



Volume 5. Issue 34

Introduction to Meilah

The prohibition of *meilah* corresponds to the prohibition against using property sanctified for the *Beit Ha'Mikdash* for personal benefit.

The scriptural source for this prohibition appears in *parshat Vayikra* (5:15). On this *pasuk* Rav Shimshon Rephael Hirsch notes that the word “*ma'al*” (the act of *meilah*) and the word coat, “*me'il*”, share the same root (*shoresh*). He identifies a similar connection between the words treachery, “*bagad*”, and clothing, “*beget*” which also have a common root.

In understanding these associations, Rav Hirsch explains that clothing can serve as a representation of a person's character. By the same token, clothing can also conceal a sinister ulterior motive by displaying a façade. The prohibition of *meilah* underscores an abandonment of the values of sanctity and holiness in the pursuit of physical desire, blanketed by a cover of innocence. The act of *meilah* is a major divergence of the standard of behaviour expected from a person sanctifying his property.

The concept represented by the prohibition of *meilah* is not exclusive to this behaviour in the context of sanctified articles. Later in *parshat Vayikra* (5:21), the term “*ma'al*” appears in the matter of commercial deceit. Rav Hirsch extends on the idea of *meilah* that even in a commercial context, improper dealings constitutes *meilah*, as “*Hashem* is present to oversee the fairness of the

dealing”. Accordingly, any attempt at dishonesty constitutes a departing from the representation he is making.

Rav Hirsch reinforces his expanded view on *meilah*, that it is not restricted to our private dealings with *Hashem*, when the term “*ma'al*” reappears in the contexts of fraud (*Bamidbar* 5:6) and rebellious wife (5:12). On these *p'sukim*, Rav Hirsch reiterates that the notion of acting truthfully before *Hashem*, manifests itself in both our social and commercial interactions.

The term “*ma'al*” also appears in *Hashem's* rebuke of *Moshe* for hitting the rock (*Devarim* 32:51). Rav Hirsch there explains that *Moshe* had committed a *meilah* by not meeting the level of *emunah* (belief) expected of him – adding a further element to the understanding of the term *meilah*.

The explanation of Rav Hirsch appears to parallel *Onkelus's* understanding of the term “*ma'al*” who consistently translates it as lying in all the *p'sukim* mentioned above. The façade presented to evade responsibility is, simply, an escape from truth.

While sanctioning for *meilah* is restricted to misuse of sanctified articles, the idea it represents as expressed by Rav Hirsch and within the translation of *Onkelus*, covers all elements of daily life.

Shmoiki Berkowitz

Revision Questions

כריתות ה' ח' – ו' ט'

- What is the law regarding a piece *cheilev* and a piece of *cheilev notar* where: (ה' ח')
 - One person ate both one after the other?
 - Two people ate one each but it is not known which person ate the *cheilev notar*?
- What are the opinions regarding one that brings an *asham talui* and the matter was clarified that he did not sin: (א' ט')
 - Before the *korban* was slaughtered?
 - After the *korban* was slaughtered?
- Regarding the previous question, what is the comparable ruling for: (ו' ב')
 - An *asham vadai*?
 - A *shor ha'niskal*?
 - An *eglah arufah*?
- According to who, can one bring an *asham talui* everyday? (ו' ג')
- Who acted according to this ruling and which days was the exception? (ו' ג')
- Which sin-related offering does not need to be brought after *Yom Kippur*? (ו' ד')
- What two laws are taught regarding a *chatat ha'of* that is brought in a case of doubt? (ו' ה')
- What is the minimum value of an *asham* offering? (ו' ו')
- What is the law regarding one that separated this sum of money then purchased two animals for the purpose of *asham* offerings? (ו' ו')
- What if two animals were purchase for regular purposes? (ו' ו')
- Are sin-offerings “transferable”? (ו' ו')
- What is the law regarding an animal separated for a sin-offering whose owner died? (ו' ז')
- In what circumstance can money separated for the purpose of an animal offering, be used for a bird offering? (ו' ח')
- What is one difference between these two types of offerings? (ו' ח')
- Is the ordering of animals listed by *korbanot* indicative of preference? Which two examples are brought? (ו' ט')
- Why is the honour of a father prior to a mother? (ו' ט')
- What other case brought is similar to the one in the previous question? (ו' ט')

מעילה א' א' – ד'

- Does *meilah* apply to *kodshei kodshim* that were slaughtered in the South section of the *azarah* ? (א' א')
- What rule does *R' Yehoshua* provide regarding the previous question? (א' א')
- List some *p'sulim* that fall within the bounds of *R' Yehoshua*'s rule and some that do not. (א' א')
- Explain the debate regarding *kodshei kodshim* that were taken outside the *azarah* prior to *zrikat ha'dam*. (א' ב')
- What else is debated in a similar manner to the previous question? (א' ג')
- Explain how *zrikat ha'dam* has both a leniency and stringency for *koshei kodshim* but only a stringency for *kodshei kalim*? (א' ד')

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
21 st December כ"ד כסלו	22 nd December כ"ה כסלו	23 rd December כ"ו כסלו	24 th December כ"ז כסלו	25 th December כ"ח כסלו	26 th December כ"ט כסלו	27 th December ל' כסלו
Meilah 2:1-2	Meilah 2:3-4	Meilah 2:5-6	Meilah 2:7-8	Meilah 2:9-3:1	Meilah 3:2-3	Meilah 3:4-5

