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Chonyo Temple

The *Mishna* had stated: and it is unnecessary to state that *Kohanim* who served idolatry are disqualified from serving in the Holy Temple.

The *Gemora* infers from there that the temple of Chonyo was not an idolatrous shrine. Our *Tanna* is in accordance with the view of the one who said that the temple of Chonyo was not an idolatrous shrine. For it was taught in a *braisa*: In the year in which Shimon the Righteous died, he told them that he would die. They said to him, “How do you know this?” He replied, “Every *Yom Kippur* there appeared to me an old man, dressed in white and wrapped in white, who entered with me into the Holy of Holies and left with me; but this year, there appeared to me an old man, dressed in black and wrapped in black, who entered with me but did not leave with me.” After the Festival (*of Sukkos*) he was ill for seven days and then died. From then on, his brethren the *Kohanim* refrained to pronounce the Name in the Priestly blessing (*they would not use the Ineffable Name*).

In the time of his passing, he said to them, “My son Chonyo shall assume the position of *Kohen Gadol* after me.” His brother Shimi, who was two and a half years older than him, was jealous of him and said to him, “Come and I will teach you the order of the (*inaugurating – Tosfos*) Temple service. He dressed him with a leather blouse and girded him with a sash (*which both were women’s clothing*), placed him near the Altar, and said to his brethren the *Kohanim*, “See what this man vowed to his beloved (*his wife*) and has now

fulfilled: ‘On the day in which I will assume the position of *Kohen Gadol*, I will put on your blouse and gird myself with your sash.’” Because of this, his brethren the *Kohanim* (*who believed Shimi’s story*) sought to kill Chonyo. He fled from them but they pursued him. He then went to Alexandria in Egypt, built an altar there, and offered sacrifices on it in for the sake of idols. When the Sages heard of this they said: If this person (*Shimi*) who had never assumed such a position could be so jealous (*to devise such a plan*); how much more so regarding one who had once assumed a position of prominence (*we should be careful about removing him*)! This is the opinion (*of the incident*) according to Rabbi Meir.

Rabbi Yehudah said to him: That was not what happened. Chonyo did not accept the position of *Kohen Gadol* because his brother Shimi was two and a half years older than him. Nevertheless, Chonyo was jealous of his brother Shimi and he said to him, “Come and I will teach you the order of the (*inaugurating – Tosfos*) Temple service. He dressed him with a leather blouse and girded him with a sash (*which both were women’s clothing*), placed him near the Altar, and said to his brethren the *Kohanim*, “See what this man vowed to his beloved (*his wife*) and has now fulfilled: ‘On the day in which I will assume the position of *Kohen Gadol*, I will put on your blouse and gird myself with your sash.’” Because of this, his brethren the *Kohanim* (*who believed Chonyo’s story*) sought to kill Shimi. Shimi explained to them all that occurred. They (*after careful investigation*) sought to kill Chonyo. He fled from them but they pursued him. He fled to the King’s palace, but they pursued him there; and whoever saw him cried out, “There he is, there he is!” He then went to Alexandria in Egypt, built an altar there, and offered sacrifices on it in for

the sake of Hashem, for it is written: *On that day, there will be an altar to Hashem in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border dedicated to Hashem.* When the Sages heard of this they said: If this person (*Chonyo*) who at first ran away from such a position (*could devise such a plan out of jealousy*); how much more so regarding one who seeks out a position of prominence!

It was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Perachyah said: At first (*before I was appointed the Nasi*), whoever would have said to me, "Take up the position (of *Nasi*)," I would have bound him and put him in front of a lion; but now, whoever would say to me, "Step down from the position," I would pour a kettle of hot water on him. Proof to this is from Shaul, who initially (*when Shmuel wanted to anoint him as king*) ran away from it, but after he had taken the position, he sought to kill David (*when Shmuel told him to give up the throne to Dovid*).

Mar Kashisha the son of Rav Chisda said to Abaye: How does Rabbi Meir interpret Rabbi Yehudah's verse (which he used to prove that the altar was used for the sake of Hashem)?

He answers that it was used for that which was taught in the following *braisa*: After the downfall of Sancheriv, Chizkiyah went out and found princes sitting in golden carriages. He made them vow that they would not serve idols (*and then allowed them to live*), as it is written: *On that day, there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan (Hebrew) and that swear by Hashem's Name, the Master of Legions.* They then went to Alexandria in Egypt, built an altar there, and offered on it sacrifices for the sake of Hashem, as it is written: *On that day, there will be an altar to Hashem in the midst of the land of Egypt.*

It is written: *Bring My sons from afar, and My daughters from the ends of the earth.* *Bring My sons from afar*: Rav Huna explains: These are referring to the exiles in Babylon, who are calm and at ease – similar to sons. *And My daughters from the ends of the earth*: These are referring to the exiles of

other lands, who are not calm and not at ease – similar to daughters.

Rabbi Abba bar Rav Yitzchak said in the name of Rav Chisda, and others say, Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: From Tzor (*a city located on the Western part of Eretz Yisroel*) to Cartiginy (*a city located on the Eastern part of Eretz Yisroel*) the gentiles know Israel and their Father Who is in heaven; but from Tzor westwards and from Cartiginy eastwards the gentiles know neither Israel nor their Father Who is in heaven.

Rav Shimi bar Chiya raised the following objection against Rav: Is it not written: *For from the rising of the sun to its setting, My name is great among the nations; and in every place offerings are burned and presented for My sake, and also a pure minchah!?*

He replied: You, Shimi (*ask such a question!*)? I merely meant that (*beyond those areas*) they call Him the God of gods (*but He does not actively intervene in worldly matters; He appoints others to manage the world; inside of those areas, however, they understand that He takes care of the entire world*).

And in every place offerings are burned and presented for My sake. The *Gemora* asks: Can it mean 'in every place'? [*Why – it is only permitted to offer sacrifices in the Beis Hamikdash!?*]

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rabbi Yonasan. This refers to the Torah scholars who devote themselves to the study of the Torah in every place. Hashem regards them as though they burned and presented offerings in His Name.

And also a pure minchah: This refers to one who studies Torah in purity; that is - one who marries a wife (*so he will not be occupied with improper thoughts*) and afterwards studies the Torah.

It is written: *A song of ascents. Behold, bless Hashem, all you servants of Hashem, who stand in the House of Hashem in the nights.*

Rabbi Yochanan said: The 'nights' refer to the Torah scholars who occupy themselves with the study of the Torah at nights. The Torah regards them as though they were occupied with the Temple service.

Rav Gidel said in the name of Rav: The verse which seems to say that sacrifices will continue forever (even at a time when there is no Temple) refers to the Altar built in heaven, where Michael, the Great Angel, stands and offers up an offering on it.

Rabbi Yochanan said: It refers to the Torah scholars who are occupied with studying the laws of the Temple service. The Torah regards them as though the Temple were built in their days.

It is written: *This is the law for the olah, for the minchah, for the chatas and for the asham.* Rish Lakish said: This teaches us that whoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah is as though he were offering an *olah*, a *minchah*, a *chatas* and an *asham*.

Rava explains it as follows: Whoever occupies himself with the study of the Torah does not need an *olah*, *minchah*, *chatas* or *asham*.

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Whoever occupies himself with the study of the laws of the *chatas* is as though he were offering a *chatas*, and whoever occupies himself with the study of the laws of the *asham* is as though he were offering an *asham*. (109b – 110a)

Mishna

It is said of the animal *olah* – a fire offering, a pleasing aroma. It is said by a bird *olah* – a fire offering, a pleasing aroma. It is said of the *minchah* – a fire offering, a pleasing aroma. This teaches us you that it is the same (*pleasing to Hashem*) - whether a man offers a lot or a little, so long as he directs his Heart to his Father in heaven. (110a)

Directing One's Heart

The *Gemora* cites Scriptural verses as the source which teaches us that it is the same - whether a man offers a lot or a little, so long as he directs his Heart to his Father in heaven.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rabbi Shimon ben Azzai said: Come and see what is written in the passages regarding the sacrifices. Neither the Divine Name of 'Kel' or 'Elokim' is found there, but only Hashem. This is in order not to give a disputant any excuse to argue (*that there are different Divine powers, and different offerings correspond to different powers*).

Furthermore, it is said of a large ox, 'a fire offering, a pleasing aroma'; of a small bird, 'a fire offering, a pleasing aroma'; and of a *minchah*, 'a fire offering, a pleasing aroma': This teaches us you that it is the same (*pleasing to Hashem*) - whether a man offers a lot or a little, so long as he directs his Heart to his Father in heaven. And Scriptural verses are cited to show that He does not need the sacrifices for eating; but rather, it is for your benefit (*to fulfill Hashem's mitzvos and for atonement*) that you offer these sacrifices.

Another interpretation is that you shall sacrifice it with the proper intention.

As Shmuel once inquired of Rav Huna: How do we know that if someone slaughters a sacrifice while preoccupied with other things, the sacrifice is invalid?



Rav Huna answered: This is as the verse states: *And he will slaughter the cattle before Hashem*. This implies that the slaughtering must be done with intent to be a *korban*.

Shmuel asked: We knew this derivation indicates that it is preferable to do so. How do we know that this means the *korban* is invalid if he does not does so?

Rav Huna answered: The verse states: *You should sacrifice it for your will*. This indicates that you must have intent to sacrifice. (110a)

**WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU,
HAREI ALAI ISSARON
AND TRACTATE MENACHOS
IS CONCLUDED**

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Anyone who learns about the chatas is as though he sacrificed it

With the conclusion of Menachos the *Gemora* teaches us: “Rabbi Yitzchak said, “...Anyone who learns about the *chatas* is as though he sacrificed it and anyone who learns about the *asham* is as though he sacrificed an *asham*.”

The Tur wrote (*O.C. 1*) that one had well say the *parshah* of the sacrifices every day and after saying the verses of the sacrifice one should say “May it be Your will” that saying the verses should be accepted as though the sacrifice were offered (see an expansion of this topic in the article “The parallel between saying *korbanos* and offering sacrifices” in Vol. 224).

Temporary atonement: Many *sugyos* indicate that even one who says the *parshyos* of the sacrifices devotedly does not

become exempt from the obligation of his sacrifice and when the Temple will be built, he must offer them. Saying *korbanos* is temporary atonement, “**as though** he offered”, but he is surely not exempt from the Torah’s obligation (*Responsa Har Tzvi, O.C. 1; Bnei Yisaschar, Maamar Rosh Chodesh, maamar 2, os 8; Responsa Torah Shleimah, 120; and see Kemetzei Shalal Rav, parshas Tzav*).

Apropos, as we approach the end of Menachos, we mention two augmentive tidbits to explain Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha’s famous words when once, on Shabbos, he tilted a light unintentionally and wrote down “I, Yishmael ben Elisha, read and tilted a light on Shabbos; when the Temple will be built, I’ll bring a fat *chatas*” (*Shabbos 12b*). Why wasn’t he satisfied with reading the *parashah* of the *chatas*?

Saying *korbanos* lacks the advantage of the kohanim’s eating: The author of *Yeshu’os Ya’akov (O.C. 1)* wrote in the name of the Rishonim that as the atonement of the *chatas* is also achieved by the kohanim’s eating – “kohanim eat and the owners are atoned” (*Pesachim 59b*) – hence by saying the verses of the *chatas* we do not achieve that same level accomplished by offering the sacrifice. This is also the reason, he adds, that Rabbi Yishmael undertook a **fat *chatas*** – to emphasize the inability to make up for the kohanim’s part by saying the verses.

By saying the verses we do not achieve the advantage of an embellished sacrifice: Rabbi Yitzchak Shvadron, the Maharsham’s son, solved this question in the following manner (in the preface to *Responsa Maharsham, II, os 32*). A few times we have already cited the halachah mentioned by Rambam (*Hilchos Isurei Mizbeiach 1:1*): “It is a positive mitzvah that all the sacrifices should be perfect and choice, as we are told: „It should be perfect for a good will“. This is a positive mitzvah.” It is obvious that though saying the verses of the sacrifices is considered like offering them, it can never achieve the level of observing the mitzvah with

embellishment such as offering a fat sacrifice. This is what Rabbi Yishmael meant when he said “I’ll bring a **fat chatas.**”

Still, saying the verses of the sacrifices has advantages over their being offered. The first is if a person has a doubt as to if he committed a transgression unintentionally, he is forbidden to bring a sacrifice because of the doubt but he may say the appropriate verses and that is considered his atonement (Responsa *Har Tzvi*, *ibid*; see *ibid*, that he proves so from the Tur).

Saying *korbanos* atones for intentional sins: The *Bnei Yisachar* of Dinov zt”l tells of the second advantage (in the preface to his *Derech Pikudecha*, preface 5, *os* 8; cf Rabeinu Yonah to *Rif*, *Berachos* 3a, s.v. *kivan*), that saying *korbanos* can atone for intentional sins! This is based on Chazal’s statement (Taanis 27a, etc.) that Avraham said, “*Ribono shel ‘olam...when there’s no Temple what will be with them?*” He told him, “I already arranged the order of *korbanos*. When they read them before Me, I attribute to them as though they offered them and forgive them **all their sins** (*‘avonoseihem*).” An *‘avon* is an intentional sin. We thus see that learning the verses of the sacrifices can ease atonement for intentional sins (*Kemotzei Shalal Rav*, *ibid*).

Hadran Aloch Maseches Menachos. We shall review it and learn about the sacrifices to atone for us before Hashem.

DAILY MASHAL

Korbanos!

It is told about HaGaon Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach zt”l (*Halichos Shlomo*, I, Ch. 6, remarks 20 and 24) that he took care to come ten minutes before the start of prayers to say *birchos hashachar* and *korbanos* patiently and pleasantly. He told to those who asked to at least be careful to say the *parshah* of the *tamid* and the *ketores* (incense). If he didn’t

say them before prayers, it is fitting to say the *parshah* of the *tamid* after prayers but not the *ketores* as they already said it at the end of the prayer. He was unsatisfied that people were careless about saying *korbanos* and would urge his pupils to heed such and in *cheider* the pupils should be taught to say at least part of *korbanos*.