



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Shulchan (cont.)

The Gemara continues to examine why the Shulchan is not susceptible to tum'ah by virtue of its gold plating.

2) Props and rods

R' Ketina provides the source for the props and rods used on the Shulchan.

Rava challenges this source and then withdraws his challenge.

A Baraisa describes the process of inserting and removing the loaves from the Shulchan.

3) Measurements

A Mishnah in Keilim presents a disagreement regarding the size of the amah that was used in the Beis HaMikdash.

R' Yochanan gives the sources for their rulings and then explains their point of dispute.

A possible interpretation of a relevant pasuk in Yechezkel is presented.

This interpretation is rejected and an alternative explanation is suggested.

This interpretation is also rejected for many reasons.

Another interpretation is suggested. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

One's table atones for him

ועכשיו שאין בית המקדש קיים שולחנו של אדם מכפר עליו

Our Gemara reports that we do not have a Beis HaMikdash where we can bring offerings upon the Altar for atonement. Nevertheless, we still have our tables, and through our proper conduct around our tables we can achieve atonement.

Rashi explains that the Gemara here is referring to the tzedakah one performs with his table by providing food for guests and the poor. Tosafos cites the Gemara in Sanhedrin (103b) which states "the tasting of food has great powers," to which Rashi comments that the food shared with guests has far-reaching rewards.

Maharsha also refers to the Gemara in Berachos (54b) which teaches that lingering next to one's table is one of three things which can lead to lengthening of one's life. The Gemara (ibid. 55a) points out that while one is at his table a poor person may come by, and the host will be able to give him some needed nourishment. The Gemara there cites the lesson of our Gemara, with the verse in Yechezkel (41:22) which states, "The Altar was of wood...This is the table that is before God." The verse begins by discussing "the Altar," but it concludes with a reference to "a table." By teaching the lesson of tzedakah for the poor as the example which illustrates this rule, it seems that the Gemara in Berachos understands that this is the manner by which a table atones. Yet, the Mishnah in Avos (3:3) tells us that when three people eat together at a table and they speak words of Torah, it is considered as if they ate at the table of the Holy One, blessed be He. This suggests that the benefit of being at one's table is through the Torah that is spoken there.

Iyun Yaakov explains that both of these virtues contribute to the rewards of being next to one's table. He cites the verse (Mishlei 16:6), "With kindness and truth will sin be atoned." "Kindness" refers to the favor extended to the poor, while "truth" refers to the words of Torah spoken at a meal. Both of these mitzvos lead to the ultimate benefit of atonement for sin.

Mishnas Aharon points out that although eating is a mundane act, and it is one of the things we share with other animals, it is still necessary to eat for a person to

REVIEW and Remember

1. How do we achieve atonement without an Altar?

2. How large were the amos of the Beis HaMikdash?

3. How large of an area was the pyre on the Altar?

4. What was the meaning of the phrase חיק האמה?

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated in memory of
Elyahoo ben Yosef, Eden ben Uri and Yosef ben Rabbi Shimon,
Avraham ben Youssef, Miryam bat Elyahoo, Ahoova bat Miryam,
Iran bat Bibijon

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
In memory of
Shmuel Zvi b"r Nechemia HaKohen

HALACHAH Highlight

Lessons from the parallel between one's table and the altar
 ועכשיו שאין בית המקדש קיים שולחנו של אדם מכפר עליו
 Nowadays that the Beis HaMikdash no longer stands a person's table atones for him

The Gemara teaches that nowadays that we do not have a Beis HaMikdash with an altar to provide atonement one's table stands in its place to provide atonement. Poskim trace a number of different halachos to the parallel that is drawn between the altar and one's table. Rema¹ writes that there is a mitzvah for one to put salt on his table before cutting bread. The basis for this practice is that one's table is similar to the altar and regarding korbanos the Torah states (Vayikra 2:13), "על כל קרבנך תקריב מלח"—On every korban you should offer salt." Sefer Chassidim² asserts that it is prohibited to kill a louse on one's table. Since one's table is similar to the altar killing a louse on one's table is comparable to killing a louse on the altar. Similarly, Sefer Chassidim³ maintains that one should cover his knives for Birkas HaMazon. The reason is that the pasuk states (Shemos 20:22), "כי חרבך הנפת ותחללהי" - For you will have lifted your sword to it and defiled it."

⁴ cites Shulchan Aruch who rules that one should not speak during a meal so that he should not choke on his food. Elya Rabba writes in the name of earlier authorities that this ruling is no longer applicable. In the time of Chazal people reclined on their side when eating so if one was to speak while eating it could pose actual danger.

STORIES Off the Daf

The Atoning Table

"שולחנו של אדם מכפר..."

Many are confused as to why chassidic rebbes conduct tischen. After all, why is this not bittul Torah for those who could learn? They would likely be surprised to hear that the Avnei Nezer, zt"l—a great lamdan—would praise the greatness of chassidic tischen. "What the tables of the rebbes achieved we shall only comprehend when our righteous Moshiach arrives."

Rav Elchonon Halperin explains this practice with a statement brought on today's daf. "Our sages tell us in Menachos 97 that one's table atones for him. Rashi explains that one's table atones in the merit of feeding poor people at the table. Yet imagine the embarrassment of destitute people who have no choice but to take their meals as charity at another's table. Surely only a very rare person can give the poor food in a manner which will not be a huge embarrassment. Most people eating at the table of another out of necessity feel nothing less than bitter darkness.

"But at the table of tzaddikim, everyone eats for free. Both the poor and the wealthy join together and one who is hungry can obtain as much food as he wants in an honorable manner. No one feels above his friend, since everyone is there for the same reason and is treated the same way. All those who attend a tisch feel a sense of togetherness that emerges out of holy love and companionship. With such a pleasant atmosphere is it any wonder that we cannot imagine the great atonement of a chassidic tisch?"¹ ■

1. שיחתן של עבדי אבות, ח"יב, ע' פ"ח

(Insight...continued from page 1)

remain healthy and to be able to fulfill his mission to learn and observe Torah. When a person uses the opportunity to speak words of Torah at a table as he eats, he is not only learning Torah at that moment, but he also elevates his eating to be a holy event. This is what is referred to as the table achieving atonement.

In Sichos Musar (5732, #5), R' Chaim Shmuelevitz notes that the Gemara says that one's table atones for him, although the tzedakah is done by the person, not by his table. He explains that by using the table as a tool to perform this great mitzvah, the person transforms his table into a vehicle of merit. ■

Nowadays that we sit upright while we eat the same risk does not apply and thus the prohibition no longer applies. ספר אורח נאמן suggests that based on our Gemara the restriction may still apply. Rashi⁵ mentions that the sin of the original elders was that they acted with levity before God at Har Sinai. He characterizes this as one who takes a bite of bread while speaking in the presence of the King. Accordingly, idle conversation while eating is considered an act of levity before the King since the table is comparable to the altar. He admits, however, that this explanation only restricts idle chatter while eating and discussing words of Torah would be permitted even though Rema did not draw this distinction. ■

1. רמ"א או"ח סי' קס"ז סעי' ה'.
2. ספר חסידים סי' ק"ב.
3. ספר חסידים שם.
4. ספר אורח נאמן סי' ק"ע סק"ב.
5. רש"י במדבר י"א ט"ז. ■

