

The Weekly Daf



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Pesachim 58-64

Week of 22 - 28 Tishrei 5759 / 12 - 18 October 1998
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Still My Sacrifice

If one slaughters the Pesach sacrifice while he is in possession of *chametz*, he has violated the Torah prohibition of "You shall not slaughter, upon *chametz*, the blood of My sacrifices." (*Shmos* 34:25)

What is the status of this sacrifice? Does the fact that a sin was involved in its slaughter disqualify it?

There is no explicit ruling on this in our *gemara*, but Tosefos cites a *tosefta* to the effect that the sacrifice is valid, and the offending slaughterer thereby fulfills his obligation to offer a Pesach sacrifice.

Tosefos here quotes the Riva who explains that the sacrifice is kosher because the Torah does not reiterate the ban on slaughtering it while possessing *chametz*; the general rule in sacrificial matters is that where such reiteration is absent, the sacrifice is *post facto* kosher. But Tosefos elsewhere (*Temura* 4b) cites an interpretation found in the Jerusalem Talmud. There the Sage Chizkiya explains that Hashem's reference to the sacrifice as "My sacrifice" even after it has been slaughtered upon *chametz*, indicates that the sacrifice is still valid.

One of the commentaries makes an interesting observation regarding this interpretation. Why does Chizkiya assume that the term "My sacrifice" means that it is still a valid sacrifice? Perhaps it refers to what was *intended* as a sacrifice but which was disqualified because of the sinful slaughtering?

The secret lies in the unusual structure of the aforementioned passage. In order to communicate the prohibition, the verse should have read "You shall not slaughter the blood of My sacrifice on *chametz*." Why were the terms "My sacrifice" and "*chametz*" so interposed if not to inform us that even after the "*chametz*" violation has taken place, it still remains "My sacrifice."

Pesachim 63a

Relying on a Miracle

The slaughtering of the Pesach sacrifice in the *Beis Hamikdash*, says the *mishna*, had to be done in three shifts. After the Temple courtyard was filled with Jews bringing their sacrifices, the gates closed and the sacrificial process began.

Who closed these doors and when?

The Sage Abaye says that no human effort was made to close the gates; people were permitted to enter through them until they miraculously closed by themselves. The Sage Rava, on the other hand, contends that such a policy could have led to all the people entering at once, thus rendering it impossible to divide them into three shifts as the Torah insists. His understanding therefore is that when the *kohanim* evaluated that there would not be enough people to form a second and third shift, they took the initiative of closing the gates on the earlier shifts.

The *gemara* explains their dispute: Abaye's opinion is that it was proper to rely on the miracle that the gates would close on their own while Rava's view is that they did not rely on such a miracle.

We are aware, asks *Iyun Yaakov*, that in human affairs there is a hard and fast rule that we trust in Hashem but do not rely on miracles. Why should Abaye hold that in this case it was proper to rely on a miracle?

Two solutions are proposed. One is that an entire community performing a mitzvah has sufficient merit to rely on a miracle. The second is that the *Beis Hamikdash* was the site of so many regular miracles (see *Pirkei Avos* 5:10 re: the ten miracles which attended our ancestors in the *Beis Hamikdash*) that it was reasonable to rely on the miracle of automatically closing gates as well.

Pesachim 64b

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