



The Location of the Korbon Pesach

The Torah teaches us that the Korbon Pesach “must be eaten in one house; you shall not take any of the meat out of the house to the outside.”¹ While the Talmud teaches that “house” refers to the group of people who are assigned to eating it (i.e. the “household”), the literal meaning of the verse still indicates a deep connection between the Jewish home/household and the Korbon Pesach.² The family and the meat must stay together.

Another, related halacha is that the meat must stay within Yerushalayim. The Mishna teaches that if the meat of the Korbon Pesach was taken out of the city it must be immediately burnt.³ While this halacha stems from a general precept regarding all sacrifices as opposed to a specific requirement of Korbon Pesach, it is striking that there are two halachos regarding the location of the Korbon: it must remain within its group/household and it must remain within Yerushalayim.

Perhaps we can suggest that these requirements are related. The Korbon Pesach represented God’s initial covenant with the Jewish people who risked their lives by sacrificing the sheep in Egypt. The reason that the korbon has such a focus on family/home/household is that the family is the basic unit of the Jewish people. While each person has their own unique relationship with God, the only way for this to be perpetuated throughout history is via the nuclear family where close-knit generations exist and interact with each other. The initial covenant with God must be made in the context of a family.

The same idea might apply to Yerushalayim. The Torah wants every single Jew to feel at home in Yerushalayim, similar to the way one feels as a child in his home. Just as a person always has a place to sleep in their parent’s home, so too, the Mishna teaches that no one ever left

¹ Shemot 12:46.

² Pesachim 85b.

³ Mishna Pesachim 7:9.



Divrei Torah on Jerusalem by Rabbi Yosef Bronstein Parashat Bo / פרשת בא / 5779

Yerushalayim due to a lack of space.⁴ Yerushalayim as the heart and soul of the Land of Israel and the Jewish people is foundational to who we are as Jews and to the relationship that we have with God. Just as a family is crucial for the acceptance and perpetuation of the Jewish people's covenant with God, the same is true for Yerushalayim. Therefore, just as the Korbon Pesach cannot leave the group/family/home, it similarly must remain within the environs of Yerushalayim.

May we and our families merit to offer the Korbon Pesach in Yerushalayim!

⁴ Pirkei Avot 5:5.