

The Parasha that I will be talking about is Parashat Tzav. If you are wondering Tzav means, it means “command.” This connects to my Haftorah which is about the bond between a child and a parent. These connect because of how much parents command us kids — well actually, after this I will be a man.

But that is not what I am going to be talking about. I will be talking about the main idea of this parasha. The main idea of this parasha is about sacrifice. In it, G-d gives Moses commands on how to sacrifice animals.

At first I thought this was a very boring chapter to get as my parasha — and well it is. In this parasha it says

*‘And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, take Aaron and his sons with him, and the garments, and the anointing oil, and the sin offering bull, and the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread.’*

Rabbi Louis taught me that sometimes people offered the goats and rams they killed afterwards for priests to eat.

I thought about it for a while, and realized that the animals are symbolic of any sacrifice and we make many sacrifices today.

We may not think about them as offerings to God, but we do do sacrifices. Like, you may do some minor sacrifices like giving the last leg of chicken to your brother at the dinner table; of course I would never make a sacrifice like that.

That is a very minor sacrifice, just annoying, but I am talking about a bigger sacrifice., I’ve heard that parents have to sacrifice a lot of freedom in order to have children.

But my mom says, *‘having children is a sacred act.’* So that is kind of similar because sacrifice means “to make sacred, so when G-d commanded Aaron to sacrifice an animal, he was really telling him to make a sacred act.

People still sacrifice animals today. In fact, they get slaughtered by the minute. And, the way it is done is not sacred.

Often, they are forced to live in terrible conditions beforehand, squeezed together so tight, they can't even move. They're pumped full of hormones to make them fat and juicy for us to eat. Then we buy them all wrapped up in plastic and we don't even see the blood or the looks on their faces before they are killed.

Which I think is very stupid and cruel.

I do not think that we should sacrifice animals in this way in a civilized society.

I'm not a vegetarian but I think they should be treated with care and honoured for the sacrifice they are making so we can eat them.

Sometimes people sacrifice in my opinion for the wrong reasons. For instance, suicide bombing. People do these terrible acts and must be deluded into thinking it's for the greater good, but it's just murder.

But sacrificing your time or money to help others is the exact opposite.

This is a good sacrifice.

At school recently, my class spent time volunteering with organizations that help people in need.

It felt satisfying to know we were helping others that we could make a difference in peoples' lives.

So that is why I believe that this chapter is important. It teaches us that giving up our time, or our money, or selfish needs, to help others is a sacred act.

Everything considered, making sacrifices is an important part of life.

I hope I can continue to find ways, as I grow up, to make the world a sacred place by doing work that is of value to others, by helping my friends, and by taking care of me and my family. This is a vital part of Tikkun Olam, which means to heal the world.

Many people in many generations before me sacrificed to help me be where I am today.

They crossed oceans to immigrate from Russia and Germany and Norway to the United States, worked their way up in the world, and got their kids an education. I have been lucky to have a good life, thanks in great part to what my ancestors did, and their good example.

And many of you here today are working to heal the world and you are my examples.

As I grow up, I would like to use my life, as many of you do, to make the world a little bit of a better place.