fire*](fire.html) *for a sweet savour: all the fat [is]* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*’s. And he shall offer thereof his offering, [even] an offering made by* [*fire*](fire.html) *unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; the fat that covereth the inwards, and all the fat that [is] upon the inwards,*

What is [food](food.html)? To understand what [food](food.html) is, we will find it instructive to ask: What happens when we stop [eating](eating.html) for a few days? We begin to feel faint, and so that is what we read in the Tanach:

***1 Shmuel (Samuel) 14:28*** *Then answered* [*one*](one.html) *of the people, and said, Thy father straitly charged the people with an oath, saying, Cursed [be] the man that eateth [any]* [*food*](food.html) *this day. And the people were faint.*

This means that our soul is separating from our [body](body.html). Now, if we stop [eating](eating.html) for a much longer period we will die. This is when the soul completely separates from the [body](body.html).

In other words, [food](food.html) [connects](connection.html) the soul to the [body](body.html), the spritual to the [physical](physical.html). Now we can understand why a korban is called “[food](food.html)”. A korban [connects](connection.html) [HaShem](hashem.html) (The Spritual) to the earth (the [physical](physical.html)). It is not that He [eats](eating.html) the [food](food.html), but rather the consumption by [fire](fire.html) is the means with which [HaShem](hashem.html) draws near to the [physical](physical.html), to us!

Having described the korbanas a medium for effecting a closeness to [HaShem](hashem.html), what remains is to discover this latent potential in our everyday [food](food.html). In other words, how is man to become close to [HaShem](hashem.html) through his [food](food.html)? The simplest answer is through his sanctification of the act [one](one.html) incorporates the divine into the mundane. By following the dietary [laws](law.html) prescribed by [HaShem](hashem.html) and by reciting the blessings on the meal, [one](one.html) elevates the meal from the purely utilitarian to [one](one.html) that serves a higher purpose of recognizing [one](one.html)’s creator. Radak, in commenting on the verse in I Kings 2:7, writes that “through [eating](eating.html) and drinking [one](one.html) finds the path to [coming](coming.html) close [*kirvu*] to [HaShem](hashem.html)”. Furthermore when [one](one.html) [eats](eating.html) a particularly sumptuous meal, defined in the [Gemara](orallaw.html) as “meat and wine”, [one](one.html) achieves a level of satisfaction and gladness referred to as simcha. The Shulhan Aruch[[5]](#footnote-5) writes that on the holidays [one](one.html) is commanded to reach this level of rejoicing with [HaShem](hashem.html), and thus, our very meal which brings us gladness serves to connect us in this joy with the divine.[[6]](#footnote-6)

Let us look at the particular text that introduces as to korbanot*.* Bear in mind that the word korban literally means to “draw near,” not “sacrifice.” So the following is a literal translation:

***Vayikra (Leviticus) 1:2*** *When a person shall draw near – from you – a drawing-near to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, from animals, from cattle or from the flock you shall draw near your drawing-near.*

The word korban literally means to “draw near,” not “sacrifice”. This verse is [speaking](mashal.html) of a voluntary offering, and it [teaches](teacher.html) us a fundamental idea about korbanot: if you want to come near to [HaShem](hashem.html), it must come “from you.” Once that is accomplished, bring your sheep too.

The [first](one.html) use of the [Hebrew](hebrew.html) word ‘korban - קרבן is found in Vayikra 1:2. This is where the concept of a korban is created.

# Intentional [Sin](sin.html)

The עולה,[[7]](#footnote-7) burnt-offering, atones for sinful thoughts, and for neglecting the performance of the positive [commandments](cmds613.html). The חטאת,[[8]](#footnote-8) [sin](sin.html)-offering, atones for the commission of unintentional [sins](sin.html) provided the [sins](sin.html) are so severe that the transgressor would be liable to the penalty of keret, extirpation, had he committed them intentionally. God would prefer that we transgress no [sins](sin.html) at all and hence render needless the entire institution of [atonement](atonemen.html) sacrifices.[[9]](#footnote-9)

A common misconception in the [Gentile](gen-jew.html) [world](worlds.html) is that chattat korbanot ([sin](sinsac.html) sacrifices) were brought for all [sins](sin.html). This is not a Torah concept. In fact, nothing could be further from the truth. Korbanot chattat were only brought for *unintentional* [sins](sin.html)[[10]](#footnote-10).

***Bamidbar (***[***Numbers***](nchart.html)***) 15:27-31*** *And if* [*one*](one.html) *person* [*sin*](sin.html) *through error (unwittingly), then he shall offer a she-goat of the* [*first*](one.html) *year for a* [*sin*](sin.html)*-offering. 28 And the* [*priest*](priests.html) *shall make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for the soul that erreth, when he sinneth through error, before* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, to make* [*atonement*](atonemen.html) *for him; and he shall be forgiven, 29 both he that is home-born among the children of Israel, and the stranger that sojourneth among them: ye shall have* [*one*](one.html)[*law*](law.html) *for him that doeth aught in error. 30 But the soul that doeth aught with a high* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, whether he be home-born or a stranger, the same blasphemeth* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. 31 Because he hath despised the word of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, and hath broken His* [*commandment*](cmds613.html)*; that soul shall utterly be cut off (keret), his iniquity shall be upon him.*

The Nazarean Codicil echoes this understanding.

[***Bereans***](bereans.html) ***(***[***Hebrews***](bereans.html)***) 10:26*** *For if we* [*sin*](sin.html) *wilfully after that we have received the* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for* [*sins*](sin.html)*, 27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*

Chattat, refers only to unintentional [sins](sin.html), generally those that had they been done intentionally are culpable of karet, being cut off. Carelessness and inadvertence indicate laxness as concerns [one](one.html)’s responsibilities; such transgressions defile the [sanctuary](mikdash.html). The chattat, bringing purification and expiation to the [sanctuary](mikdash.html), is a mandatory part of the unintentional sinner’s repentance process. With the exception of the asham (guilt offering) brought for withholding testimony, *intentional* [*sins*](sin.html) *can not be expiated by means of a sacrifice*.

[Atonement](atonemen.html) for intentional [sins](sin.html) can only be accomplished through teshuva, repentance.

***Melachim Alef (I Kings) 8:46-50*** *If they* [*sin*](sin.html) *against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captives unto the land of the enemy, far or near; 47 Yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they were carried captives, and repent, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captives, saying, We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have committed* [*wickedness*](wicked.html)*; 48 And so return unto thee with all their* [*heart*](body.html)*, and with all their soul, in the land of their enemies, which led them away captive, and* [*pray*](prayer.html) *unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their* [*fathers*](fathers.html)*, the* [*city*](city.html) *which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have built for thy* [*name*](name.html)*: 49 Then hear thou their* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *and their supplication in* [*heaven*](heaven.html) *thy* [*dwelling*](dwelling.html) *place, and maintain their cause, 50 And* [*forgive*](forgive.html) *thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee, and give them* [*compassion*](jonah.html) *before them who carried them captive, that they may have* [*compassion*](jonah.html) *on them:*

Thus we understand that the efficasy of teshuva is foretold by King Shelomo. Teshuva is required for all [sins](sin.html). Additionally, unintentional [sins](sin.html) required a korban chattat. The korban was not brought by the penitent who sinned willfully, but rather *unintentionally*. To draw near to [HaShem](hashem.html), after [sin](sin.html), always requires teshuva!

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 32:5*** *I acknowledged my* [*sin*](sin.html) *unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my* [*sin*](sin.html)*. Selah.*

***Tehillim (***[***Psalms***](psalms1.html)***) 51:15*** *O Lord, open thou my lips; and my* [*mouth*](body.html) *shall shew forth thy praise. 16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in* [*burnt offering*](offering.html)*. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite* [*heart*](body.html)*, O God, thou wilt not despise.*

# The [Name](name.html)

Whenever we find a korban in the Tanach,[[11]](#footnote-11) we find that it is always associated with the the [name](name.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html) (YHVH). It is not associated with the names *Elohim*, *El*, or *Shaddai*.

***Menachoth 110a*** *It was* [*taught*](teacher.html)*: R. Simeon b. ‘Azzai said. Come and see what is written in the chapter of the sacrifices. Neither el nor elohim is found there, but only the Lord (*[*HaShem*](hashem.html)*), so as not to give sectarians any occasion to rebel.*

This suggests that a korban is associated with The [Name](name.html) that is associated with the attribute of loving-kindness and *rachamim* - mercy. It is not associated with any of His names which are associated with the attribute of Judgment. **This tells us something very profound about the korbanot.**

Nachmanides, at the beginning of Vayikra 1:9, writes that when the Torah uses the word ‘korban’, it means human sarifice and not that of an animal. [HaShem](hashem.html) abhors and rejects [human sacrifice](human.html):

***Bereshit (Genesis) 9:6*** *Whoever sheds the* [*blood*](body.html) *of man, by man shall his* [*blood*](body.html) *be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.*

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:29*** *When* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God shall cut off the* [*nations*](nations.html) *from before thee, whither thou goest to possess them, and thou succeedest them, and dwellest in their land; 30 Take heed to thyself that thou be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before thee; and that thou enquire not after their gods, saying, How did these* [*nations*](nations.html) *serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. 31 Thou shalt not do so unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God: for every abomination to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, which he hateth, have they done unto their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the* [*fire*](fire.html) *to their gods.*

[HaShem](hashem.html) abhors and rejects [human sacrifice](human.html), but only as far as its [physical](physical.html) implementation is concerned.

Rabbi [Joseph](joseph.html) B. Soloveitchik said, “When a man brings a sacrifice after having sinned, he must imagine that it is he himself who is being offered upon the altar. When the [blood](body.html) of the animal is sprinkled, he must imagine that it is his own [blood](body.html) that is being sprinkled - that his own hot [blood](body.html) which in his passion drew him to [sin](sin.html), is being sprinkled upon the altar of his [sin](sin.html); that the fats which are consumed on the altar are not the animal’s, but his own fats, which congealed in his [heart](body.html) and gave him over to the [hands](fourteen.html) of [sin](sin.html). Only by virtue of God’s august mercy is man [redeemed](redemption.html) from having to sacrifice himself, for it is God who arranged for a ram to take the place of [Isaac](isaac.html). It is for this reason that it is always the Ineffable [name](name.html) of God (the Tetragrammaton - indicating God’s attribute of mercy and [forgiveness](forgive.html)) that appears in the context of sacrifices - for the quality of divine mercy is revealed in the sacrificial rites”.[[12]](#footnote-12)

Man and all he possesses belongs to [HaShem](hashem.html). An animal sacrifice is a very inadequate substitute for the real korban, which is [human sacrifice](human.html). This is the significance of the akeida and the crucifixion. [Avraham](avraham.html) understood that [HaShem](hashem.html) wanted the life of [Yitzchak](isaac.html), but demanded only a substitute.

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) understood that He was the substitute for all of the [Goyim](gen-jew.html). If the Torah had used the names of El or Elohim, then a subsititute would not have sufficed as these names are associated with the attribute of strict justice. Since the korbanot are associated with the YHVH ([HaShem](hashem.html)) [name](name.html); a substitute is not only permitted, but required.

During the akeida, we see that the [name](name.html) used was *Elohim* all the way till the [time](time.html) that ‘the [Angel](angels.html) of [HaShem](hashem.html)’ commanded [Avraham](avraham.html) to stay his [hand](fourteen.html). At that point, *Elohim* became [*HaShem*](hashem.html).

This YHVH [name](name.html) is used when *He gives to us* so that no [one](one.html) should think that [HaShem](hashem.html) [needs](needs.html) to ‘[eat](eating.html)‘ [food](food.html) from us. The korbanot are for our benefit only. We can not feed [HaShem](hashem.html)!

***Malachi 3:4*** *Then the minchah / meal offering of Yehudah and* [*Yerushalayim*](city.html) *will be pleasing to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*, as in days of old and in former years.*

R’ [Avraham](avraham.html) [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Hakohen Kook z”l writes: *Why does G-d despise* [*human sacrifice*](human.html)*? Animals lack intelligence, and they have no way to be elevated to a higher purpose other than by being sacrificed to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*. Not so humans, who have intelligence, and who can use that intelligence to elevate themselves. In particular, man can elevate himself by reflecting on the purpose for which his animal was offered to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*.*

However, we are told of the [future](future.html)

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 11:9*** *For the earth will be filled with* [*knowledge*](knowledge.html) *of* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *as water covers the sea.*

We also read

***Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 43:20*** *The beasts of the field will honor Me . . .*

If so, it will no longer be appropriate in the [future](future.html) to offer animal sacrifices. Accordingly, says our verse (which speaks of the [End of Days](lastdays.html)), “Then the minchah / meal offering of Yehudah and [Yerushalayim](city.html) will be pleasing to [HaShem](hashem.html), as [other sacrifices were] in days of old and in former years.[[13]](#footnote-13)

# Korban = Tefillah

Ok, now we have learned a bit about the korbanot, but how does this apply to us? Since the [Temple](temple.html) was destroyed we can longer bring a korban:

***Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12:10*** *But when ye go over* [*Jordan*](stages.html)*, and* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in the land which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God giveth you to* [*inherit*](inherit.html)*, and when he giveth you rest from all your enemies round about, so that ye* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *in safety; 11 Then there shall be a place which* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *your God shall choose to cause his* [*name*](name.html) *to* [*dwell*](dwelling.html) *there; thither shall ye bring all that I* [*command*](cmds613.html) *you; your* [*burnt offering*](offering.html)*s, and your sacrifices, your tithes, and the heave offering of your* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, and all your choice vows which ye vow unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*:*

In the absence of the [Temple](temple.html), what do the korbanot have to do with us? The [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[14]](#footnote-14) points out that the daily [prayers](prayer.html) are structured based on the daily korbanot. The [Gemara](orallaw.html)[[15]](#footnote-15) goes a step further to inform us that [prayer](prayer.html) is even more significant than korbanot. The goal of korbanot is to elevate man from his lowly state, to [purify](purity.html) him, and to bring him close to [HaShem](hashem.html). This is the goal of [prayer](prayer.html) as well.

***Berachoth 26b*** *The Tefillahs (*[*prayer*](prayer.html)*) were instituted[[16]](#footnote-16) to replace the daily sacrifices (korbanot).*

***Hoshea 14:1*** *O Israel, return unto* [*HaShem*](hashem.html) *thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. 2 Take with you words, and turn to* [*HaShem*](hashem.html)*: say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously: so will we render the calves of our lips.*

***Berachoth 32b*** *R. Eleazar also said:* [*prayer*](prayer.html) *is more efficacious than offerings, as it says, To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto Me, and this is followed by, And when ye spread forth your* [*hands*](fourteen.html)*.*

[Yeshua](yeshua.html) is the [atonement](atonemen.html) for the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) (the [world](worlds.html)). In this way He plays the role of [Yitzchak](isaac.html) ([Isaac](isaac.html)) when he was bound by [Avraham](avraham.html). In the same way that [Yitzchak](isaac.html) was an [atonement](atonemen.html) for the [Jews](gen-jew.html), so also was [Yeshua](yeshua.html) an [atonement](atonemen.html) for the [Gentiles](gen-jew.html). He was the Lamb of God, He was the sacrificial offering required of all [Gentiles](gen-jew.html) as part of the conversion process. He is therefore a replacement for the lamb of conversion which can no longer be brought because the [Temple](temple.html) was destroyed. [Jews](gen-jew.html) do not need this lamb because they converted at Mt. [Sinai](stages.html) in the days of Moses and thus have no need of the conversion lamb.

There are [two](two.html) aspects to bringing a korban. The [first](one.html) is the complicated [laws](law.html) and deep intentions required for the sacrifice. Not everyone was able to have these profound intentions, so the job of offering the animal was left to the [kohanim](priests.html). The second aspect, which applied to the entire [nation](nations.html), was experiencing the holy atmosphere of [HaShem](hashem.html)’s house. This acted to inspire and uplift the [nation](nations.html).

Just as the korbanot involved [two](two.html) separate aspects, so do our [prayers](prayer.html). The text of our [prayers](prayer.html) was composed by the [one](one.html) hundred [twenty](twenty.html) elders of the Men of the Great Assembly, some of whom were prophets. These great men understood the [world](worlds.html) and all the mystical forces involved therein. When they composed the [prayers](prayer.html), each word was carefully weighed and placed in such a way that it would have a tremendous [spiritual](physical.html) and mystical impact. This is the [first](one.html) aspect of [prayer](prayer.html). Just like the korbanot, our [prayers](prayer.html) involve profound ideas and forces that most people cannot understand.

However, [prayer](prayer.html) also shares the korban’s second aspect. In both, the general populace have the opportunity to be inspired by [standing](mashal.html) before [HaShem](hashem.html). When a person brought a korban, they did not necessarily have the deep intentions that the [kohanim](priests.html) did. They were, however, inspired by the [experience](experience.html). In the same way, we do not necessarily understand the profound concepts behind our [prayers](prayer.html). We can, however, be inspired by the [experience](experience.html) of [standing](mashal.html) before [HaShem](hashem.html). Even if a person does not understand the words, it is still important for him to [pray](prayer.html) because it creates a [connection](connection.html) with [HaShem](hashem.html). This is the main goal of our [prayers](prayer.html). Once a person does this, the next step is to develop an understanding of the [prayers](prayer.html). He can begin with the simple translation, and then work his way into the various commentaries.

A person must [eat](eating.html) a few times a day. If he does not, he will survive, but will feel its absence. This should be our attitude towards our [mitzvot](cmds613.html) and [prayers](prayer.html). The korbanot offered us a way of connecting with [HaShem](hashem.html). This [connection](connection.html) must be reinforced on a daily basis. Now that we live without korbanot, there are still ways to develop this [connection](connection.html). We have the opportunity to approach [HaShem](hashem.html) in [prayer](prayer.html) and stand in His presence a few times each day. Also, by enhancing our performance of [mitzvot](cmds613.html) for [HaShem](hashem.html)’s sake, we develop a love that [connects](connection.html) us, which may not have existed before. By working on enhancing our concentration on and understanding of our [prayers](prayer.html), and by performing [mitzvot](cmds613.html) for [HaShem](hashem.html)’s sake, we can create this [connection](connection.html) with [Hashem](hashem.html).

Why in fact does [HaShem](hashem.html) wish for us to bring Korbanot?

***Sanhedrin 106b*** *Raba observed: Is there any greatness in propounding problems? In the years of Rab Judah the whole* [*study*](study.html) *was confined to Nezikin, whilst we* [*study*](study.html) *a great deal even of ‘Ukzin; and when Rab Judah came to the* [*law*](law.html)*, ‘If a woman preserves vegetables in a pot’ — or as others say, ‘olives which were preserved with their leaves are* [*clean*](purity.html)*,’ — he observed, ‘I see here the discussion of Rab and Samuel;’ whilst we, on the other* [*hand*](fourteen.html)*, have* [*studied*](study.html) *Ukzin at* [*thirteen*](thirteen.html) *sessions, yet Rab Judah merely took off his shoes, and the rain came down, whilst we* [*cry*](mashal.html) *out [in supplication] but there is none to heed us. But it is because the Holy* [*One*](one.html)*, blessed be He, requires the* [*heart*](body.html)*, as it is written, But the Lord looketh on the* [*heart*](body.html)*.*

Because “[HaShem](hashem.html) [desires](needs.html) the [heart](body.html)”, [HaShem](hashem.html) [wants](needs.html) us to give from our hearts, that we should use the Korbanot as a means of improving what is in our hearts, the Korbanot are not for His benefit but for our own. In what way does a Korban change a person’s [heart](body.html)? At the [time](time.html) of the sacrifice it should awaken within him the [desire](needs.html) to be bound and brought upon the altar like [Yitzchak](isaac.html) Abinu as a means of becoming closer to [HaShem](hashem.html). Because [HaShem](hashem.html) informed us at Akeidat [Yitzchak](isaac.html) that He does not [desire](needs.html) [human sacrifice](human.html), I must bring an animal in my stead. Yet, had it been possible, I would offer myself, for I wish to totally give of myself to [HaShem](hashem.html). This is the feeling [one](one.html) should have when offering a Korban.

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[***Succah***](succoth.html) ***49*** *Rabbi Elazar said: Doing righteous deeds of charity is greater than offering all of the sacrifices, as it is written: “Doing charity and justice is more desirable to the Lord than sacrifice”.[[17]](#footnote-17)*

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1. Commentary to Vayikra 1:2 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Tiferet Yisrael 70 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 41:22 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Oreh Hayim 167:5 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Oreh Hayim 529:1-2 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See esp. Biur [Halacha](walking.html) (Oreh Hayim 529, s.v. *keitzad mesamhin*). [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Olah [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. Chattat [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Radak [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. See Ramban, conclusion of Vayikra. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. An acronym for Torah, Neviim, and Ketuvim – The [Law](law.html), the prophets, and the Writings. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, On Repentance, pp. 266-268 [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Quoted in [Haggadah](haggada.html) Shel [Pesach](passover.html) Im Peirush Harav Kook [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Berachoth26a/b [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Berachoth32b [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. By the Men of the Great [Synagogue](synagog.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Mishle (Proverbs) 21:3 [↑](#footnote-ref-17)