

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Identifying the author of the Mishnah (cont.)

R' Yishmael's exposition quoted in the Baraisa is challenged.

The Gemara explains the rationale behind R' Yishmael's opinion and R' Akiva's response to that exposition.

The exchange between R' Yishmael and R' Akiva regarding their respective derivations is recorded.

2) Utensils used to serve an idol

R' Hamnuna inquires about the halacha of one who repaired a utensil for the sake of idolatry.

After the Gemara identifies the intent of this inquiry it is left unresolved.

3) Food offered to an idol

R' Yochanan asked whether food offered to an idol could be nullified.

After discussing alternate ways this question could be presented the inquiry is left unresolved.

4) Chonyo's temple

R' Yosi ben Shaul inquired about the status of utensils used for service in Chonyo's temple.

After the inquiry is clarified Rebbi responds that the utensils are prohibited.

Rebbi's position is unsuccessfully challenged.

A Baraisa is cited in support of Rebbi's position.

R' Pappa rejects the proof from the Baraisa.

The Gemara digresses to discuss the stones of the altar that had been defiled.

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REVIEW and Remember

1. How does R' Yishmael know that the idol of a Jew becomes prohibited immediately?

2. How does the Gemara understand the intent of R' Hamnuna's inquiry?

3. What was בית חוניו?

4. What teaching of Rebbi changed from the time he was young to the time that he was older?

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לזכר נשמת

הרב הקדוש רבי אלימלך בן הרב הקדוש רבי אליעזר ליפמאן זצלה"ה
 מליזענסק

Distinctive INSIGHT

The fallacy of the Asheira tree

כל המעמיד דיין שאינו הגון כאילו נוטע אשרה בישראל שנאמר שופטים ושוטרים תתן לך בכל שעריך, וסמך ליה לא תטע לך אשרה כל עץ

The bringing of offerings occupies a major place in the Torah, with the offerings even being referred to as "the fire-offering food" of Hashem. (see Bamidbar 28:2) Nevertheless, Hashem is obviously not in need of any nourishment, and these offerings do not contribute any benefit to Hashem's existence. Rather, these offerings are meant to aid in man's advancement in spirituality and to allow him to come closer to Hashem. The prophets reinforce this idea in many places. For example, we find in Iyov (35:7): "If you were righteous, what have you given Him, or what has He taken from your hand?", and in Micha (6:7): "Will Hashem be appeased by thousands of rams or with tens of thousands of streams of oil?"

In his Meshech Chochmah, R' Meir Simcha of Dvinsk explains that among the fallacies of idol worship is the erroneous way in which its worshipers relate to their deities. The pagans look upon their god as a force which craves strength and power in order to appease its anger and to be recognized as supreme. The offerings and sacrifices which are demanded from its adherents are therefore designed to feed this unending hunger and yearning for power. For example, the worshipers are expected to offer the blood of their own children to satiate the desires of the gods. The pagan concept is that the god has an appetite which must be fed. The worshiper supplies this need, and the god grows from it, just as a plant grows when nourished.

Common objects can be categorized as either mineral, plant, animal, or human. The Torah expresses the comparison of idolatry with plants by typifying the worship of avodah zarah in the form of the asheira - a tree used for idol worship. When we are told not to plant a tree next to the altar of Hashem in the Beis HaMikdash, we are being taught that this concept of god as a force which is glorified the more it is fed is foreign. Hashem is unchanging. He does not benefit from our actions. Rather, the opposite is true. It is we who need to come close to Hashem for our own benefit. In fact, the altar itself, upon which we bring our offerings, is made of stone, a material which neither consumes nor does it grow. It is static and unyielding, thus representing the idea that our worship is not to benefit Hashem, Who is perfect and complete. Hashem has no appetite, nor does He possess anger which demands to be placated. The service of Hashem sustains the one who worships, as he develops a bond with the spiritual realm which nourishes his soul. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Using linen stolen by grave-robbers

בקשו לגנוז כל כסף וזהב שבעולם משום כספא ודהבא של ירושלים
They sought to prohibit all the silver and gold in the world because of the silver and gold of Yerushalayim

It happened once that a person purchased pieces of linen cloth from a gentile only to discover that the pieces of linen were taken from the shrouds of corpses. The gentile had dug up a number of graves and had stolen the linen shrouds. The buyer inquired of the author of Teshuvos Yad Eliyahu¹ whether he is permitted to benefit from these pieces of linen cloth. Yad Eliyahu answered that it is clear that the gentile grave-robber did not acquire these pieces of cloth due to the fact that the owner gave up hope of recovering their property (יאוש) and that the items were physically altered since in the case of burial shrouds how could one assert that the owner gave up hope of recovering his property? Consequently, what would be the basis to permit using property that belongs to another?

He then suggests that grounds for leniency could be found in our Gemara. R' Oshaya relates that there was a thought to prohibit the use of certain coins out of concern that the gold came from the Beis Hamikdash and was sacred. The reason they did not follow through with this thought was due to an exposition that was found that permits the coins. The verse states, "And lawless people came into it and profaned it." This

(Overview...continued from page 1)
 5) MISHNAH: Some of the parameters of nullifying an idol are discussed.

6) Nullifying the idol of a Jew

R' Shimon noted to his father, Rebbi, that he used to teach that an idolater could nullify the idol of a Jew but now he teaches that an idolater cannot nullify the idol of a Jew.

The Gemara explains the circumstance in which it is possible to nullify the idol of a Jew.

Rebbi's thinking concerning his initial position and latter position is explained.

The Gemara relates a second context in which it was taught that an idolater can nullify the idol of a Jew. ■

verse teaches that the sacred gold of the Beis Hamikdash lost its sacred status, not because the gentiles acquired the gold because the Jews abandoned hope of recovering the gold; rather it lost its sacred status simply because it was taken by the gentiles who destroyed the Beis Hamikdash. Similarly, one could argue that as soon as the grave-robber removed the shrouds from the graves they lost their status as being objects that are prohibited from benefit since a "lawless person came and profaned it" and it would be permitted to derive benefit from the pieces of linen. He ultimately rejects this approach citing differences between sacred property and property that is prohibited because it was used to bury a corpse. ■

1. שו"ת יד אליהו סי' נ' ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Restoring the Altar

גנוזו בית חשוננאי את אבני המזבח ... ובאו פריצים וחללוהו

Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l, once explained that the custom in Israel to eat doughnuts on Chanukah is based on a statement on today's daf. "We find in Avodah Zarah 52 that when the Chashmonaim rededicated the Beis HaMikdash, they found stones of the altar which the Greeks had defiled and were unsure how to purify them. So they were forced to hide the stones.

"Each Chanukah we beseech Hashem to rectify the damage done specifically to the altar by the Greeks before they were defeated. Doughnuts require

an על המחיה, unlike latkes. This is the preferable oily food to eat, since it includes a prayer that Hashem restore His altar.

"As far as why we pray about the altar specifically in the brochah mei'ein shalosh, Rav Moshe Leib Shachor, zt"l, explained that this is based on the Mishnah at the end of Sotah. There we find that when the sanctuary was destroyed the taste was taken away from produce. It follows that the blessing on the seven species specifically contains a request to restore the mikdash so that the full and proper taste will also return to the fruits of the land."¹

The Ramah MiPano, zt"l, learns a very powerful lesson from the continuation of the same Gemara. "We see in Avodah Zarah that the pritzim came and profaned the sanctuary, literally made it

חול. This teaches that even when non-Jews come to destroy the mikdash, the holiness retreated and ascended on high. It follows that those who hate us do not have any mastery over the essence of the Beis HaMikdash."

The Komarna Rebbe expands on this same theme. "This explains why we do not fast on the tenth of Av when the Beis HaMikdash was actually burned. Once the non-Jews set fire to the structure and the holiness ascended, the main mourning is already finished, since what they actually burned was merely the physical shell. The true tragedy was that the holiness ascended, which allowed the non-Jews to physically burn what remained. This is what occurred on the ninth of Av, and this is when we fast"² ■

1. הליכות שלמה

2. מעשה אורג מעשר שני פ"ג משנה ה'