

21 Nissan 5783
April 12, 2023



Sotah Daf 14

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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

Moshe our Teacher

Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina says: Even Moshe our Teacher does not know where he is buried. The verse here says: *And no “Ish” – “man” knows his burial place.* A different verse says: *And this is the blessing that Moshe, the “Ish” Elokim – the man of God, blessed.* [We see that Ish is used to refer to Moshe.]

And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina says: Why was Moshe buried close to Beis-Peor? It was in order to atone on what happened by Peor (*the Jewish men were enticed by the Moabite women into depravity and idolatry*).

And Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina says: What does the verse mean when it says: *After Hashem your God you should follow?* Is it possible for man to walk behind the Divine Presence? But it says elsewhere: *For Hashem your God; He is a consuming fire!*? Rather this first verse must mean that you should follow the attributes of the Holy One, Blessed be He. Just as He clothes the naked, as it is written: *And Hashem God made for Adam and his wife tunics of skin (see below that they were not actually made of skin), and He clothed them,* so too you should clothe the naked. The Holy One, Blessed be He, visited the sick, as it is written: *And Hashem appeared to him (Avraham) in the plains of Mamrei,* so too you should visit the sick. The Holy One, Blessed be He, comforts mourners, as it is written: *And it was after the death of Avraham, and Hashem*

blessed his son Yitzchak, so too you should comfort mourners. The Holy One, Blessed be He, buries the dead, as it is written: *And He buried him in the depression,* so too you should bury the dead.

Tunics of skin. Rav and Shmuel argue about the definition of this verse. One says that this refers to something that comes out of skin (*wool, which comes from sheep’s skin*), while the other says that it refers to tunics that are enjoyed by the skin (*linen*).

Rabbi Simlai taught: The Torah starts off with acts of kindness and finishes with acts of kindness. It starts off with acts of kindness, as it is written: *And Hashem God made for Adam and his wife tunics of skin,* and it finishes with acts of kindness, as it is written: *And He buried him in the depression.*

Rabbi Simlai taught: Why did Moshe our Teacher desire to enter Eretz Yisrael? Did he need to eat from its fruit or be satiated from the good that was there? [Certainly not!] Rather, this is what Moshe said: The Jewish people were commanded with many mitzvos that can be fulfilled only in Eretz Yisroel. I will go into Eretz Yisroel so that they can all be fulfilled through me. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: Do you want only to receive reward? I will consider it as if you already fulfilled those mitzvos. This is as the verse states: *Therefore I will give him a portion from the multitudes and he will divide the booty with the great ones, being that he emptied his soul for death and was counted*



among the wicked, and yet, he carried the sin of the multitudes and prayed for the wicked. Therefore I will give him a portion from the multitudes - One might think that his reward will be like that of the righteous who came later, not the earlier ones; this is why the verse states: *and he will divide the booty with the great ones*, referring to the forefathers Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, who were great in Torah and mitzvos. *Being that he emptied his soul for death* - This refers to his sacrificing himself to death (in order to protect the Jewish people), as it states: *And if not (You do not forgive the Jewish people for the sin of the golden calf), erase me now* (from Your book). *And was counted among the wicked* - This means that he was counted with the generation who died in the desert (even though he didn't sin). *And yet, he carried the sin of the multitudes* - This refers to his achieving atonement for the sin of the golden calf. *And prayed (yafgia) for the wicked*. This refers to the fact that he prayed to God for mercy that the sinners of Israel should repent. And 'pegi'ah' means only prayer, as it is written: *And you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up for them a cry and a prayer, and do not entreat [tifga] Me.* (14a1 – 14a3)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU,
HAMEKANEI L'ISHTO

Mishnah

He (the husband) would bring her minchah (flour) offering in a basket made from the fibers of a palm tree, and place it on her hands in order to tire her out.

All the minchah offerings are at first and at the end in a Kli Shareis (*saced service vessel used in the Temple service*), but this one was first in a basket made from the fibers of a palm tree and only later was it is a sacred

service vessel. All minchah offerings require oil and levonah (frankincense), but this one does not require neither oil nor levonah. All minchah offerings come from wheat, but this one comes from barley. The minchah offering of the omer, while it also comes from barley, it would come as fine flour, but this one comes as meal.

Rabban Gamliel states: Just as her actions were those of an animal, so too her offering is from animal food (i.e., barley). (14a4)

Procedure of the Sotah

The Gemora cites a Baraisa: Abba Chanin said in the name of Rabbi Elazar: We tire her out in order that she should retract (and admit her guilt; this way she will not drink the sotah waters and die). He notes: If we see the Torah had such pity on sinners, certainly Hashem has pity on those who do His will!

The Gemora asks: Perhaps the reasoning behind trying to make her admit is not out of pity, but rather so that the scroll (containing Hashem's Name) should not be erased (with the sotah waters)!?

The Gemora answers: Rabbi Elozar must hold that she drinks the water first and then offers her minchah. [*Being that her holding of the offering is even after the Name is erased, it must be that this is in order to get her to admit and not die.*] (14a4 – 14b1)

The Mishnah had stated: All the minchah offerings [are at first and at the end in a Kli Shareis (*saced service vessel used in the Temple service*), but this one was first in a basket made from the fibers of a palm tree and only later was it is a sacred service vessel].



The *Gemora* asks a question from a Baraisa: What is the way that a minchah offering is brought? A person brings a minchah offering from his house in a vessel of gold or silver, he puts it in a sacred service vessel and consecrates it in a sacred service vessel. He puts oil and levonah on it and brings it to the kohen. The kohen brings it to the Altar, and brings it to the southwestern corner opposite the tip of the corner of the Altar, and it is enough (*see below for explanation of this last phrase*). He then separates the levonah to one side, and he takes a komeitz (*scoopful*) from the place where there is a lot of oil. He then puts that in a sacred service vessel and consecrates it in a sacred service vessel. He then collects the levonah and puts it on top of the komeitz (*in the kli shares*). He then brings it (*the sacred service vessel*) with the intent to burn it (*after being emptied from the sacred service vessel*) towards the Altar. He salts it first, and then puts it on the fire. Once the komeitz is burned, the kohanim may eat the rest of the offering. The kohanim are permitted to put wine, oil or honey in the mixture. They are prohibited only from allowing it to become chametz.

The *Gemora* asks: The Baraisa started by saying that a regular minchah offering is brought in a basket of silver or gold! [*Doesn't it then proceed to say that only later, when it reaches the Temple, it is placed in a sacred service vessel, unlike our Mishnah, which stated that it leaves his house in a sacred service vessel?*]

Rav Pappa answers: Our Mishnah means that (the minchah offering needs to be taken out) in a vessel that is fitting to be a sacred service vessel.

The *Gemora* asks: This implies that a basket made from a palm tree cannot be used. This is seemingly unlike the position of Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah, for it was taught in a Baraisa: If a service vessel was made

from wood, Rebbe says that it is unfit, while Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah says that it is fit. [*According to Rabbi Yosi, there would be no special significance in bringing a basket of palm tree, as one could do so for any minchah offering.*]

The *Gemora* answers: Even Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah said his ruling only by superior quality (vessels; such as wooden vessels); did he say this regarding inferior quality (vessels; such as the basket carrying the minchah of the sotah)? Doesn't Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Yehudah also hold of the verse: *Offer it, if you please, to your officer [will he show you favor or will he turn his countenance toward you?]* [This verse indicates that inferior vessels may not be used for the Temple service.] (14b1)

The Baraisa had stated: He puts it in a sacred service vessel and consecrates it in a sacred service vessel.

The *Gemora* comments: It appears that one can sanctify something only by putting it in a sacred service vessel with the intention that it should be sanctified!

The *Gemora* disagrees: The Baraisa means that it is placed in the sacred service vessel in order that it should become sanctified (*but not that one must do so with intent to sanctify it*).

The Baraisa had stated: He puts oil and levonah on it.

The *Gemora* cites the Scriptural source for this: *He shall pour oil on it and place levonah on it.*

The Baraisa had stated: And he brings it to the kohen.

The *Gemora* cites the Scriptural source for this: *And he shall bring it to the sons of Aaron.*

The Baraisa had stated: The kohen brings it to the Altar.

The Gemora cites the Scriptural source for this: *And the kohen shall bring it close to the Altar.*

The Baraisa had stated: He brings it to the southwestern corner opposite the tip of the corner of the Altar, and it is enough.

The Gemora asks: From where is this known?

The Gemora answers: It is written: *And this is the law of the minchah offering: the sons of Aharon shall bring it before Hashem, to the front of the Altar.* And it was taught in a Baraisa: [The verse says, “*And this is the law of the flour offering, the sons of Aharon should bring it before Hashem to the face of the altar.*”] *Before Hashem* implies to the west, but the verse states “*to the face of the altar.*” One might therefore think that it should be to the south, but the verse states, “*Before Hashem.*” How can these verses be reconciled? He brings it to the southwestern corner – to the tip of the corner of the altar, and it is sufficient.

Rabbi Elozar states: One would think that it should be brought to the west or south of the corner of the altar. We therefore apply the rule that whenever there are two verses, one can be explained as fulfilling itself and a second verse, but the other can only be explained by negating the explanation of a second verse, we use the former way of explanation. If we would remain with the literal, “*Before Hashem*” in the west, this would negate the verse, “*to the face of the altar*” in the south. However, “*to the face of the altar*” in the south does not necessarily negate, “*Before Hashem*” in the west. What does one do? He brings it to the southern corner of the altar.

The Gemora asks: How is this considered upholding the other verse?

Rav Ashi answers: Rabbi Elozar understands that the entire altar was in the northern part of the Courtyard (*and therefore, even when the Kohen is by the south of the altar, he is still “before Hashem”*).

The Gemora asks: What does it mean: And it is enough?

Rav Ashi answers: This is needed. One might have thought that a person would have to touch the actual minchah offering itself to the Altar; the Mishnah therefore states that he can bring the vessel there, and does not have to do so.

The Gemora asks: Indeed, why don’t we say he must touch the actual offering to the Altar?

The Gemora answers: The verse states: *And he shall bring it to the kohen, and he (the kohen) shall bring it close to the Altar.* Just as the bringing the offering to the kohen is in its service vessel, so too, when the kohen brings the offering to the Altar, it is in its service vessel.

The Baraisa had stated: He then separates the levonah to one side.

The Gemora explains the reason for this: It is in order that the levonah does not get scooped up together with the minchah, as it was taught in a Mishnah: If he scooped and a pebble came into his hand, or a grain of salt, or a speck of levonah, it is invalid.

The Baraisa had stated: He takes a komeitz (*scoopful*) from the place where there is a lot of oil.

The Gemora asks: From where is this known?

The Gemora answers: It is written: *from its fine (wheat) flour and from its oil...from its fine (barley) flour and from its oil.*

The Baraisa had stated: He then puts that in a sacred service vessel and consecrates it in a sacred service vessel.

The Gemora asks: What is the necessity for this? He already sanctified it one time!?

The Gemora answers: It is similar to blood (of an animal sacrifice). Just as by blood – even though it was sanctified in the neck of the animal (during the time of slaughtering), nevertheless, he sanctifies it again in a sacred service vessel; here as well, it is no different.

The Baraisa had stated: He then collects the levonah and puts it on top of the komeitz (*in the kli shares*).

The Gemora cites the Scriptural source for this: *and all the levonah that is on the minchah.* (14b1 – 14b4)

DAILY MASHAL

Moshe and Ba'al Pe'or

Rabbi Chama b'Rabbi Chanina says: Why was Moshe buried by the house of Pe'or (*an idol*)? In order to atone on what happened by Pe'or (*the Jewish men were enticed by the Moabite women into depravity and idolatry*).

Why was Moshe chosen to be buried there to atone for this sin? What level in greatness did Moshe possess that was being used as the counterbalance to Pe'or?

Reb Chaim Shmuelewitz states that the idolatry of Pe'or is the attribute of wantonness. It indicates that a person has no restraint and the feelings or rights of others do not concern him. [*The procedure of serving this Avodah Zarah involved defecating before the idol.*] He is solely interested in himself. This is why Moshe Rabbeinu was buried opposite Pe'or. Moshe is the epithet of what it means to be interested in his task and mission of leading Klal Yisroel, and his own personal concern is the farthest thing from his mind. Moshe is the faithful servant that Hashem has complete trust in him.

This is why he can receive the “*klil tiferes,*” - the crown of glory on his head. A king, when he temporarily removes his crown from his head (*due to its weight or on account of the heat*), will not place it on the head of his vice-minister for several reasons. If someone would walk in and observe that the king's crown is on his head, they would assume that he is indeed the king. Furthermore, the vice-minister himself would entertain those feelings. The king, therefore, would place it on a “hook on the wall.” No one will consider that the hook became king. The Holy One, Blessed be He, can place His “crown of glory” on Moshe's head, for he is the ultimate faithful servant. Moshe will not suppose that he became the king, and nobody who sees the crown on his head will think that way.