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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

**Omens**

Abaye said: Now that it has been said that omens are of significance, a person should make a regular habit of seeing (*some have the version: eating*) at the beginning of the year a gourd, fenugreek, leek, beets and dates.

Rav Mesharshiya said to his sons: Whenever you intend to come in for your lesson with your teacher, study the *Mishna* well (*so you will be able to ask relevant questions*) and then enter the presence of your teacher; and when you sit before him, look at his mouth, for it is written: *But your eyes shall see your teachers.*

When you study Torah, study by a river of water, so that just as the waters advance continuously, so may your acquired knowledge advance continuously. Rather dwell in the rubbish heaps of Masa Mechasya (*where there are Torah scholars fit to issue rulings; a place where people’s conducts are exemplary*) than in the palaces of Pumbedisa (*which was reputed for thievery*). Rather eat a *gildana* fish (*from Masa Mechasya*) that is about to putrefy than the *kutach* (*a dip made from moldy bread, spoiled milk and salt*) which can break rocks (*due to its hardness*). [*It is much healthier, for the kutach clogs the heart, blinds the eyes and weakens the body.*]

The *Gemora* notes: The kingdoms of David and Shlomo who were anointed with a “horn” of oil endured (*for the horn on an animal is durable and lasts a long time*); the kingdoms of Shaul and Yeihu who were anointed with a “flask” of oil (*made of earthenware, something that can break easily*) did not endure. (6a)

**Smelling the Incense**

The *Mishna* had stated: One who compounds the incense (*is liable to kares*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: One who compounds incense for learning purposes or in order to hand it over to the public (*to use in the Temple service*), he is exempt (*from kares*). If he compounds it in order to smell it, he is liable. He who smells it, however, is not liable, but he is guilty of *me’ilah* (*one who has unintentionally benefited from hekdesch or removed it from the ownership of the Beis Hamikdash has committed the transgression of me’ilah, and as a penalty, he would be required to pay the value of the object plus an additional fifth of the value; he also brings a korban asham*).

The *Gemora* asks: But is smelling subject to the law of *me’ilah*? Hasn’t Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi stated in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi in the name of Bar Kappara that one is not subjected to *me’ilah* biblically for deriving benefit from sound (*of the musical instruments in the Bais HaMikdash*), from appearance (*of the beauty of the Bais HaMikdash*), and from fragrance (*of the incense that was burned on the Mizbeich HaPnimi - the inner altar of the Bais HaMikdash*)!?

The *Gemora* answers: The reference to smelling refers to the fragrance of the incense after its column of smoke rises; it will then not be subject to the laws of *me’ilah*, because the *mitzvah* performed with the incense is already completed. [*Once the mitzvah has been done with something sacred, it is not regarded as being a “holy of Hashem,” and therefore, it will not be subject to me’ilah.*]

The *Gemora* asks: Is this indeed so? [**It is said: and he shall separate the ash... and he shall place it next to the altar, and we derive from this verse that one may not scatter the ash when placing it next to the *mizbei’ach*, and the words he shall place it teaches us that one cannot receive benefit from the ash.**] But the *terumas hadeshen* - separation of the ash is

something whose procedure has been performed (*because the ash was placed next to the mizbei'ach*), yet it is still subject to the laws of *me'ilah* (*because one cannot benefit from it*)!?

The *Gemora* answers: The reason for this is because the commandment regarding the *terumas hadeshen* and the commandment regarding the *Kohen Gadol* wearing linen garments on *Yom Kippur* are two biblical verses that teach the same ruling, and the rule is that any two biblical verses that teach the same ruling cannot be used to teach that same ruling for other laws. [Regarding *terumas hadeshen* it is said and he shall place it, and regarding the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* it is said: and he shall leave them there, and that verse teaches us that the garments of the *Kohen Gadol* must be put away.]

The *Gemora* asks: This is well according to the Rabbis, but what is to be said according to Rabbi Dosa? For it has been taught in a *braisa*: Regarding the white garments that the *Kohen Gadol* wears on *Yom Kippur* it is said: and he shall leave them there. The Rabbis maintain that this teaches us that the garments of the *Kohen* are put away. Rabbi Dosa, however, maintains that the white garments worn by the *Kohen Gadol* on *Yom Kippur* are fit for an ordinary *Kohen* to wear, and the verse that states and he shall leave them there means that a *Kohen Gadol* cannot use them for a future *Yom Kippur*. [According to Rabbi Dosa, this verse does not teach the ruling that an item of *hekdesch* still has sanctity even after its *mitzvah* has been fulfilled, because Rabbi Dosa maintains that another *Kohen* can still use the garments, and thus the *mitzvah* has not been fulfilled.]

The *Gemora* answers: The law concerning the *terumas hadeshen* and that of the *eglah arufah* (*the law is that upon finding a corpse, and being unable to solve the murder, the leaders of the city closest to the corpse are required to bring a calf to an untilled valley, decapitate it, wash their hands over it, and then they must recite a verse, declaring publicly that they did not kill the person*) are two biblical verses that teach the same ruling, and the rule is that any two biblical verses that teach the same ruling cannot be used to teach that same ruling for other laws.

The *Gemora* cites the sources for these laws: What is the law of the *terumas hadeshen*? It has been taught in a *braisa*: He shall place it by the side of the altar; this teaches us that it has to be hidden away. What is the law of the *eglah arufah*? It has been taught in a *braisa*: And shall axe the heifer's neck there in the valley; this teaches that it has to be hidden away.

The *Gemora* notes that even according to the one who holds that any two biblical verses that teach the same ruling can be used to teach that same ruling for other laws, here indeed no inference can be made because there are explicit exclusionary verses that the law applies here, and nowhere else. (6a)

### Compounding the Incense

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The compound of the *ketores* (*incense*) consisted of stacte, onycha, galbanum and frankincense, each seventy *manehs* by weight; of myrrh, cassia, aspic and saffron, each sixteen *manehs* by weight; of costus – twelve *maneh*, of aromatic bark – three *maneh*, and of cinnamon – nine *maneh*. Karshinah soap – nine *kavin*; Kafrisin wine – three *se'ahs'* and three *kavin*. If Kafrisin wine is not available, old white wine may be used instead. Salt of Sodom – a fourth of a *kav*, and of *ma'aleh ashan* (*a herb which makes the smoke of the ketores rise in a column*). a minute quantity. Rabbi Nassan says: Jordan amber – a minute quantity is also sufficient. If, however, fruit-honey is added, the *ketores* (*like any offering*) is rendered unfit. If one omits one of the spices, he is liable to the penalty of death (*by the hands of Heaven*).

Rabbi Shimon said: Stacte is nothing but a sap which exudes from the wood of the balsam tree.

The Karshinah lye was rubbed over the onycha in order to render it pleasant. The Kafrisin wine was used to steep the onycha in order that its aroma might be intensified. Although urine might be more suitable for this purpose, it (*out of respect*) is not brought inside the Temple.

This supports that which Rabbi Yosi, the son of Rabbi Chanina says: *It is holy, and it shall be holy for you*, implies that all services in connection with it must be performed within the

Holy (*and that is why it cannot be made with urine, even outside of the Temple*).

The *Gemora* asks on Rabbi Yosi from the following *Mishna*: If one consecrated all his possessions, and amongst those possessions were some items that were fit for communal offerings, they shall be given to the Temple craftsmen as wages. Now, what is meant by ‘items that were fit’? It cannot mean animals, for this has been explicitly taught there, and it cannot be referring to wine, oil or fine flour, for this has also been taught there! It must therefore be in reference to *ketores* (*and if an individual has ketores in his possession, this proves that it may be made outside of the Temple*)!?

Rav Oshaya said: It refers to the leftover *ketores* which is given to the craftsmen as their wages; for we learned in a *Mishna*: The leftover of the *ketores* - what was done with it (*in order to make it usable for the next year*)? The wages of the workmen (*who prepared the incense*) were allocated (*from the half-shekels in the Temple treasury; and the money was deconsecrated when it was given to them*), and the extra incense was deconsecrated by exchanging it for the worker’s money, and (*the extra incense was*) given to the workmen as their wages, and was then re-purchased (*from them*) with the new donations (*and now could be used for the next year*). [*If someone was given the leftover ketores, and he consecrated it before the Temple had the opportunity to buy it back from him, since it cannot be used for the new ketores, it is given to the workers as their wages.*]

Rav Yosef, due to the language of the *Mishna*, disagrees with this interpretation. He explains that the *Mishna* is referring to a single ingredient of the *ketores*.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: How is the incense mixture formulated? Three hundred sixty-eight *maneh* were in it: three hundred sixty-five corresponding to the days of the solar year – a *maneh* for each day, half in the morning and half in the afternoon; and three extra *maneh*, from which the *Kohen Gadol* would bring both his handfuls (*into the Holy of Holies*) on *Yom Kippur*. The leftover of the *ketores* (*for he did not use all three maneh*) was given to the workmen as their wages. This is as was

taught in a *Mishna*: The leftover of the *ketores* - what was done with it (*in order to make it usable for the next year*)? The wages of the workmen (*who prepared the incense*) were allocated (*from the half-shekels in the Temple treasury; and the money was deconsecrated when it was given to them*), and the extra incense was deconsecrated by exchanging it for the worker’s money, and (*the extra incense was*) given to the workmen as their wages, and was then re-purchased (*from them*) with the new donations (*and now could be used for the next year*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The leftover of the *ketores* - once in sixty or seventy years (*when the remaining ketores would total 184 maneh*), only half the quantity was manufactured (*for more was not necessary for that year*). Therefore, if an individual compounds half the quantity, he is liable (*to kares*). These are the words of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, who said in the name of the Deputy *Kohen Gadol* that there is no tradition that a third or a fourth of the quantity was ever compounded. The Sages say: The *Kohen* prepared the *ketores* each day according to its composition and offered it inside (*and accordingly, an individual who compounded a maneh’s worth of ketores would be liable*).

The *Gemora* notes that this supports Rava, for Rava said: If one compounds half the quantity of *ketores* (*at least one maneh*), he is liable, for it is written: *And the incense which you shall make; whatever quantity you make, and it is possible for one to prepare (a maneh) - half a maneh (to be offered) in the morning and half in the afternoon.* (6a – 6b)

#### DAILY MASHAL

#### *Ketores – According to the Solar Year*

The Rabbis taught: How is the incense mixture formulated? Three hundred sixty-eight *maneh* were in it: three hundred sixty-five corresponding to the days of the solar year – a *maneh* for each day, half in the morning and half in the afternoon; and three extra *maneh*, from which the *Kohen Gadol* would bring both his handfuls [into the Holy of Holies] on *Yom Kippur*. He would return them to the mortar on the day before *Yom Kippur*, and grind them very thoroughly so that it would be exceptionally fine. Here again the *Gemara* references the solar



year and not the lunar year, and again in reference to Yom Kippur. Why does the Gemara insist on associating Yom Kippur with the solar year?

My brother, Reb Binyomin suggests that the solution to this puzzle can be found in the Medrash (Bereishis Rabbah 65:15) that states that Yaakov and Esav are likened to a hairy man and a smooth-skinned man standing at the edge of the wheat silo, and the chaff became tangled in the hair of the hairy man. When the chaff landed on the smooth-skinned man, he merely placed his hand on his head and removed the chaff. Similarly, Esav, i.e. the nations of the world, becomes sullied throughout the year with sins and does not have the means to gain atonement. Yaakov, however, becomes sullied with sins throughout the year and when Yom Kippur arrives, he can gain atonement. This statement of the Medrash encapsulates our entire existence in this world. While we are distinct from the gentiles, at times it is difficult to discern our holiness and purity, as our sins are formidable obstacles to coming close to HaShem. Thus, the Medrash teaches us that we are like the smooth-skinned man, as our sins do not stick to us and they are washed off with the holiness of Yom Kippur. Esav, however, remains mired in sin throughout his entire existence. This explains why the Gemara associates Yom Kippur with the solar year. Yom Kippur is not merely a Jewish holiday. Rather, Yom Kippur is the defining moment in a Jew's year, when he transcends his sins and HaShem allows him to be elevated to a sphere which the gentiles cannot penetrate.

### ***Rosh HaShanah:***

#### ***The Custom of Eating Symbolic Foods***

The Gemora in the tractate of Kerisus (6a) states "Abaye said 'Now that you have said that an omen is significant, at the beginning of each year, each person should accustom himself to eat gourds, fenugreek, leeks, beets and dates...!'" Because of this Gemora, it is a custom to eat these listed foods, as well as other foods, which represent good things. (We will soon explore how exactly these foods are representative of good things.) The issue that must first be addressed is why do we "indulge" in omens at the beginning of the year, on Rosh HaShana? As we

will soon see, there are many, many different omens and customs. Why do we eat these foods on this occasion?

The goal of these omens is to act as a reminder. By eating all of these foods that have positive connotations, a person realizes that now is the time he needs to be asking for these good things, because now is the time he is being judged. As soon as the person realizes that now is the time that he is being judged, he will realize that omens alone will not be enough for his salvation, and that repentance is needed. Therefore, eating these omens, which are a reminder that now is the time for repentance, is extremely appropriate for Rosh HaShana.

Another reason given for why we eat these "omens" has to do with the "spirit" of the holiday of Rosh HaShana. If one looks over the prayers on Rosh HaShana, one will find that the basic theme is one of proclaiming the kingship and greatness of Hashem. Although Rosh HaShana is the day on which we are being judged, we do not make requests for sustenance, health, long life, etc.. We instead demonstrate how we have accepted Hashem as our king, and that we will listen to Him and follow His dictates.

Yet, asking Hashem for one's needs really is not so far out of the realm of proclaiming the kingship of Hashem. By asking Hashem for our needs, we vividly illustrate the fact that Hashem is our superior, and that we depend on Him for everything. In reality, if we asked Hashem for our needs, it would demonstrate how we are the subjects of Hashem, and that we have accepted Him as our king.

In order to reconcile these two realities, we have the omens. By eating these omens (and with some, saying the accompanying liturgy), we are covertly asking Hashem for our needs. We do not want to do such blatantly, as that is not in the strict spirit of the day. However, as it does demonstrate that we have accepted Hashem as our king, and today is the day we are being judged, we "ask" Hashem that we be remembered for a good year in a fashion that is not outwardly a request.