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Zevachim Daf 63

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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

### **Gradient of the Ramp**

Rami bar Chama said: All the ramps (*of the Temple*) had a gradient of one *amah* (*vertical*) in three (*horizontal*) except the ramp of the altar, which had a gradient of one *amah* (*vertical*) in three and a half *amos* and a finger and a third, using the joint in the middle of the thumb. [*Since heavy limbs of animals had to be brought up on it, it had an easier gradient, nine amos high in thirty-two amos horizontally.*] (63a)

### **Mishna**

*Minchah* offerings would have their *komeitz* separated anywhere in the Courtyard. They may be eaten within its curtains, by male *Kohanim*, in any fashion, for one day and a night until midnight. (63a)

### **Kemitzah in the Heichal**

Rabbi Elozar said: If the *komeitz* of a *minchah* offering was separated in the Sanctuary, it is valid, for like so we find regarding the removal of the spoons of *levonah* (*which, in a sense, is like a kemitzah of a minchah, for the removal of the spoons is the act which permits the lechem hapanim for consumption*).

Rabbi Yirmiyah asked from a *braisa*: [*And he shall bring it etc.*] *And the Kohen shall take a komeitz from there*. This means that it should be taken from a place where the feet of the non-*Kohen* can stand (*which excludes the Sanctuary*)!?

The *braisa* continues: Ben Beseirah said: How do we know that if the *Kohen* separated the *komeitz* with his left hand, he must return the *komeitz* (*into the service vessel*) and separate it with

his right hand? It is because it is written: *from there*; which means - from the place where he had already taken the *komeitz*.

There are some who state that Rabbi Yirmiyah raised the challenge, and answered it himself, whereas others state that Rabbi Akiva said to Rabbi Yirmiyah: Son of Tachlifa! I will explain it to you: The *braisa's* purpose is only to affirm that the entire Courtyard is fit for *kemitzah*; for I might argue as follows: Since an *olah* offering is *kodshei kodashim* and a *minchah* offering is *kodshei kodashim*; just as an *olah* offering requires the north, so does a *minchah* offering require the north. Therefore the Scriptural text informs us otherwise.

The *Gemora* asks: How could we have compared it to an *olah* offering, which is completely burned?

The *Gemora* answers: We can derive it from a *chatas* offering.

The *Gemora* asks: How could we have compared it to a *chatas* offering, which atones for those who are liable to *kares*?

The *Gemora* answers: We can derive it from an *asham* offering.

The *Gemora* asks: How could we have compared it to an *asham* offering, which is a blood sacrifice.

The *Gemora* answers: We derive it from all three of them.

The *Gemora* asks: We could not have learned it from all three of them, because they are blood sacrifices!?

The *Gemora* answers: Rather, the Scriptural text is necessary for the following: I might have thought that since it is written: *And he shall bring it close to the altar...and he shall separate from*

there his *komeitz*. Just as it must be brought near the southwestern corner, so must the *komeitz* be separated by the southwestern corner. Therefore the Scriptural text informs us otherwise. (63a)

### ***Shelamim in the Heichal***

Rabbi Yochanan said: If a *shelamim* offering is slaughtered in the Sanctuary, it is valid, because it is written: *And he shall slaughter it at the entranceway of the Tent of Meeting*; and the secondary cannot be stricter than the principal. [Since it must be slaughtered at the entranceway of the Tent of Meeting, the Tent of Meeting is obviously the primary place for it, while the Courtyard is but a secondary place.]

The *Gemora* challenges this: Rabbi Yehudah ben Besirah said: How do we know that if idolaters surrounded the entire Courtyard (and they were shooting arrows and missiles into it), the *Kohanim* may enter the Sanctuary and eat *kodshei kodashim* there? It is because it is written: In the most holy place shall you eat it. Now, why is this text necessary? Let us apply the same reasoning: since it is written: *In the Courtyard of the Tent of Meeting they shall eat it*, and the secondary cannot be stricter than the principal?

The *Gemora* answers: The cases cannot be compared, for there (in Rabbi Yochanan's case), we are dealing with a service, therefore we can say, "Do not allow the secondary to be stricter than the principal." This is because a man can perform a service in the presence of his master. But regarding eating, where a man would not eat in the presence of his master, we do not say, "Do not allow the secondary to be stricter than the principal." (63a)

### ***Mishna***

The service of a *chatas* bird (*melikah*, sprinkling its blood and squeezing the blood on the side of the altar) was performed by the southwestern corner of the altar. It was valid in any place, but this was its place.

That corner served for three things below, and three things above. The three below: for the *chatas* of the bird, for the bringing close of the *minchah* offerings, and for the remainder of the blood (of the *Outer chatas*); the three above: for the libation of the wine and water, and for the *olah* offering of a bird when there were too many *Kohanim* on the east. All who went up the altar ascended by the right; they then went around the altar and descended by the left, except for these three, who ascended and, afterwards, descended by the same way that they came. (63a – 63b)

### ***Location of the Chatas Bird***

Rabbi Yehoshua cites the Scriptural verse which proves that the *chatas* bird was offered on the southwestern corner of the altar: *He shall put no oil upon it (the minchah of a sotah), neither shall he put any frankincense on it, for it is a chatas offering: a chatas offering is designated as a minchah offering, and a minchah offering is designated as a chatas offering: just as a chatas offering requires the north, so does a minchah offering require the north.* [Rashi maintains that the text is faulty, because a bird *chatas* offering did not require the north, nor did a sinner's *minchah* offering; he emends the text, based upon the *Gemora* in *Menachos 4a* that just as a *chatas* offering is invalid if offered not for its own sake, so is a sinner's *minchah* offering invalid if it was brought not for its own sake.] And just as a *minchah* offering is brought to the southwestern corner of the altar, so is the *chatas* bird offered at the southwestern corner of the altar.

The *Gemora* asks: And how do we know this of the *minchah* offering itself?

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: [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 *Mishna* had stated: The service of the *chatas* bird was valid in any place, but this was its place.

Rav Ashi explains this to mean as follows: Any place is fit for the *melikah*, but this (*the southwestern corner of the altar*) was the place for its sprinkling.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which supports our understanding of the *Mishna*: If he performed its *melikah* on any part of the altar, it is valid; if he sprinkled its blood on any part of the altar, it is valid. [*The Gemora will question this last ruling.*] If he sprinkled it but did not squeeze it out, it is valid, provided that he applies its life blood below the red line.

The *Gemora* explains: If he performed its *melikah* on any part of the altar, it is valid; if he squeezed out the blood at any part of the altar, it is valid, for if he sprinkled but did not squeeze it out at all, it is valid, provided that he applies its life blood below the red line. (63b – 64a)

#### INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

#### *Slope of the Ramps*

Tosfos asks that because of the length of the ramp of the altar, the altar would not be able to be facing the Mishkan. They could not make the ramp shorter because it would make its slope too hard for the *Kohanim* to climb up. But it must face the Mishkan because the coals on the altar for *Yom Kippur* must be *lifnei Hashem*, meaning facing the Mishkan.

Maasei Chosheiv (6, 7) explains that since the ramp of the altar in the Mishkan was probably made of *shittim* wood, it did not have to be as long as the ramp in the Beis HaMikdash which was made of marble, because marble is more slippery than *shittim* wood, therefore a marble ramp needed to be longer, so that its slope should not be too hard for the *Kohanim* to climb up.

Ezras Kohanim (Middos 3,3) suggests that maybe the ramp in the Mishkan did not need to be as long as the one in the Beis HaMikdash because maybe the generation of the Wilderness was stronger than the latter generations and could climb up a ramp that had a greater slope than the one in the Beis HaMikdash.

It is interesting to note that it is not clear what the ramp of the altar in the Mishkan was made out of.

Maasei Chosheiv says that it was probably made of *shittim* wood.

Keren Orah Zevachim 63a says that he does not know what it was made out of.

HaRav Chaim Kanievsky, shlit"א, in his sefer Taama D’Kra on Chumash at the end of Parshas Terumah says that it is possible that the ramp did not have to be made out of any specific material. He says that it could have possibly been made out of sand.

#### *Base all Around*



HaRav Dovid Meyers, author of the fabulous sefer on the construction of the Mishkan, Melech HaMishkan V'Kailav, notes: In the Mishkan the base went completely around the altar, even in the southeast corner. This is in contrast to the second Beis HaMikdash, where there was no base in the southeast corner.

Maasei Chosheiv (6,2) and Olas Shlomo (Zevachim 62a) learn this out from Tosfos (61b) who say regarding the Mishkan that there will not be a base in the southeast corner in the second Beis HaMikdash.

Maasei Chosheiv and Maskil L'Dovid (Shemos 29 12) explain that the reason there was no base in the southeast corner in the second Beis HaMikdash was because the base was only in the portion of Binyomin, and the southeast corner was in the portion of Yehudah. However, since in the Wilderness, the altar was not in anyone's portion, there was no reason that there should not be a base all around.

#### DAILY MASHAL

##### *Ashes of Yitzchak*

The *Gemora* asks: As for the Temple, it is well (*how they knew its location*), for its outline (*through its foundation*) was distinguishable; but how did they know the precise site of the altar?

Rabbi Elozar answered: They saw (*in a vision*) the altar built, and Michael the great officer, standing and offering sacrifices upon it.

Rav Yitzchak Nafcha said: They saw the ashes of Yitzchak lying in that place.

Rabbi Nosson Scherman explains this as follows: Avraham prayed that the sacrifice of the ram be considered as if Yitzchak had remained upon the altar (Bereishis Rabbah 56:14). The plea was not rhetorical. Both Avraham and Yitzchak came with all their hearts to complete the offering. There was no hesitation,

no attempt to seek a reprieve. In every sense except the physical, Avraham did slaughter Yitzchak and burn his remains as an offering. As the commentators note, the purpose of every offering is to demonstrate in a tangible manner that a Jew dedicates all his faculties and resources to G-d and His service. Animals we recreated to serve man. They do so by providing labor, food, hides. When used as an offering, they serve him by being the vehicle to show the owner's complete deference to G-d. Theoretically, it would seem that the best way for someone to prove his devotion would be to sacrifice himself or whomever he loves the most, but a person has no right to demonstrate this awareness by sacrificing himself or another human because every human being comes to earth with a mission and the potential to fulfill it. Were he to become or to offer a human sacrifice, he would fail to serve G-d because genuine service can be done only by utilizing every available mean to carry out His will, not by ending a life that can still make contributions. It is not for us to say when G-d's gift of life should be returned to him.

When an offering is brought with proper intentions, it is truly a substitute for its owner, as if he were declaring that he would mount the Altar himself if that were G-d's will. Forbidden to do so himself, he offers his living possession to represent his own dedication. No human being had ever done this as Yitzchak did. He truly became Avraham's offering. He mounted the Altar and the knife was at his throat. It took a Divine command to gain his release. When he descended the Altar, he was no less an offering than he was when he ascended it. When G-d commanded Avraham to substitute a ram for Yitzchak, it became his substitute in a more tangible way than even the purest ordinary sacrifice because Yitzchak had actually been on the altar. The ashes of the ram were on the altar not only to symbolize Yitzchak's intentions but in place of the real Yitzchak. Thus the ashes of the ram were Yitzchak's ashes in a very real sense (Michtav MeEliyahu).