



PhiloTorah D'var Torah

T'FILOT & the AVOT

It is well-known that our three daily prayers are attributed to the Avot - Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.

But to be more detailed...

The Gemara in B'rachot (26b) brings a dispute (of sorts) between Rabi Yosi b'Rabi Chanina, who says that our T'filot were established by the Avot - and Rabi Yehoshua ben Levi, who says that T'filot were instituted based on the daily korbanot in the Beit HaMikdash.

Although the focus of this PTDT is the connection between the Avot and our three-times-a-day T'filot, I would like to make an important point about the Korban connection to davening.

T'fila - prayer - pre-dates the Avoda in the Beit HaMikdash. Davening existed before the Mishkan and Mikdash, during the tenures of the Mishkan and Mikdash, and ever since. And will continue during the Messianic times with the Third Beit HaMikdash.

It is specifically the three times a day aspect and the timing of those thrice-daily t'filot that were purposely matched to the korbanot.

The way I like to put it - Davening was, is, and always will be. However (or AND or maybe BUT), during the time when we are sadly without a Mikdash, davening takes on the additional role of connecting and reminding us of the Avoda which was and which will be.

I guess we are including the korbanot angle of davening in this PTDT after all. Especially if we point to the haftara this week. It contains the famous expression, UNSHAL'MA FARIM S'FATEINU (and let us render [for] bulls [the offering of] our lips.).

This gives the impression that davening replaces korbanot and that when there are korbanot, what? we don't daven?

Both ideas are wrong. This is what was expressed above.

With that said, let's get back to the Avot.

The Gemara elaborates on the statement that our Avot established the t'filot by quoting two p'sukim each, for each of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov.

The first of each pair of p'sukim expresses a time of day and an action done by each of the Avot. The second pasuk equates that action with prayer.

For Avraham, the Torah tell us that he

rose early in the morning... and STOOD before G-d. The second pasuk shows us that AMIDA (standing) also means davening. Taken together, the p'sukim describe Shacharit and attribute it to Avraham.

Yitzchak went out to the field to commune, LASU'ACH before evening (late afternoon). The second pasuk points to SICHA as a synonym for davening. Hence, the association of Yitzchak with Mincha.

Similarly, the Torah tells us that Yaakov encountered the Place and slept there because night had fallen. The second pasuk shows us that P'GI'A (encounter) is a term for prayer. Hence Maariv from Yaakov.

As long as we are on the subject, let's look at one aspect of davening - namely, that Shacharit and Mincha have the repetition of the Amida with Kedusha, and Maariv does not.

The correspondence between T'fila and Korbanot points to there being a difference between Shacharit and Mincha on the one hand, and Maariv on the other.

Shacharit and Mincha correspond to the two daily T'midim - the lambs offered in the morning and the afternoon. Maariv corresponds to the simmering on the Mizbei'ach of the fats and parts of the day's korbanot. No sacrifices were brought at nighttime. The HEKTEIR CHALAVIM

V'EIVARIM continued through the night, mostly so the Mizbei'ach would continue to be used at night.

Originally, Shacharit and Mincha were both obligatory and Maariv was optional or voluntary. Today, all three davenings are required, but some elements of the difference between Shacharit and Mincha vs Maariv still exist.

Most notably, the above mentioned Repetition (CHAZARAT HASHATZ). Before the age of printing, most people did not have handwritten siddurim to daven from. Davening was mostly said by heart. At Shacharit and Mincha - the required T'filot, the system developed that one person would say his Amida aloud so that those who did not know the davening by heart would be able to fulfil their obligations by listening and answering AMEIN to the Shatz's Amida. This then evolved into the Shatz saying his Amida silently, as everyone else who knew how to daven, and then repeating the Amida for those who needed it. This further evolved into the current practice of a repetition of the Amida - even if everyone present said his/her own.

Teimanim (Yemenite Jews) still have one person saying his own Amida out loud, rather than saying it quietly and then repeating it. More on this at some future time. **PTDT**