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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

How much Blood?

The *Mishna* had stated: The blood which splattered out and that which is upon the knife must also be covered up.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *And he shall cover it* teaches us that the blood which splattered out and that which is upon the knife must also be covered up. Rabbi Yehudah said: When do these words apply? It is when there is no other blood but that, but when there is other blood besides this, it does not need to be covered up.

The *Gemora* cites another *braisa*: *And he shall cover it* teaches us that the entire blood must be covered up. From here they said: the blood which splattered out and that which remains on the walls of the throat must also be covered up. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: This is only if he did not cover up the lifeblood, but if he did cover up the lifeblood, this does not need to be covered.

The *Gemora* explains their disagreement: The Rabbis (of the second *braisa*) maintain that ‘its blood’ means the entire blood. Rabbi Yehudah maintains that ‘its blood’ implies even part of its blood. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel maintains that ‘its blood’ means its unique blood (its lifeblood). (88a)

Mishna

With what may one cover up the blood and with what may one not cover it up? One may cover it up with fine dung, with fine sand, with lime, with ground pottery, or with a brick or earthenware stopper of a cask that have been crushed into powder. But one may not cover it up with coarse dung or coarse sand, nor with a brick or an earthenware stopper of a cask that have not been crushed into powder; nor may one invert a vessel over it. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said the following rule: One may cover it with anything in which plants would grow; but one may not cover it with anything in which plants would not grow. (88a)

Cover with What?

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: Fine sand is sand that a potter does not need to crush (*before using it*).

Some say that this was said regarding the latter clause: But one may not cover it up with coarse dung or coarse sand Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: Coarse sand is sand that a potter needs to crush (*before using it*).

The *Gemora* notes the following practical difference between the two versions: In a case where it needs to be crushed, but it doesn’t need to be crushed, as it crumbles in the hand. [*Since it does not need to be crushed, it is still regarded as fine sand – according to the first version;*



however, according to the second version, it will be regarded as coarse sand, since it still does need to be crushed.]

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *And he shall cover it*. I would have thought that he may cover it with stones or invert a vessel over it, the verse therefore adds *'with earth.'* From there I only know earth; how do I know to include fine dung, fine sand, crushed stones and pottery, fine scraps of flax, fine sawdust from carpenters, lime, or pottery clay, or a brick or earthenware stopper of a cask that have been crushed into powder? The text therefore states: *And he shall cover it (without specifying how)*. Perhaps I should also include coarse dung, coarse sand, crushed metal utensils, or a brick or stopper that have not been crushed into powder, or flour, coarse flour or bran. The text therefore states: *with earth*. And how do you know to include the one and exclude the other? Since the verse includes some and excludes others, I include those that are a kind of earth and exclude those that are not a kind of earth.

The *Gemora* asks: Perhaps I should argue the following: *'And he shall cover it'* is a generalization and *'earth'* is a specification; we thus have a generalization followed by a specification, in which case the scope of the generalization is limited by the particular specification, that is, earth only but nothing else!?

Rav Mari answered: Here, it is a generalization that needs a specification (to teach that it must be covered with earth), and a generalization that needs a specification is not to be interpreted by the same rule as a generalization followed by a specification.

Rav Nachman son of Rav Chisda expounded: One may only cover up the blood with a substance that if seeds were planted in it, it would produce growth.

Rava remarked: This is baseless!

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said to Rava: Why is it baseless? I myself told it to him, and I derived it from the following *braisa*: If a person was travelling in a desert and can find no earth to cover up the blood, he may grind a golden *dinar* into powder and cover the blood with its dust. If a person was travelling on a ship and has no earth to cover up the blood, he may burn his garment and cover the blood with its ashes.

Now, the ruling regarding the burning of a garment and covering up with its ashes is understandable, for we find in Scripture that ashes are referred to as earth; but where do we know this about a golden *dinar*?

Rabbi Zeira answered: It is written: *It had earth of gold*.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: One may cover up the blood only with earth; these are the words of Beis Shammai. But Beis Hillel say: We find in Scripture that ashes are referred to as earth, for it is written: *And for the contaminated one they shall take some of the earth of the burning of the chatas*.

Beis Shammai, however, holds that ashes might be referred to as *'the earth of the burning,'* but it is never referred to simply as *'earth.'*

A *Tanna* taught: They added the following (*to be used to cover the blood*): ground charcoal, kohl, millstone dust. Some add: even orpiment.

Rava taught: In the merit that Avraham Avinu said, "And I am ashes and earth," his descendants merited two *mitzvos*, namely the ashes of the red heifer and the dirt of the *sotah*.



The *Gemora* asks: What about the earth used in covering the blood (of a bird or undomesticated animal)?

The *Gemora* answers: There the earth is merely used in a *mitzvah*, but there is no direct benefit from the *mitzvah* (besides earning reward in the next world).

Rava taught: In the merit of Avraham Avinu's statement, "If a string or shoelace (I will take) his descendants merited to have two *mitzvos*, namely the string of *techeiles* on their *tzitzis*, and the *tefillin* straps.

The *Gemora* asks: It is understandable that *tefillin* straps were a reward (for this world as well), as the verse states, "And all of the nations of the land will see that the name of Hashem is upon you and they will fear you." The braisa quotes Rabbi Elozar the Great as saying that this refers to the *tefillin* that we wear on our heads. However, what (earthly) reward do we have from *techeiles*?

The *Gemora* answers this question from a braisa. Rabbi Meir taught: Why was *techeiles* singled out from all colors (to be used in *tzitzis*)? This is because *techeiles* is a similar color to that of the ocean, which is similar to that of the sky, which is similar to that of the Throne of Glory. This is as the verse states, "And they saw the G-d of Israel, and under His feet was like something made out of a brick of sapphire, and like the purity of the sky." The verse also states, "like the appearance of a sapphire stone is that of the Throne of Glory. [The *Gemora's* answer seems to be that this merit benefits us in this world as well.] (88a – 89a)

DAILY MASHAL

Benefit from Techeiles

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Rashi (*sotah* 17a) explains that anyone who fulfills the *mitzvah* of *tzitzis* is regarded as if he received the Divine Presence. This is obviously beneficial to the person.

Rashi here explains differently. He says that when Hashem looks at His Throne of Glory, He is reminded of the *mitzvah* of *techeiles* that is being performed by the Jewish people. And because of this, Hashem has compassion on *Klal Yisroel*.