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In the North

The *Mishna* had stated: The bull and the goat of *Yom Kippur* (are slaughtered in the north of the Courtyard).

The *Gemora* asks: Considering the fact that the *halachah* requiring the northern part of the Courtyard is written in connection with the *olah* offering, then let the *Tanna* teach its law first!?

The *Gemora* answers: Since the law regarding a *chatas* is derived by a Scriptural exegesis, he cherishes it more.

The *Gemora* asks: Then let him teach the outer *chatas* offerings first (for that is where the exegesis comes from)!?

The *Gemora* answers: Since the blood of these enters the Holy of Holies, he cherishes it more.

The *Gemora* cites the scriptural source which proves that the *olah* must be slaughtered in the north. It is written: *And he shall slaughter it (a sheep or a goat) on the side of the Altar, on the north.* How do we know that this applies by cattle as well? It is written: *And if his offering will be from the flock;* the ‘*vav*’ – ‘and’ continues the preceding section, so that the *halachah* above may be derived from that below.

The *Gemora* asks: That is well according to those who maintain that you can learn the subject above from that below (through the ‘*vav*’); but according to the view that you cannot learn it in that manner, what can be said? For it was taught in a *braisa*: *And if a person (sins and they are unaware,*

they bring an asham out of doubt; the next verse discusses the korban brought for one who trespasses hekdesh); this (the ‘*vav*’) teaches us that one is liable to an *asham* out of doubt on account of a doubtful trespass; these are the words of Rabbi Akiva. However, the Rabbis exempt him. Surely then they disagree regarding this: one master holds that we learn the subject above from that below, while the other master holds that we do not learn it!?

Rav Pappa said: All agree that we do learn in such a manner, but the following (*gezeirah shavah*) is the Rabbis’ reason: It is written *mitzvos* here (by the *asham out of doubt*), and *mitzvos* is employed in connection with the *chatas* of forbidden fat. Just as there, the transgression referred to is one whose deliberate infringement entails *kares* and its unwitting violation entails a *chatas*, so here too (by the *asham out of doubt*), it is brought only by those sins whose deliberate infringement entails *kares*, while its unwitting violation entails a *chatas*.

The *Gemora* explains Rabbi Akiva’s reason: Just as there (by the forbidden fats) it (the *korban*) is fixed (and it does not depend on the sinner’s financial situation), so here (by the *asham out of doubt*) it is fixed; this would exclude the *chatas* for the defilement of the Temple and its sacred objects, which is a variable sacrifice.

The Rabbis, however, maintain that there is no such thing as a semi *gezeirah shavah* (it must be similar in all respects).

The *Gemora* asks: But doesn’t Rabbi Akiva as well admit that there is no such thing as a semi *gezeirah shavah*?



The *Gemora* concedes the point, and explains their dispute as follows: Rabbi Akiva holds: *And if a person (sins and they are unaware, they bring an asham out of doubt; the next verse discusses the korban brought for one who trespasses hekdesh); the 'vav' continues the preceding section (and teaches us that one is liable to an asham out of doubt on account of a doubtful trespass; it is this hekesh that limits the gezeirah shavah from the chatas of the forbidden fats).* And according to the Rabbis - although surely it is written: *And if a person (and therefore the two sections are connected together through the power of a hekesh), they maintain that the gezeirah shavah is significant (and it uproots the hekesh completely), whereas Rabbi Akiva holds that the hekesh is significant.*

The *Gemora* rejects this and states that they both agree that the *hekesh* is significant, but the Rabbis can answer you that (*the hekesh is used to teach us that*) the subject below (*by the asham out of doubt*) is learned from the one above it (*the asham for me'ilah*), that the *asham* (*out of doubt*) must be a value of at least two silver *shekels*, so that you should not say that the *asham* out of doubt cannot be more stringent than the certainty; for you might have said that just as the certainty of sin requires a *chatas* worth even a *danka* (*one-sixth of a dinar, and in truth, even that amount is not necessary*), so too for the doubt – an *asham* of a *danka* is sufficient. [*The hekesh teaches us that this is not the case, and it must be valued to be worth at least two silver coins.*]

Rabbi Akiva derives this from the verse: *And this is the law of the asham*, which intimates that there is one law for all *asham* offerings.

The *Gemora* notes that according to those who do not maintain that '*law*' can be so interpreted, he derives it from a *gezeirah shavah*, using the word *be'erkicha* - '*according to the proper value.*'

The *Gemora* cites the Scriptural sources proving that a *chatas* offering is also slaughtered in the north of the Courtyard. Sources are brought to prove that this applies to the acceptance of the blood and to the *Kohen* who is accepting the blood as well. The *Gemora* then proves that these laws are not merely the preferable method, but they are essential to the validity of the sacrifice.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which teaches us that the goat of Nachshon (*the inaugural offerings*) was not required to be slaughtered in the North. It also teaches us that the *mitzvah* of *semichah* applies to the goat of Nachshon according to Rabbi Yehudah, and to the goats for idolatry according to Rabbi Shimon.

The *Gemora* cites a different *braisa* which teaches us that the *melikah* of a bird is not performed in the north. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov teaches that the *pesach* offering does not need to be slaughtered in the north.

Ravina applies the following logic: A secondary matter cannot be stringent than the primary one. Accordingly, if regarding a *chatas* offering, it is essential that its service be performed in the north, and this requirement is derived from an *olah* offering; so certainly, the requirement for an *olah* to be performed in the north, must be essential and indispensable. (48a – 48b)

DAILY MASHAL

The Merit of Yitzchak's Ashes

Our *Mishna* (47a) says that all the *kodshei kodoshim* "are slaughtered on the north side" – i.e., to the north of the altar, as the Torah says: "...and he will slaughter it at the side of the altar to the north" (Vayikra 1:11). *Shulchan Aruch* (O.C. 1:8) writes about this verse: "When reciting the *korbanos* he should say the verse, "*he will slaughter it at the side of the altar to the north before Hashem.*" The reason for saying the verse stems from the Midrash (Vayikra Rabah, *parashah 2*, os

11) which says “when the Jews would offer the *tamid* on the altar and recite ‘to the north before Hashem,’ the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers the sacrifice of Yitzchak.” The Midrash adds that whenever someone cites this verse, Hashem remembers the sacrifice of Yitzchak (*Beer HaGolah*, based on the Rishonim). Of course, these matters are hidden and lofty but as we say this verse each day, we should examine its connection to the *‘akeidah*.

The Midrash says that Yitzchak’s ashes – the ashes of the ram offered in his stead – are hidden in Mount Moriah. HaGaon Rav Meir Simchah of Dvinsk zt”l writes (*Meshech Chochmah*, Vayikra 1:10) that this means that since Avraham’s devoted self-sacrifice, freedom of choice has almost disappeared from the Jews because of the path and direction that he paved and opened for us. Therefore, Yitzchak’s ashes are hidden (*tzafun*) before Him, from the term *ruach tzafon* – the north direction, which is the most open and unobstructed. As a result, he explains, we were commanded to slaughter to the north of the altar and thus remind Hashem of Yitzchak’s ashes, which eliminate impediments and direct our devotion to Him. According to this explanation, we can somewhat understand the Midrash, that when someone cites the verse “to the north before Hashem”, Hashem remembers Yitzchak’s sacrifice.

In this way he continues to explain that the Torah only mentions the north side in the second paragraph of *Vayikra* dealing with an *‘olah* from **tzon** - sheep or goats, because Yitzchak’s ashes were from a ram! Thus it is fitting to mention *tzafon* by a type of sacrifice resembling that offered instead of Yitzchak. This is also the reason that our *Gemora* asserts that an *‘olah* from a bird is not slaughtered to the north, giving the reason as being that a sheep or a goat is slaughtered with a *keli* (utensil) and a bird with a fingernail. As the slaughtering to the north is intended to be a reminder of Yitzchak’s ashes and as the *halachah* that one must slaughter with a *keli* is also learnt from Yitzchak’s sacrifice – as we are told: “...and he took the knife (*maacheles*)” (*Zevachim* 97b), the bird, which is not slaughtered with a

knife, does not remind us of Yitzchak’s ashes.

Meshech Chochmah (Bemidbar 7:12) also mentions the commentary of Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra, who explains that the sacrifices were slaughtered to the north of the altar because *kodshei kodoshim* are regarded as being brought on a table before Hashem. Therefore, they should be slaughtered in alignment with the *shulchan* and the showbread placed on the north side of the *Heichal*. *Meshech Chochmah* writes that this explanation is “very sweet” (and see *ibid* as to what he explains accordingly).