



Volume 6. Issue 38

More Lenient than the Tzedukim

After stringency upon stringency preventing even a hint of *tumah* at every preparatory step leading to the slaughter of the *para aduma*, the final step is quite surprising. The *kohen gadol* was deliberately made *tameh*. Why?

The *Mishnah* explains that this was motivated by a debated between the *Chachamim* and the *Tzedukim*. After one immerses in a *mikvah* to purify themselves from *tumah*, they have a status of *tevul yom*. The person must then wait till nightfall in order to become completely *tahor*¹. Before that time, for example, a *kohen* may not eat *trumah*. The *Tzedukim*, who disregarded the oral tradition, understood that a *tevul yom* cannot perform the *para aduma*. They interpreted the *pasuk*, “A pure (*tahor*) man shall gather the ash of the cow” to mean that the *kohen* must be completely *tahor*. We however have a tradition from *Moshe Rabbeinu* that a *tevul yom* could engage in the *para aduma* activities. Consequently, prior to the *kohen gadol* beginning, he would be made *tameh* and immerse in the *mikvah*, making him a *tevul yom* and thereby act in accordance with the opinion of the *Chachamim*.

The *Mishnah Achronah* asks, what is to be lost if they acted stringently in accordance with the opinion of the *Tzedukim*? There are indeed many instances where the *Chachamim* rule stringently above *Torah* law; why should this be any different?

The *Mishnah Achronah* explains that there is a big difference. When the *Chachamim* rule stringently, they accept that the *Torah* law is lenient, but for the

purposes of “creating a fence around the *Torah*” institute a rabbinic decree. In this case however, the *Tzedukim* disagree with the tradition we have about the *Torah* law itself. Consequently, he explains, we are forbidden to behave according to their opinion for the *pasuk* states “you shall not deviate left or right” – be that lenient or strict.

One may still ask, if those engaged in the *para aduma* did not submit to the opinion of *Tzedukim* why can they not still act in the stringent manner. The *Mishnah Achronah* cites a *Tosefta* which describes a case where *R' Yishmael ben Piabi* ensured that a *para aduma* was performed by a *kohen* that was *tahor* and not a *tevul yom*. They wanted to rule that the *para aduma* was valid since it was already performed. The *Chachamim* ruled in that case that it was nonetheless invalid otherwise it would appear to be an outward demonstration that all previous *para aduma* were invalid. The *Mishnah Achronah* explains that the *Chachamim* knew that *R' Yishmael's* intentions were pure and he agreed that it could have been performed by a *tevul yom*. Furthermore their ruling was for a case that was after the fact – *bedi'aved*. Ideally however we find that no matter the intention, in our case of *para aduma*, one cannot act stringently in order not to emulate these heretics.

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¹ This is provided that they do not require a *korban* to follow. In such a case they would have the status of a *mechusar kippurim* until the *korban* is brought. Such a person would not be able to eat from any other *korbanot* until their required *korban* is offered.

Revision Questions

פרה ג' ב' – ד' ד'

- Describe how the water was brought to *har habayit* and what was done well in advance to facilitate it. (ג' ב')
- Where was the existing *eifer chatat*, how was it extracted and what was done with it? (ג' ג')
- Regarding the previous question, which point was the subject of debate? (ג' ג')
- Was the *tahara* that was performed for one *chatat* applicable for another? (ג' ג')
- What point was debated regarding the preparation of the children that took part in the preparation for *para aduma*? (ג' ד')
- What are the seven *parot aduma* from which the ashes were stored in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*? (ג' ה')
- Where was the *para aduma* burnt? (ג' ו')
- Describe the construction of the bridge that lead to that location. (ג' ו')
- What are the different reasons brought for why a black *para* could not be used to lead the *para aduma* to the site? (ג' ו')
- Why (and how) would they cause the *kohen* to become *tameh*? (ג' ו')
- Where was the *mikvah* in which would the *kohen* then immerse? (ג' ו')
- What would was used for the fire and how was it structured? (ג' ו')
- How as the *para aduma* bound and how was it place on the wood? (ג' ו')
- Describe how it was slaughtered and what was done with the blood. (ג' ו')
- Why did the *kohen* wipe the blood on the cow? (ג' ו')
- What are the two opinions regard how the fire was lit? (ג' ו')
- What was done when the *kohen* took the cedar, hyssop and scarlet thread? (ג' ו')
- How were they bound together? (ג' ו')
- What was first done with the ashes from the *para aduma*? (ג' ו')
- How were the ashes divided and what was done with each part? (ג' ו')
- Which of the following would invalidate the *para aduma* and which are the subject of debate:
 - Slaughtered with the proper intent.
 - The *kohen* that accepted the blood hadn't washed his hands and feet.
 - The *kohen* that performed the *para aduma* was not the *kohen gadol*.
 - The *kohen* was not wearing all the *bigdei kehuna*. (ד' א')
 - The *para* was not slaughtered in the correct location.
 - Two *parot* was burnt in the same spot.
 - The blood was not sprinkled in the correct direction. (ד' ב')
 - The fire was fuelled using straw.
 - The *para*'s hide was stripped and the animal was cut apart.
 - The *para* was slaughter with the intent to eat it. (ד' ג')
- Which other act involving the sprinkling of the blood would invalidate that *para aduma*? (ד' ב')
- What is the rule regarding when those that are involved in the *para aduma* are *tameh*? (ד' ד')
- Can extra fire wood be added? (ד' ד')
- Until which point does *melacha* invalidate the water used for *mei chatat*? (ד' ד')
- Until which point must everything be performed by a *kohen*? (ד' ד')

Local Shiurim

Sunday -Thursday

After maariv
Mizrachi Shul

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before mincha
Beit Ha'Roeh

Next Week's Mishnayot...

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | שבת קודש |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| 8 th November כ"א חשוון | 9 th November כ"ב חשוון | 10 th November כ"ג חשוון | 11 th November כ"ד חשוון | 12 th November כ"ה חשוון | 13 th November כ"ו חשוון | 14 th November כ"ז חשוון |
| Parah 5:1-2 | Parah 5:3-4 | Parah 5:5-6 | Parah 5:7-8 | Parah 5:9-6:1 | Parah 6:2-3 | Parah 6:4-5 |

