

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Menachos 9-15

Week of 24 Iyar-1 Sivan 5756 / 13-19 May 1996
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

When Flesh and Fat Combine

When the blood of an animal sacrifice is applied to the altar it serves as a catalyst for the fatty parts of the sacrifice (*cheilev*) to be burned on the altar and for the flesh of the sacrifice to be eaten.

What if both the fatty parts and the flesh disappeared before the blood was applied to the altar?

The rule stated by Rabbi Yehoshua is that at least a *kezayis* (olive-size) of either flesh or *cheilev* must remain intact in order for the blood application to take place. Otherwise it serves no significant purpose and cannot be performed.

Even if there is half a *kezayis* of flesh and half a *kezayis* of *cheilev* the blood is not applied to the altar for we cannot combine the altar's consumption with human consumption. But if the sacrifice in question is an *olah* which is completely consumed upon the altar the blood will be applied even if only half a *kezayis* of flesh and half a *kezayis* of *cheilev* remain. The reason is that in the case of the *olah*, flesh and *cheilev* are both consumed upon the altar and are therefore considered one entity.

Menachos 9a

A Sacred Shortcut

In the sanctuary service of offering a *mincha* (a meal offering) a *kometz* (a palm-full of meal) is taken from the *mincha* and brought to the altar to be burned. Then the frankincense on the *mincha* is gathered and also burned on the altar while the remaining meal is consumed by the *kohanim*.

What if a non-*kohen* gathered this frankincense and handed it to a *kohen* to burn on the altar?

Rabbi Yannai ruled that this would be invalid since performed by a non-*kohen*.

The question arises, however, as to why such a seemingly inconsequential action as gathering the frankincense should be valid only if a *kohen* performs it.

Rabbi Yirmiyahu points out that both in regard to animal sacrifices and *mincha* offerings the relaying of something to the altar is considered an essential part of the service which only a *kohen* can perform. In the case of the animal it is relaying the blood to be applied to the altar; in the case of the *mincha* the relaying of the *kometz* of meal or the frankincense to be burned on the altar. Although the non-*kohen* fails to take a single step his gathering of the frankincense and handing it to the *kohen* reduces the distance which the *kohen* would have been compelled to walk in order to perform the service of relaying this frankincense to the altar and it is therefore considered an integral part of the service which is invalid when performed by a non-*kohen*.

Menachos 13b

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