

# TORAHSCOPE: Terumah (Offering)

by Mark Huey posted 08 February, 2008 www.outreachisrael.net

Exodus 25:1-27:19  
1 Kings 5:26(4:29)–6:13

## “Willing Hearts”

“Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution. This is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze’” (Exodus 25:1-3).

In *Terumah*, the people of Israel are finally given an opportunity to give back to God for all that He has done for them. Apparently, the outpouring of material is great (Exodus 36:5). Then with meticulous detail, Moses is given and then records the instructions for construction of a temporary Tabernacle, which will be used to worship the Lord during the sojourn through the desert:

“Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them” (Exodus 25:8).

The lengthy list of items to be contributed also includes the materials necessary for the other implements of the Tabernacle and garments for the high priest:

“This is the contribution which you are to raise from them: gold, silver and bronze, blue, purple and scarlet *material*, fine linen, goat *hair*, rams' skins dyed red, porpoise skins, acacia wood, oil for lighting, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones and setting stones for the ephod and for the breastpiece” (Exodus 25:3-7).

As you can read from this list of materials and instructions, the Lord is very particular about what He requires to fellowship with His chosen people. He warns Moses about following the pattern revealed on the mountain:

“See that you make *them* after the pattern for them, which was shown to you on the mountain” (Exodus 25:40).

For the balance of the Book of Exodus, the specifics of the Tabernacle, its construction, and the implements to be used in it are described. Of course, this culminates with the glory of God filling the Tabernacle as this section of Scripture (Exodus 25-40) concludes:

“He erected the court all around the tabernacle and the altar, and hung up the veil for the gateway of the court. Thus Moses finished the work. Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle” (Exodus 40:33-34).

As one reads this particular Torah portion, and contemplates the volume of Scripture that is devoted to describing the Tabernacle essentials, you are reminded that the Lord is definitely interested in dwelling with His people. In fact, as Paul will later indicate, the concept of God dwelling with His people gets elevated to living inside the very human tabernacles that commit themselves to Yeshua the Messiah:

“Do you not know that you are a temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?” (1 Corinthians 3:16).

Reflection on *Terumah* can focus on a number of aspects described in the very materials chosen for the Tabernacle construction. Each has considerable meaning and symbolism that have ministered to me.

## Freewill Offering

Rather than dig into that interesting study, when I read this Torah portion the Holy Spirit began to focus my attention on the importance of the free will offering that the Israelites are commanded to give to the Lord:

“Tell the sons of Israel to raise a contribution for Me; from every man whose heart moves him you shall raise My contribution” (Exodus 25:2).

As *Terumah* begins, the Hebrew verb used to describe the movement of the Israelites' hearts is *nadav* (נדב). It means to “urge on, prompt” (*CHALOT*),<sup>1</sup> in reference to freewill offerings and acts of heartfelt volunteering. From other places where *nadav* is used, you get the impression that when someone is compelled to perform an action, the personal and physical costs are not considered. There is also an apparent link to gathering materials for the Tabernacle, and later the Temple, that houses the glory of God.

*Nadav* is used when a description is made of the freewill offerings that are given to King David for the construction of the first Temple that was built during King Solomon's reign. In this passage, the verb means to “decide voluntarily, volunteer,” or “offer voluntarily, give a free will offering” (*CHALOT*)<sup>2</sup>:

“[O]f gold for the *things of gold* and of silver for the *things of silver*, that is, for all the work done by the craftsmen. Who then is willing to consecrate himself this day to the LORD?’ Then the rulers of the fathers' *households*, and the princes of the tribes of Israel, and the commanders of thousands and of hundreds, with the overseers over the king's work, offered willingly” (1 Chronicles 29:5-6).

We also see the verb *nadav* used when the materials for the Second Temple are being gathered by Ezra's generation:

“Then the heads of fathers' *households* of Judah and Benjamin and the priests and the Levites arose, even everyone whose spirit God had stirred to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. All those about them encouraged them with articles of silver, with gold, with goods, with cattle and with valuables, aside from all that was given as a freewill offering” (Ezra 1:5-6).

In each of these recorded offerings, people whose hearts are stirred are those who freely offer up the valuable items for the construction projects.

### Living Sacrifice

As I examined these Scriptures and the actions of those who were moved by the Lord, I was reminded of some important things. First, I was reminded that our spiritual forefathers had an opportunity to offer gold, silver, and other precious and costly items for the construction of God's Earthly dwelling places. Whether it was the Tabernacle in the desert or the First and Second Temples, these were each unique occasions when certain persons responded in an overwhelming fashion. I was impressed with the thought that these people had their heart stirred to such a point that they did not consider the cost of the items they gave.

Secondly, I was reminded of the reality that modern-day Believers, who are indeed the living temples or tabernacles of the Holy One, have much more to offer. Instead of offering mere gold and silver, we have the privilege of presenting our very lives as living sacrifices before the Lord:

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is your spiritual service of worship*” (Romans 12:1).

As children of the Most High, who are confident that we are indwelt with the Ruach HaKodesh, we can literally offer our very temples or bodies as a living sacrifice for use by God as He so pleases. This, in and of itself, is something that each believer must willfully choose to do.

But in order to make that choice, our hearts must be moved without counting the costs. Because, if you take the time to count the cost, and realize that your offering requires total surrender to the will of God, you just might not be willing to place yourself on the altar of sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> William L. Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden, the Netherlands: Brill, 1988), 228.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

## A Better Sacrifice

What we all must be thankful for is that God Himself, in the Person of Yeshua, had a willing heart to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sins of mankind:

“And according to the Law, *one may* almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness. Therefore it was necessary for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Messiah did not enter a holy place made with hands, a *mere* copy of the true one, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us; nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment, so Messiah also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without *reference to sin*, to those who eagerly await Him” (Hebrews 9:22-28).

Thankfully, Yeshua’s heart was stirred to the point that He was willing to be our sacrifice.

How about you? Is your heart being stirred to the point where you are willing to offer yourself up as a living sacrifice so that you can be useful in the Kingdom’s work?

If not, pray that our Heavenly Father will stir your heart to the point that the cost does not matter. Take the opportunity to offer your tabernacle for His spiritual service of worship. Remember the chance to become a willing sacrifice comes only during your lifetime. Be like those who did not miss the chance to make an offering when their time came. Your time is now. Pray for the stirring of your heart!

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