



The Gift of Giving



Eventually, in some shop I found a plastic model of a silver

trophy. Underneath it was a plaque that read, "To the best father in the world." Today, all these years later, I cringe at the memory of that object. It was cheap, banal, almost comically absurd. What was unforgettable, though, was what he did after I had given it to him. I can't remember what he said, or whether he even smiled. What I do remember is that he placed it on his bedside table, where it remained—humble, trite—for all the years that I was living at home. He allowed me to give him something, and then showed that the gift mattered to him. In that act, he gave me dignity. He let me see that I could give even to someone who had given me all I had.

Rabbi Sacks "What Do We Receive When We Give?"

Replacing Sacrifices



Rav Shmuel bar Unya said: "Torah study is greater than sacrificing the daily offerings." (Megillah 3b)



Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai

Re-inventor of Judaism

"Deeds of loving kindness not sacrifice"

Avot d'Rabbi Natan 4:21

Rabbi Yohanan ben Zakkai was once leaving Jerusalem. Rabbi Joshua was walking behind him and saw the Temple in ruins.

Rabbi Joshua said, "Woe unto us for the destruction of the Temple, the place of atonement for the sins of Israel!"

Yohanan replied, "My son, do not worry – we have another form of atonement like it. What is it? Acts of lovingkindness. As it is written: For I desire acts of lovingkindness and not sacrifice. [Hosea 6:6]"

A Torah of Hesed

Doing righteous deeds of charity (tzedakah) is greater than offering all of the sacrifices, as it is written, "Doing righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than an offering." (Prov. 21:3)

The sages taught that acts of kindness (hesed) are superior to charity in three ways: charity can be done only with money while acts of kindness can be done with one's person and with one's money; charity is giving to the poor while acts of kindness are for both the poor and the rich; charity is giving to the living while acts of kindness are for both the living and the dead.

R. Elazar ben Pedat

(3rd century)



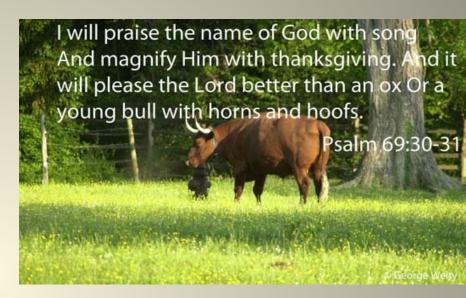


"Prayer is greater than sacrifices" R. Elazar

To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD:

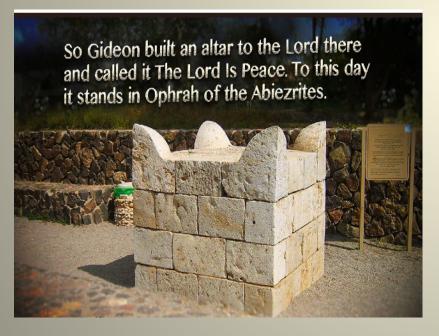
I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats.

Isa. 1:11









ופוגעבול פוןסופ, ופ, גְאָלְהָה זִּעַלְּאֵי לְּא גווופ (ואחב) פסס סצ ופאאבר... ב

Jacob set up an altar to God at Shechem.

This worshipful act on Jacob's part identified "God of his fathers" with
"the true God of Israel." [Gen 33.20]

...to the designated place of worship, the place YaHWeH your God chooses for his name to be honored. 12 "You must celebrate there in the presence of YaHWeH your God with your sons and daughters and all your servants.... 13 Be careful not to sacrifice your burnt offerings just anywhere you like. 14 You may do so only at the place YaHWeH will choose within one of your tribal territories.

Judges 6:24 Deut. 12:11-14

Christian Sacrifices

"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24

Acts 21:26, Paul Offered A Sacrifice

 NAU Acts 21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day, purifying himself along with them, went into the temple giving notice of the completion of the days of purification, until the sacrifice was offered for each one of them.

