

25 Tishrei 5779
Oct. 4, 2018



Menachos Daf 55

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How to Measure

The *Gemora* asks from the end of the *braisa* (mentioned above 54b), which states: Rabbi Elozar the son of Rabbi Yosi states that his father would take ten dried figs from the (dried) fig cake to exempt ninety that were in the basket. Now if you hold that we measure the dried figs according to the condition in which they were before, it is well (for then the number of dried figs being taken for *ma’aser* is equal to ten percent of the initial volume of the moist figs); but if you hold that we measure them according to the condition in which it is now, then he is separating too little (for it is less than the required tenth for *terumas ma’aser*)!?

When Rav Dimi came from *Eretz Yisroel*, he said in the name of Rabbi Elozar that the case of the dried figs is different since they can be boiled and then they would be restored to their former condition.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: One may separate *terumas ma’aser* from moist figs for dried figs in a place where it is the custom for figs to be pressed (for then there will be people who will take those moist figs and dry them; this way, they will last until a *Kohen* comes to receive them); but one may not separate *terumas ma’aser* from dried figs for moist figs (for the moist figs are regarded as a superior type of produce, and the law is that one should not separate from inferior produce for the superior ones) even in a place where it is the custom for figs to be pressed. (55a)

If a Kohen is Present

The master stated: One may separate *terumas ma’aser* from moist figs for dried figs in a place where it is the custom for figs to be pressed. It seems that this may be done only where there is this custom, but not where there is no such custom. But what is the circumstance of the case? If there is a *Kohen* present, then why, even where there is no such custom, is this not allowed? Have we not learned in a *Mishna* that wherever there is a *Kohen* present, one separates *terumah* from the choicest produce (even though they might not keep as long)? Obviously then, the *braisa* is referring to a case where there is no *Kohen* present.

However, let us consider the next clause of the *braisa*: But one may not separate *terumas ma’aser* from dried figs for moist figs (for the moist figs are regarded as a superior type of produce, and the law is that one should not separate from inferior produce for the superior ones) even in a place where it is the custom for figs to be pressed. Now, if there is no *Kohen* present, why is one not allowed to do so? Have we not learned in a *Mishna* that where there is no *Kohen* present, one must separate *terumah* from the produce which keeps for longer? Obviously then, the *braisa* is referring to a case where there is a *Kohen* present.

Accordingly, the *Gemora* asks: Must we say then that the *braisa* in the first clause is referring to a case where there is no *Kohen* present. While in the second clause there is a *Kohen* present?

The *Gemora* answers: Yes. In the first clause there is no *Kohen* present, but in the second clause there is a *Kohen* present.

Rav Pappa said: We see from here that when faced with a *Mishna* that teaches two *halachos* (that cannot be resolved unless we say that they are dealing with two different cases or that they were authored by two different *Tannaim*), it is preferable to say that the *Mishna* is dealing with two different cases, rather than say that it was authored by two different *Tannaim*. (55a)

Mishna

All *minchah* offerings are kneaded with lukewarm water and they were watched to ensure that they should not become *chametz*. And if the remnants became *chametz*, he has violated a negative prohibition. This (that one must watch to ensure that they should not become *chametz*) is derived from the verse: *Any minchah that you offer to Hashem shall not be prepared leavened*. And one is liable for the kneading (of a leavened *minchah*), shaping and for the baking. (55a)

Leavening a Minchah

The *Gemora* asks: From where is this derived (that if the remnants became *chametz*, he has violated a negative prohibition)?

Rish Lakish said: It is written *Do not bake them as chametz, their share* etc. This means that even their share should not become *chametz*!

The *Gemora* asks: But is this verse not needed for that which was taught in the following *braisa*: Since it states: *It shall not be made leavened*, I might have thought that one is liable only once for all the preparations involved, the verse therefore states: *It shall not be baked leavened*. Now baking was included in the general prohibition; why did it leave (to be specifically mentioned)? It is to compare all other preparations to it: just as the preparation of baking is singular that it is a specific work (by itself) and one is liable solely on account of it, so I will bring the preparation of kneading and

of shaping and every other act of preparation, including also the preparation of smoothing (*the dough with water*) which is also a distinct preparation, that one is liable on account of each one by itself.

The *Gemora* answers that Rish Lakish derives his *halachah* (regarding the remnants) from the words *their portion* (which is written immediately after 'It shall not be baked leavened').

The *Gemora* notes that from the way the words in the verse are written, we may derive both *halachos* (that there are lashes for each preparatory act, and that the remnants cannot be leavened) from there.

The *Gemora* asks: But perhaps the verse regarding baking is expressly mentioned to teach us that for baking he incurs lashes, but as for the other preparations (such as kneading, smoothing and shaping), one will only incur lashes for transgressing all of them!?

The *Gemora* answers: It is because baking is something that was included in the general prohibition (of preparing a *minchah* leavened), and left the generalization in order to teach us something. In such cases, it did not leave to teach only concerning it; but rather, it left to teach regarding the entire generalization (and therefore we derive that one incurs lashes for each and every preparatory act).

The *Gemora* asks: But perhaps I should say that the verse 'It shall not be made leavened' is a general prohibition, and the verse, 'it shall not be baked leavened' is a specific prohibition; we would have then a generalization followed by a specification, in which case the rule is that the generalization would be limited to the particular specification, so that only the baking is prohibited but no other preparatory act!?

Rabbi Aptoriki said: Here the generalization and the specification are far away from each other, and in every case where the generalization and the specification are far away



from each other, the principle relating to a generalization followed by a specification does not apply. (55a – 55b)

Generalization and Specification

Rav Adda bar Ahavah asked, and according to others, the challenger was not identified: And is it true that where the generalization and the specification are far away from each other, the principle relating to a generalization followed by a specification does not apply? Surely it has been taught in a *braisa*: It is written (*regarding the Nasi's chatas*): *And he shall slaughter it in the place where he would slaughter the olah before Hashem; it is a chatas*. Now where is the *olah* slaughtered? It is on the north side of the Courtyard. This too (*the Nasi's chatas*) is also slaughtered on the north side.

The *braisa* asks: But do we derive this from here? Is it not written: *In the place where the olah is slaughtered the chatas shall be slaughtered?* [*The Nasi's chatas should be included in the rule of all sin offerings!?*] The verse regarding the *Nasi's chatas* serves to teach us that if it was not slaughtered on the north side it is invalid.

The *braisa* asks: Perhaps it is coming to teach us that this *chatas* only must be slaughtered in the north but no other *chatas* requires the north side at all! The text therefore states: *And he shall slaughter the chatas in the place of the olah*; this establishes the rule that all sin offerings must be slaughtered on the north side.

He concludes his question: Now this is so because the Torah wrote '*and he shall slaughter the chatas*,' but without this verse, I would have thought that only the *Nasi's chatas* requires the north side, but no other requires the north side. And why? Is it not because this would be a case of a generalization followed by a specification, and although the two are far away from each other, it would nevertheless be governed by the principle of a generalization followed by a specification!?

Rav Ashi asked (*thus deflecting the above proof*): Is this an instance of a generalization followed by a specification? It is rather a case of a specification followed by a generalization, in which case the generalization extends the scope of the specification, and includes everything (*all sin offerings*)!

Rather, another verse was necessary, for the *Tanna* had a difficulty with the expression '*it*' (*written by the Nasi's chatas*, where it said: *and he shall slaughter it*), and he said as follows: Perhaps only '*it*' (*the Nasi's chatas*) must be slaughtered on the north side, but no other requires the north side, for the Torah wrote '*it*.'

The *Gemora* asks: Now that all *chatas* offerings (*must be slaughtered in the north*) are derived from the verse: *And he shall slaughter the chatas*, what does the term '*it*' exclude?

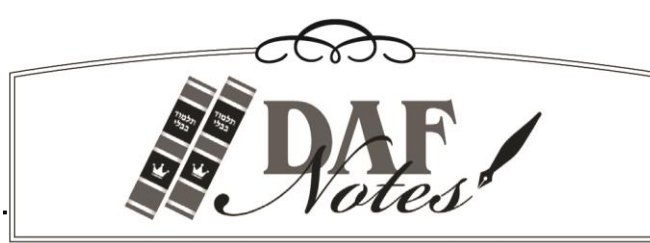
The *Gemora* answers: (*Mnemonic: Nachshon, slaughtered, a bird, on Pesach*) It teaches us that it must be on the north side, but Nachshon's goat (*those that were brought by the Nesi'im during the Tabernacle Inauguration*) was not slaughtered on the north side. For I might have thought that since it was included in the laws of *semichah*, it should also be included in this law; we are therefore taught that it was not so.

And, the *Gemora* asks, from where do we know that *semichah* was required?

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *And he shall lean his hand on the head of the goat*. This includes Nachshon's goat; these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Shimon said: It includes the goats of idolatry. (55b – 56a)

DAILY MASHAL

The Merit of Yitzchak's Ashes



Shulchan 'Aruch (O.C. 1:8) writes: "When reciting the *korbanos* he should say the verse, "he will slaughter it at the side of the altar to the north before Hashem." The reason for saying the verse stems from the Midrash (Vayikra Rabah, *parashah* 2, os 11) which says "when the Jews would offer the *tamid* on the altar and recite 'to the north before Hashem,' the Holy One, blessed be He, remembers the sacrifice of Yitzchak." The Midrash adds that whenever someone cites this verse, Hashem remembers the sacrifice of Yitzchak (*Beer HaGolah*, based on the Rishonim). Of course, these matters are hidden and lofty but as we say this verse each day, we should examine its connection to the *'akeidah*.

The Midrash says that Yitzchak's ashes – the ashes of the ram offered in his stead – are hidden in Mount Moriah. HaGaon Rav Meir Simchah of Dvinsk zt"l writes (*Meshech Chochmah*, Vayikra 1:10) that this means that since Avraham's devoted self-sacrifice, freedom of choice has almost disappeared from the Jews because of the path and direction that he paved and opened for us. Therefore, Yitzchak's ashes are hidden (*tzafun*) before Him, from the term *ruach tzafon* – the north direction, which is the most open and unobstructed. As a result, he explains, we were commanded to slaughter to the north of the altar and thus remind Hashem of Yitzchak's ashes, which eliminate impediments and direct our devotion to Him. According to this explanation, we can somewhat understand the Midrash, that when someone cites the verse "to the north before Hashem", Hashem remembers Yitzchak's sacrifice.

In this way he continues to explain that the Torah only mentions the north side in the second paragraph of *Vayikra* dealing with an *'olah* from *tzon* - sheep or goats, because Yitzchak's ashes were from a ram! Thus it is fitting to mention *tzafon* by a type of sacrifice resembling that offered instead of Yitzchak. This is also the reason that the *Gemora* asserts that an *'olah* from a bird is not slaughtered to the north, giving the reason as being that a sheep or a goat is slaughtered with a *keli* (utensil) and a bird with a fingernail. As the slaughtering to the north is intended to be a reminder

of Yitzchak's ashes and as the *halachah* that one must slaughter with a *keli* is also learned from Yitzchak's sacrifice – as we are told: "...and he took the knife (*maacheles*)" (*Zevachim* 97b), the bird, which is not slaughtered with a knife, does not remind us of Yitzchak's ashes.

Meshech Chochmah (Bemidbar 7:12) also mentions the commentary of Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra, who explains that the sacrifices were slaughtered to the north of the altar because *kodshei kodoshim* are regarded as being brought on a table before Hashem. Therefore, they should be slaughtered in alignment with the *shulchan* and the showbread placed on the north side of the *Heichal*. *Meshech Chochmah* writes that this explanation is "very sweet" (and see *ibid* as to what he explains accordingly).

GLOSSARY

ma'aser - a tenth of one's produce that is given to the Levite

terumas ma'aser - the Levite takes one tenth of his *ma'aser* received, and gives it to the Kohen; it has the sanctity of *terumah*

Terumah – the separation of a certain amount of produce which is then given to a *Kohen*

minchah – meal offering

chametz - leavened

chatas – sin offering

semichah - the owner places his hands on the head of the sacrificial animal before it is slaughtered and leans on it with all his weight