



Adapted from the sefer **חמין במוצאי שבת** and **דעותא דזעיר אנפין** collections of maamarim given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Naso 5764

In this week's portion of *Tana D'vei Eliyahu* we learn:

“When *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* told *Adam*, **וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדָּר תִּצְמִיחַ לְךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ אֶת עֵשֶׂב**, **וְהַשָּׂדֶה** - and thorns and thistles will grow for you and you will eat the grass of the fields, all of his limbs shook. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* said to him, ‘Since your limbs shook, you will eat bread, as it says, **בְּזַעַת אֶפְיֶךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם** - by the sweat of your brow will you eat bread.’” (בראשית ג:י"ח)

In *Maseches Pesachim*, this is related differently.

“R. Yehoshua ben Levi said. ‘When *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* told *Adam* **וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדָּר תִּצְמִיחַ לְךָ** his eyes shed tears. He said before Him, *Ribono Shel Olam*, will I and my donkey eat from the same feedbag? Once Hashem told him **בְּזַעַת אֶפְיֶךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם** he was relieved.

The concept of “I and my donkey eating from the same feedbag”, also appears in the *Parsha* of the *Sotah* in *Parshas Hashavua*. The Torah commands the *Sotah* to bring a very unusual *korban*.

והביא את קרבנה עליה עשירת האיפה קמח שערים לא יצק עליו שמן ולא יתן עליו לבנה כי מנחת קנאת הוא מנחת זכרון מזכרת עון.

In the *Mishna* (סוטה י"ד.) *Chazal* teach us:

“All *Menachos* come from wheat, but this comes from barley. Raban Gamliel says, ‘Just as her deeds were animalistic, so too her *korban* is of animal food.’”



[1]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבתורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortna@gmail.com

This demonstrates that when a person sins and descends to the level of animals, he and his donkey eat barley, the food of animals, from the same feedbag.

However, these statement of *Chazal* must be reconciled with the fact that the *Mincha* isn't eaten by the *Sotah*, but rather by the *kohanim*! As the Rambam writes

“...After she drinks, he takes the vessel that contains the *Mincha*...takes the *kometz* and burns it on the *mizbeach* and the rest is eaten by the *kohanim*.” (סוטה ג:ט"ו)

Why were the *kohanim*, who have been dedicated to perform the *avoda* with the highest levels of *kedusha*, required to eat barley, the food of animals? They had no connection to the misdeeds of the *Sotah* who brings the *korban*.

A similar question can be asked about the statement of *Chazal* in the beginning of *Maseches Sotah* (.ב):

“*Tanya*, Rabbi said, why is the *parsha* of *Nazir* adjacent to that of *Sotah*? It is to teach you, that whoever sees a *Sotah* in her degradation should take an oath of *nezirus* to separate himself from wine”

The *Shita Mekubetzes* explains that after one sees that her drinking the water leads to horrifying physical punishment, there is no longer any doubt that she committed adultery. This realization leads him to undertake *nezirus*, out of fear that wine may cause him to sin”

The scenario is that a man prepared himself with *kedusha* and *tahara* before coming to the *Beis Hamikdash* in order to bring a *Korban Toda* or *Shelamim*. It happens to be that he arrives on a day when a *Sotah* undergoes the process of drinking the *Mei Sotah*. He sees the terrible consequences of the *aveira*, but he had nothing to do with her or her



[2]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבתורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortolna@gmail.com

misdeeds. Why should he feel the need to undertake *nezirus* and refrain from drinking wine?

The explanation is based on a fundamental principle taught by my ancestor the *Baal Shem Tov, zy" a*.

(As brought in the *Toldos Yaakov Yosef* (פרשת לך לך ועוד)

“I heard from my master that if a person happens to see or hear of someone committing an *aveira*, he should understand that some aspect of that *aveira* exists in him, and he should be moved to perform the *tikun* necessary to repair himself.”

The *Sefer Sifsei Tzadikim* (פר' וירא, תורי זהב פר' פנחס) elaborates:

“The *Baal Shem Tov zy" a* said that it isn't possible for a Jew to see another committing an *aveira* unless he has within him an aspect of that *aveira* or something similar to that *aveira*. For example, if he sees that someone had relations with a married woman, it is quite likely that he is guilty of something related, i.e. *gaava* - arrogance. For *Chazal* said (סוטה ד.) - If one is arrogant, it is as if he had relations with a married woman. Or, if he saw someone worshipping *avoda zara*, it is likely that he has an aspect of that, i.e. anger. For *Chazal* said, (זוה"ק ח"א כ"ז:) If one gets angry, it is as if he served *avoda zara*.

This applies to all *aveiros* that a person may witness. This transgression is shown to him *min hashamayim* so that he will remember and do *teshuva*.”

We can now return to the case of the *Sotah*. *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*, who arranges all that takes place, ensured that certain *kohanim* from that particular *mishmar* and *beis av* would be in the *Beis Hamikdash* at the exact time that the *Sotah* arrived. The same applies to each and every Jew who came to the *Beis Hamikdash* that day to bring a *korban*. They were brought there by *hashgacha pratis* in order to witness the degradation of the *Sotah*.



[3]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבתורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortolna@gmail.com

They are supposed to realize that it wasn't a coincidence that they witnessed the punishment of the *Sotah*. It should be clear to them that they must devote time and energy to introspection in order to determine what hidden flaw in their inner world relates to the sin of the *Sotah*. If that flaw didn't exist, Hashem wouldn't have arranged for them to be there at that particular moment. This will lead them to *teshuva shleima*.

We can now understand why the *kohen* who performed the *avoda* on that day had to eat the *Korban Mincha* of barley that was brought by the *Sotah*. It must be that he is also afflicted by a spiritual shortcoming that is related to the sin of the *Sotah*. Therefore, he must eat barley, the fodder of livestock.

There is another way to understand the *kohen's* obligation to eat the *Sotah's Korban Mincha* of barley. The Torah wants him to have empathy for the pain and suffering of even the most pitiful and distant *neshamos* who have descended to the depths of depravity. He is meant to develop the *midos* of his Creator that are revealed in the *pasuk* (ויקרא ט"ז:ט"ז) - השכן אתם בתוך טמאתם (ויקרא ט"ז:ט"ז) - who dwells with them in the midst of their *tumah*. He must sense their pain and the pain of their *neshamos*. For this is pain that is meant to lead them to *teshuva*, *kappara*, and a future of hope and *shalom*.

We must all internalize this lesson. If *min hashamayim*, it has been arranged for us to see anything negative, it means that we have to fix our own behavior, whether regarding that specific sin or its equivalent. Then, rather than such encounters leading us to look down on others, we will view them as a mirror that displays our own shortcomings. Taking an honest look at ourselves will enable us to be *melamed zchus*, to find ways to judge even sinners favorably.

ונזכה שגם עלינו ילמדו זכות משמי השמים אכי"ר



[4]

© כל הזכויות שמורות למכון 'המאור שבתורה' שע"י מוסדות טאלנא עיה"ק ירושלים תובב"א

The editor is solely responsible for any mistakes and omissions

If you would like to be added to our mailing list, or for any comments, please email us at

hamaortolna@gmail.com