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Avodah Zarah Daf 76

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

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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

Purging a Spit and Grill

Rav Amram pointed out the following contradiction to Rav Sheishes: We learned in our *Mishna*: A spit and grill (*from an idolater*) must be purged in a white-hot flame, but it has been taught with reference to sacrificial meat: A spit and grill (*in order to remove the “nosar” absorptions from the pot*) must be purged with boiling water!?

Rav Sheishes replied: Amram, my son, what is the connection between the utensils of *kodoshim* and the vessels of idolaters, since the former absorbed what is permitted (*when the sacrificial meat was being cooked, it was not nosar yet*) and the latter absorbed what is prohibited!

Rava challenged this logic: But ultimately, that which they discharge is prohibited!?

Rather, Rava said: When the *Mishna* there uses the term “*haga’alah*,” it means rinsing and scouring (*merikah and shetifah*).

Abaye asked him: What is the comparison between the two? *Merikah* and *shetifah* are done with cold water, whereas *haga’alah* is done with hot water!?

Rather, Abaye said: Each of them sheds light on the other. In our *Mishna*, the *Tanna* taught that it must be purged in flame, but in truth, *haga’alah* is required as well, and there the *Tanna* taught that they must be purged in boiling water, but in truth, they must be purged in flame as well.

Rava objected: If that was correct, let the *Tanna* teach both in one *Mishna*, and one of them in the other, and then it would be possible to say that one sheds light on the other!?

Rather, said Rava, in the case of the sacrificial meat, the vessels may be purged with boiling water (*and a flame is not necessary*), based upon the following reason given by Rav Nachman in the name of Rabbah bar Avuha: Since the vessels were used every day, it was considered a purging with respect to the absorptions from the preceding day.

The *Gemora* notes: This makes sense with respect of a utensil used to cook *shelamim* with, for since a *shelamim* can be eaten for two days, the purging (*from the next day*) occurs before it has a chance to become *nosar*; however, with respect of a *chatas*, since it may only be eaten for a day and the following night, when he cooks today a *chatas*, it becomes *nosar* the following morning; so when he cooks tomorrow either a *shelamim* or a *chatas*, the pot will be discharging (*nosar*)



from today's *chatas* into the *chatas* or *shelamim* of tomorrow!?

The *Gemora* answers: The case where *haga'alah* would be sufficient is when he cooks a *chatas* today, and then he cooks a *shelamim* today, so that the time limit of tomorrow's *chatas* and the preceding day's *shelamim* will expire simultaneously, and then he may cook in it tomorrow's *shelamim*.

The *Gemora* asks: If that is so, then why is *haga'alah* necessary at all?

The *Gemora* notes: This is indeed a difficulty.

Rav Pappa answers (*the original question*): The reason is that the (*absorptions from the*) utensil (*used by idolaters*) becomes hard (*and therefore purging with fire is necessary*), whereas the other does not (*for it is constantly being used; therefore, it may be removed through haga'alah*).

Rav Ashi said: The answer is certainly as was originally explained, viz., what is the connection between the utensils of *kodoshim* and the vessels of idolaters, since the former absorbed what is permitted (*when the sacrificial meat was being cooked, it was not nosar yet*) and the latter absorbed what is prohibited! And as for your objection that ultimately, that which they discharge is prohibited, the answer is that at the time of discharging, there is no actual substance which is prohibited. (76a)

Haga'alah and Libun

The *Gemora* notes that when purging through fire is required, it must be purged until the outer layer falls off.

Rav Huna explains how *haga'alah* is done: A small vessel (*that needs to be purged*) must be placed inside a larger one (*with boiled water*).

The *Gemora* explains what is done if it is a large vessel: There was a cauldron in the house of Rav Akavya which needed *haga'alah*. He made for it a rim of dough around its mouth and filled it with water which he boiled up. Rava said: Who could have been smart enough to do this if not Rav Akavya, who is a great man! He was of the opinion that just as a vessel absorbs, so too it discharges; and therefore, just as the cauldron absorbed through splashing, so too, the splashing of the boiling water can discharge the prohibited matter. (76a – 76b)

Purging a Knife

The *Mishna* had stated: A knife may merely be scraped (*on a grindstone*) and it is permitted for use.

Rav Ukva bar Chama said: One should also push it ten times into the ground. Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua said: It must be in untilled soil (*for otherwise, it will be too soft to accomplish any cleaning*). Rav Kahana said: This works only with a knife which is not blemished and has no notches.

The *Gemora* cites a supporting *braisa*: A knife which is not blemished and has no notches should be pushed ten times into the ground.



Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua said: This is true only to eat cold food with it (*however, regarding hot food, haga'alah would be required*). Mar Yehudah and Bati bar Tovi were sitting with King Shapur and an esrog was brought before them. The king cut a slice and ate it, and then cut a slice and handed it to Bati bar Tovi. After that, he thrust the knife ten times into the ground, cut off a slice and handed it to Mar Yehudah. Bati bar Tovi said to the king, "Am I not a Jew as well?" He replied, "Regarding him, I am certain that he is observant (*and would not eat anything forbidden*), but not of you." According to another version, the king said to him, "Remember what you did last night!" [According to the Persian tradition of hospitality, the king sent a female companion to each of them the night before. Mar Yehudah refused to see her, but Bati accepted.] (76b)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, HASOCHER ES HAPOEL
AND TRACTATE AVODAH ZARAH IS CONCLUDED

DAILY MASHAL

Haga'alah Every Day

The Gaon of Tchebin zt"l asked why the Jews didn't perform *haga'alah keilim* after the giving of the Torah, as their utensils had absorbed forbidden foods. He answered that, at any rate, they had to perform *haga'alah* every day throughout the 40 years that they stayed in the desert. After all, they were commanded not to leave the manna that fell each day till the following morning. The manna was absorbed by their utensils and the latter then needed *haga'alah* each day (*Sefer HaZikaron "Zera" Beirach*).

Concluding Avodah Zarah

Though the Kenesses HaGedolah banished the evil inclination for idolatry (Yoma 69b), Chazal said that someone who commits certain sins is as though he worships idolatry (see Seder Ya'akov, p. 340, for a list of 28 transgressions of that type). It seems, asserts Seder Ya'akov, that just as learning tractate Kerisos is a segulah for rectifying sins punishable by kareis (Likutei Halachos, Kerisos, in the name of the Ari z"l), learning Avodah zarah is a segulah to rectify those transgressions described as being equivalent to idolatry.

Avraham's Tractate

Chazal tell us that Avraham Avinu had a tractate on idolatry that contained 400 chapters, while ours has only five. How did all those laws go lost? The answer is that in ancient times, the yetzer hara of idolatry was very strong; it was the main yetzer hara of the times. Therefore, it presented itself in many different forms, in order to tempt people. Avraham Avinu lived in a world full of idolatry. In whatever area of life one looked, there was always some connection to idolatry. In order to combat this, he needed many more laws. But when Chazal wrote our tractate Avodah Zarah, that inclination had been diminished by the Anshei Knesses Hagedolah to a shadow of its former size. There was not so much idolatry in the world, so it could be covered in only five chapters.