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Yoma Daf 31

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Abaye said to Rav Yosef: According to Rabbi Yehudah who said that the immersion (of the Kohen every morning before entering the Bais HaMikdash) is only a reminder (a Rabbinic enactment to remind one of an old tumah contamination), does an external object that clings to the skin constitute a barrier between the person’s body and the water (and thus would invalidate the immersion) or does it not interpose? He said to him: The Chachamim enacted their decrees similar to the Biblical laws (and therefore an object that is a barrier between a person’s body and the water would invalidate the immersion). (30b3 - 31a1)

Abaye said to Rav Yosef: Is a partial entry into the Courtyard of the Bais HaMikdash considered an entry (that would necessitate a reminder immersion according to the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah) or not? He said to him: The thumbs of a metzora prove that even if one only enters into the Courtyard partially, he is required to immerse himself prior to entering, because inserting the thumbs into the Courtyard is considered a case of partial entry. We learned in a Baraisa that first a metzora immerses himself and only then can he stand in the Gate of Nikanor to insert his hand and foot into the Courtyard. (31a1)

The Gemora questions if one can make a long knife and slaughter an offering in the Courtyard while he is standing outside the Courtyard.¹ This is a question according to Ben zoma and it is a question according to the Rabbis who disagree with Rabbi Yehudah. The Gemora states that even according to Ben Zoma who maintains that everyone is Biblically obligated to immerse in a mikvah before entering the Courtyard, he only requires one to immerse when the person is actually in the Courtyard. If, however, one remains outside the Courtyard, then Ben Zoma will not require that he immerse himself. On the other hand, however, perhaps Ben Zoma will require him to immerse, because the Kohen may be pulled into the Courtyard while he is slaughtering. The Gemora then wonders according to the Rabbis who disagree with Rabbi Yehudah² perhaps the Rabbis do not require a non-metzora to immerse before entering the Courtyard only because he is not performing any service in the Bais HaMikdash, but here, where he is performing the service of slaughtering, he would be required to immerse before slaughtering. Or, perhaps we can say that it does not make a difference what he is doing (and they will never require immersion for one who is tahor). The Gemora leaves the question unresolved. (31a1)

¹ The Gemora knows that only the animal that will be slaughtered is required to be inside the Courtyard, but the one slaughtering the offering is not required to be inside the Courtyard. The question then is if the Kohen can avoid

immersing in a mikvah if he does not enter the Courtyard to slaughter the animal.

² They maintain that only a metzora is required to immerse before entering the Courtyard but a regular person who is tahor is not required to immerse.



The Mishnah had stated: The Kohen adol performs five immersions and ten sanctifications (on Yom Kippur).

A Baraisa states that the Kohen Gadol performed five immersions and ten sanctifications on Yom Kippur, and all of these immersions are in the Holy, in the Parvah Chamber, except for the first immersion which was in the unsanctified area on top of the Water Gate. This area was located on the side of the Kohen Gadol's Chamber.

Abaye said: From this Baraisa we learn that Ein Eitam³ was twenty-three amos higher than the floor of the Courtyard. For we learned in a Mishnah (in Middos 2:3) that all the gates in the Bais HaMikdash were twenty amos high and ten amos wide, except for the gateway of the Ulam.⁴ And it was taught in a Baraisa: it is said *he shall immerse his flesh in the water*. The words *in the water* teach us that one must immerse in a mikvah.⁵ The words *his entire flesh* teach us that one is required to immerse in water that can contain his entire body at one time. And how much is this? This is a measurement of water which is the volume of an amah by an amah by the height of three amos. The Chachamim calculated the water of a mikvah, i.e. three cubic ammos of water, to be equal to forty se'ah.⁶ (31a1 - 31a2)

The Gemora challenges the calculation mentioned above, because there was an amah-thick ceiling over the airspace of the Water Gate and there was also an

amah-thick concrete pavement under the mikvah.⁷ The Gemora answers that since the gates of the Bais HaMikdash were fashioned from marble, the ceilings of the gates could be made with a minute amount of this material, and only a thin slab was necessary for the floor of the mikvah to prevent water from seeping out. – But there was that minute amount? – Since it did not equal an amah, he (Abaye) did not count it. (31a2 - 31b1)

The Mishnah stated that they spread a linen sheet between him and the people. Why was it made of linen? It is like Rav Kahana said regarding a Mishnah later (35a) that a linen sheet was used so that the Kohen Gadol would realize that the Yom Kippur service was performed with linen vestments. Here too the reason a linen sheet was used was so that the Kohen Gadol would realize that the special service of Yom Kippur was performed with linen vestments. (31b1)

The Mishnah states that the Kohen Gadol undressed, went into the mikvah, immersed himself and ascended and dried himself by wrapping himself in a large cloth towel to absorb the water on his body. They brought him the golden garments, he put them on and sanctified his hands and feet. They brought him the tamid offering, he made the required cut and someone else finished it for him. He received the blood and threw it (on the Altar). He went inside to burn the incense of the morning and to prepare the lamps (of the Menorah),

must have been a little more than twenty-amos higher than the Courtyard floor in order for the spring to be able to supply water to that mikvah, as water does not run higher than its source.

⁷ This amah-thick pavement for the floor of the mikvah was to prevent any water from seeping out of the mikvah. To support the weight of the pavement, the ceiling of the Water Gate needed to be one amah thick. This being the case, then, the water from Ein Eitam would have to rise two additional amos to reach the mikvah, which was not possible.

³ Which was a spring that supplied water via the canals to the mikvah that the Kohen Gadol used on Yom Kippur.

⁴ Which was forty amos high and twenty amos wide; thus, the Water Gate, which the mikvah was placed upon, was twenty amos high.

⁵ Which is a pool of water that was gathered together by natural means and not from water that was drawn into a vessel.

⁶ Now, since the Water Gate was twenty amos high and the mikvah that was on top of it was three amos high, Ein Eitam

and to offer up the head and the limbs and the chavitin (meal offering) and the wine libations.

The morning incense was offered up between the blood and the limbs, and the afternoon (incense) between the limbs and its libations.

If the Kohen Gadol was either old or of delicate nature, warm water would be prepared for him and poured into the cold (of the mikvah), to mitigate its coldness. (31b1 – 31b2)

GEMARA: The Rabbis said in the presence of Rav Pappa: This [Mishnah]⁸ is not in accord with Rabbi Meir, for if it were in accord with him, behold he said: There must be two sanctifications for the putting on of the garments, therefore, there ought to be here, too,⁹ two sanctifications for the putting on of the garments!¹⁰ Rav Pappa said to them: Whether on the view of the Sages or of Rabbi Meir, one sanctification is for the removing of the holy garments, and one for the donning and the reason of their dispute is [the interpretation of these words]: He shall remove, he shall wash and he shall don. Rabbi Meir holds that Scripture compares the removing to the donning [of the garments], i.e., just as in the case of the donning of the garments he first puts them on and only afterwards sanctifies himself, so also with the removing of the garments, he first removes them and then sanctifies himself; whereas the Rabbis hold that [Scripture] compares the removing to the donning, i.e., just as with the donning, he sanctifies himself while dressed in the garments, so with the removing, he

⁸ Which prescribes only one sanctification in connection with the first immersion when he changes from his non-holy garments into the garments of gold.

⁹ It is assumed that the reason of Rabbi Meir for prescribing the disrobing before the sanctification is that he holds that the two sanctifications required on the change of garments are for the putting on of holy vestments. Whereas the Rabbis ascribe one

sanctifies himself while the garments are yet on him. Said the Rabbis to Rav Pappa: How can you say so, has it not been taught: A sheet of linen was spread between him and the people, he removed [his garments], went down, immersed himself, came up and dried himself. One brought the golden garments before him, he put them on, and sanctified his hands and his feet. Rabbi Meir said: He removed [his garments] and sanctified his hands and his feet, went down and immersed himself, came up and dried himself. One brought the golden garments before him, he put them on and sanctified his hands and feet!¹¹ — He answered them: If there is such teaching, it is a teaching [to be recognized]. According to Rabbi Meir it is right, because we thus account for the ten sanctifications, but according to the Rabbis, they are only nine? — The Rabbis will answer you: The last sanctification is made when he removes the holy garments and puts on the ordinary ones. (31b2 – 32a1)

INSIGHT TO THE DAF

Kohen Gadol Dries himself off after the Mikvah

The Mishna states the Kohen Gadol would dry himself after immersing in the *mikveh*. The question arises: Was this just for his own convenience, or was there a halachic reason behind this practice?

The *Mishna Lamelech* deals with this question. In his opinion, the Kohen Gadol was required to dry off in order to prevent a *chatzitzah* (separation) between his skin and the priestly garments. He offers as proof to this

for the stripping of holy garments and the other for the putting on of holy garments.

¹⁰ On the other hand, in the view of the Rabbis, there would be no need for more than one sanctification, since the garments of which he strips himself at the first immersion are non-holy.

¹¹ This shows that Rabbi Meir requires two sanctifications also in connection with the first immersion.

idea the Gemora which says that wind which lifts the garments off of the kohen's skin disqualifies the service. If the wind between the garments and the skin is a problem, certainly, the Mishna Lamilech reasons, water will be problematic.

Rav Moshe Arik offers a different explanation for this Mishna. He explains that there is a prohibition to wash on Yom Kippur. Even though this prohibition is not applicable to the Kohen Gadol because he is not bathing for his own pleasure, he still has an obligation to limit his washing as much as possible. Therefore, according to Rav Moshe Arik, the Kohen Gadol was obligated to dry himself off.

Rav Eliashiv challenges this explanation. There are times when the halachah allows one to go in water on Yom Kippur, yet we never find that allowance is conditioned on drying off immediately afterwards. If a river is obstructing one's way to visit his teacher, he is allowed to wade through it. Nowhere is it mentioned one must dry off after going through the river. Therefore Rav Eliashiv rejects this explanation of the Mishna.

DAILY MASHAL

Vestments of white

The Gemora states that they spread a linen sheet between the Kohen Gadol and the people so that the Kohen Gadol would realize that the service of the day is performed with linen vestments. The theme of Yom Kippur is white, which reflects purity and being sin-free. The Gemora further (39b) states that the Bais HaMikdash was called *Levanon* because it whitened the sins of Israel.

The Gemora in Sanhedrin (97a) states that Moshiach will not arrive until the entire kingdom converts to heresy. This is alluded to in the verse that states *all of it has turned white, it is pure*.

Apparently, there are two scenarios where the Jewish People gain atonement. They can either gain atonement through repentance and good deeds, or they can gain atonement when the world is so corrupt that everyone has become heretical.

The Gemora (ibid 97b) states that according to the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua, if the Jewish People do not repent, Hashem will appoint a king over them whose decrees will be as harsh as Haman, and the Jewish People will repent, and in this way HaShem will bring them back to the right path.

It is certainly better to gain atonement and redemption through voluntary repentance, rather than being persecuted by the gentiles. Let us make the right choice and repent now, on our own volition, and gain true atonement and redemption.