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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

[Kinnim is the plural of the word *kein* (a bird’s nest) and it refers here to a pair of birds brought as a sacrifice. There are six instances in the Torah where a person is obligated to bring a pair of birds, either (both) turtledoves or (both) pigeons, one as an *olah* and one as a *chatas*: 1. A person who committed a sin (listen at the end of Vayikra) and is too poor to bring an animal *chatas*; 2. A *zav* (a man with a seminal discharge); 3. A *zavah* (a woman with such a discharge); 4. A woman after childbirth – if she is too poor to bring an animal. 5. A *nazir* who became *tamei* with corpse *tumah*; 6. A *metzora* who is too poor to bring animals. A person can also voluntarily bring bird sacrifices. Those are all brought as *olah* offerings.]

This tractate deals with cases where birds got mixed up and it is not clear which was meant to be an *olah* and which was meant to be a *chatas*, or other complications, such as when they are from different owners.

The manner in which a *chatas* bird is offered is different than that of an *olah* in several ways. The first *Mishna* deals with this and other background material, which will help us understand the entire tractate.]

Mishnah 1: The sprinkling of the blood of a *chatas* bird (after the *melikah* – the cutting of one pipe by its neck with his thumbnail, was done) is performed below (the *chut hasikra* – a red line on the Altar at the point where it was five amos

high; this was the dividing line between the two halves of the Altar), but that of an animal *chatas*, above. An *olah* bird (when the body of the bird is squeezed, which results in the draining of the remaining blood) is performed above, but an animal *olah*, below. Should one deviate (regarding the placement of the blood) with either, then the offering is invalid.

The prescribed ritual in the case of *kinnim* (a pair of birds) was as follows: Concerning obligatory offerings, one bird is offered as a *chatas* and the other as an *olah*. Concerning vows and donated offerings, however, all are *olos*. What constitutes a vow-offering? When one says: ‘it is incumbent upon me to bring an *olah*’. And what constitutes a freewill-offering? When one says: ‘behold, this shall serve as an *olah*’. What is the [practical] difference between vowed and freewill obligations? In the case of vows, one is responsible for their replacement in the event of their death, or their having been stolen; but in the case of freewill obligations, one is not held responsible for their replacement.

Mishnah 2. If a *chatas* becomes mixed up with an *olah*, or an *olah* with a *chatas*, were it even one in ten thousand, all must be left to die.¹ If [birds assigned as] *chatas* become mixed up with [unassigned] obligatory offerings, then those valid correspond to the number of *chatas* among the obligatory

¹ Since we have already been told in the preceding *Mishna* that the slightest variation in the blood-sprinkling disqualifies the offering, what greater variations can there be than in the confusion here instanced? In the case of living creatures, the rule of ‘majority’ does not apply, on the

ground that anything of outstanding importance cannot be declared ‘nullified’. To avoid the risk of their being unwittingly offered up by another, they had to be secluded in a special place, where they would ultimately perish.

offerings;² similarly, if [birds assigned as] an olah become mixed up with [unassigned] obligatory offerings, the number valid is in proportion to the number of an olah among obligatory offerings. [This rule holds good] whether the [unassigned] obligatory offerings are in the majority and the freewill-offerings in the minority, or the freewill-offerings are in the majority and those that are obligatory in the minority, or whether they are both equal in number.³

Mishna 3. When is this so?⁴ When obligatory offerings [get mixed up] with voluntary offerings.⁵ When, however, obligatory offerings get mixed up one with another,⁶ with one [pair] belonging to one [woman] and the other pair to another [woman], or two [pairs] belonging to one and two [pairs] to another, or three [pairs] to one and three [pairs] to another,⁷ then half of these are valid and the other half disqualified.⁸ If, however, one [pair] belongs to one [woman] and two pairs to another, or three pairs to another, or ten pairs to another or a hundred to another, only the lesser number remains valid.⁹ [This is irrespective of] whether [the pairs] are of the same denomination or of two

denominations, or whether they belong to one woman or to two.

Mishna 4. What is meant by one 'denomination'? [When both pairs are] for two births, or for two issues; [such a case] constitutes one denomination. And 'two denominations'? [When one pair is brought] for a birth, [and the other] for an issue. What is meant by 'two women'? [When] one [woman] brings [her offering] for a birth and the other for a birth, or [when one brings] after an issue and the other after an issue, this also constitutes 'of one denomination'. And a case 'of two denominations'? When one brings her pair as a result of a birth and the other as a result of an issue. Rabbi Yosi says: when two women purchase their kinnim in partnership, or give the price of their kinnim to the Kohen [for him to purchase them], then the Kohen can offer which one he pleases as a chatas or as an olah, irrespective of the fact whether they belong to one denomination or to two.

² An example will make this clearer. If one bird, specified as a chatas, gets confused with two pairs of birds brought as obligatory offerings but not yet specified, then none of the five birds can be offered as an olah, since one is definitely a chatas. To offer up three as chatas is also not permissible, lest all the three may belong to the two 'kinnim' brought as obligatory offerings, of which not more than two are chatas. Only two out of the five can be offered as chatas, corresponding to the number of chatas in the obligatory offerings. This only holds good if the two unspecified 'kinnim' belong to the same woman and were brought for similar causes, as for a past and present confinement, in which case they consist of two an olah and two chatas.

³ The *Mishna* refers to obligatory offerings that have not been specified; in all these instances, the rule is that only that number is valid which corresponds to the number of an olah among the obligatory offerings. If two are an olah or two specified chatas get mixed up with an unassigned pair of birds, the rule applied is always the same.

⁴ Namely, that those valid correspond to the number of chatas or an olah among the obligatory offerings. This *Mishna* explains the preceding.

⁵ That is when offerings comprising both olah and chatas get mixed up with an olah.

⁶ If unassigned kinnim brought by a woman after child-birth or zivah get confused with the kinnim of another brought for a similar cause.

⁷ Each bringing an equal number, without yet specifying what offering each bird should be.

⁸ Of the two kinnim that got confused, only one bird can be offered as a chatas and the other as an olah; more than this number cannot be offered as either offering, lest the two birds offered, for instance, as an olah belong to the pair of one woman, of which only one is an olah. This ruling equally applies to any number of kinnim that get confused. When the Kohen sacrifices the half that are valid, he must stipulate that they are on behalf of the woman who has specified them for this purpose. In addition, the two women must bring another offering in partnership and state that each allows the other to offer up the part belonging to herself. This was done in order to make the offering perfectly valid.

⁹ The *Mishna* now discusses the case when one woman only brings one pair and the other two, three, ten or a hundred pairs. In this case, only two birds can be sacrificed, one as a chatas and the other as an olah. Similarly, if ten kinnim get confused with a hundred belonging to another woman, only ten kinnim can be sacrificed, half of them as an olah and half as chatas.