



פרשת שמיני  
פרשת פרה  
שבת מברכים  
אדר ב תשע"ט

### HALACHOS OF THE SEDER

All men are invited to join the Kollel for a 2-part series of shiurim on the Halachos of the Seder night with Rabbi Michael Stern.

Tuesday 26 Adar 2 - April 2  
and 4 Nissan - April 9

8:40-9:30pm in the lunchroom.

### MIVTZA HALACHA

Pick up a booklet at the back of the Shule and join the program.

The halachos of the Seder from the Alter Rebbe's Shulchan Aruch have been divided up into short daily portions to ensure that you get through them before Pesach this year.

### KASHERING SERVICE

The annual Kollel Menachem Pesach Kashering service will be held this year on Nissan 10 - Monday April 15, from 6:00-8:30pm at the Werdiger Hall kitchen.

Please ensure that all vessels being Kashered have been thoroughly cleaned and have not been used within the 24 hours prior to koshering.

### YUD ALEF NISSAN

Stay tuned for details of a number of programs in preparation for Yud Alef Nissan, including Community Beis Medrash learning and shiurim on the Rebbe's Kapitel Tehillim 118



Rabbi Yankel Raskin leads the retirees morning Shulchan Aruch shiur

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## Offerings of foreign fires

On the day of the Mishkan's inauguration, a day that was supposed to be one of joy and communal celebration, tragedy struck. Nadav and Avihu, two of Aharon's sons were consumed by a Divine fire and died while offering incense in the Mishkan.

The Meforshim offer a number of insight as to what was their wrongdoing and why it warranted such a severe punishment.

The Midrashim bring a number of opinions as to why they were killed, these include;

- 1) They offered a foreign fire before Hashem that they were not commanded to bring
- 2) They were drunk on wine at the time they entered the Mishkan
- 3) They issued a halachic ruling in the presence of their teacher Moshe's. This infraction is punishable by death at the hands of Heaven.

What Halacha did Nadav and Avihu issue a ruling on? In last week's Parsha Moshe was instructed to kindle an earthly fire on the Mizbeach, despite the fact that the sacrifices were consumed by a fire descending from Heaven. Torah Temimah explains that this commandment was understood to apply only on the outdoor sacrificial Altar. By bringing their fire-pans into the Kodosh to burn Ketores, Nadav and Avihu were 'ruling' that the same requirement of lighting an earthly fire, applied to the inner incense Altar as well.

The suggestion that their infraction was intoxication is supported by the juxtaposition to the next passage in the Parsha. Immediately after recording their deaths, Aharon is instructed that neither he nor his sons drink wine when approaching the Mishkan.

But it is the first answer that seems to be the most plausible, since the verse clearly states that their sin was in offering before Hashem a foreign fire which He had not commanded them.

So why did the commentaries see the need to suggest numerous other reasons? Furthermore, Nadav

and Avihu were Torah scholars and righteous individuals, how could their sin be so basic as to make an offering which seemed unwanted and unsolicited by the Torah?

The Sfias Emes explains that the 3 reasons are not distinct. They all refer to one underlying short-falling which came about specifically because of their greatness.

Nadav and Avihu's failing was serving Hashem based on their own intellect and understanding. Wine, with its pleasing taste (*Taam*) is a euphemism for the mystical reasons (*Taamim*) behind the Mitzvos. Their offering came from intellectual intoxication; because it made sense logically to do it, rather than because it was what Hashem wanted.

Why was rendering a halachic ruling in the presence of their teacher such a great offence? Whilst they were no doubt great scholars and their ruling may have been correct, the problem was that it came from themselves and not from Moshe. As such, it was divorced from the Mesora. When Torah study and interpretation is separated from surrender to accept the Mesora, it lacks connection to the 'Giver of the Torah' and is subject to fallibility.

This is the meaning of a foreign fire which He (Hashem) had not commanded them. They did not offer the incense because Hashem had instructed them, but rather because *they* understood it to be the right things to do.

The death of Nadav and Avihu took place on Rosh Chodesh Nissan. As such, it is listed in Shulchan Aruch as a Tannis Tzaddikim. Their passing leaves a lasting lesson for all time - להחיי יתן אל לבו.

Torah and Mitzvos must be kept with Kabbolas Ol - simply because Hashem has commanded us. Reasons, understanding and spiritual feelings certainly enhance our Avodah, but they should never be the basis for it.

Avodah with Kabbolas Ol is the fire that Hashem has commanded us. Anything else is foreign.

# The “Chabad Mikva”

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

At the end of this weeks Parsha, the Torah teaches *אך מעיין ובור מקוה מים יהיה טהור a spring or pit of collected water will be pure*. This Posuk describes two types of bodies of water which may be used for purification; a *Maayan* (natural spring) or a *Mikvah*. The word Mikvah means a gathering of collected water.

The water of a Mikvah must gather naturally from rainwater which collects into an excavation or structure that is built into or on the ground. There must be a minimum volume of 40 Se’ah of rainwater. How Halachic measures translate into litres is subject to a Machlokes. Common practise is to be extra stringent and collect at least double the largest size volume.

In previous times, Mikvaos would have only a single *Bor* (pit), and people would Toivel in the actual rainwater. However, since the water could not be changed (without collecting new rainfall), the water in these Mikvaos would sit stagnant and become dirty.

## Cleaner Mikvaos

For the last few hundred years, Mikvaos have been constructed using two *Boros* in a manner that allows the water used for Toivelling to be changed regularly to remain clean, while leaving the rainwater intact.

The rainwater is kept in one *Bor* known as the *אוצר מי גשמים*. A separate *Bor* is used for Toivelling. This *Bor* is filled with regular tap water and can be filled and refilled to keep the Mikvah clean. This tank is referred to as the *בור טבילה*.

Tap water itself is not kosher as a Mikvah so the *בור טבילה* must be rendered kosher by connecting it to the *אוצר מי גשמים*. This is done by having an opening between the two *Boros* of at least two finger-breadths diameter (approx. 4cm) which remains open. This method of connecting the two *Boros* is called Hashakah (literally the kissing of the waters, describing how the waters touch one another).

Traditionally the two *Boros* were positioned side-by-side with the hole placed in the wall in between the 2 Mikvaos. This type of Mikvah is referred to as *בור מן הצד*.

## The “Chabad” Mikvah

The “Chabad” Mikvah is a Mikvah which is based on the explicit directives of the Rebbe Rashab for the Mikvah which was built in Rostov. The

primary feature of this Mikvah was that instead of placing the *Boros* side by side, the rainwater *Bor* would be placed underneath the *בור טבילה* with the connection hole in the floor of the upper Mikvah. Due to its configuration, this type of Mikvah is referred to as *בור על גבי בור*.

The Rebbe Rashab specified that the Mikvaos should be connected with two holes rather than one, to avoid a situation where the hole gets blocked. He also required that these holes be one Tefach diameter (approx. 8cm).

## The Hiddur of “Chabad” Mikva

According to the Raavad and others, once the original 40 Se’ah of rainwater becomes diluted with invalid water and reduced to less than 50%, the Mikvah is Pasul. Whilst the halacha does not accord with the Raavad, we try to build Mikvaos to a level of hiddur which would satisfy most opinions.

When the two *Boros* are positioned side by side, there is greater mixing of the waters between the two chambers and when the *בור טבילה* is drained, rainwater will also be removed. This creates a concern that the constant draining and refilling will cause a dilution of the original rainwater and the concern of it falling below the 50% threshold.

By placing the rainwater *Bor* underneath the *בור טבילה*, with only the small holes connecting them, the dilution rate is greatly reduced, since the draining of the upper Mikvah does not affect the water level in the lower one. Additionally, the water in the upper Mikvah is heated, whereas the rainwater is not. Since heat rises and cool falls, the waters are kept distinct and minimises mixing.

Another concern is that when the Mikvaos are side by side, constant care must be taken to ensure that the water level remains above the connecting hole.

One need not worry about this in a *בור על גבי בור* Mikvah

Many later Poskim write about the hiddur of such a Mikva, including Rabbi Ovadiah Yosef who describes it as *מהודר* לכתחילה שבלכתחילה.

## Key Features of a Mikvah

At right is a diagram showing a “Chabad Mikvah” and its key features which are described below;

A. The rainwater *Bor* is situated under the floor of the upper

Toivelling Mikvah. This is where the rainwater collects when being filled. The opening is fitted with a ledge. Once filled with rainwater, a stone cover is fitted into the opening sitting on top of the ledge. (The walls of this *Bor* can be sealed with a water-proofing to ensure that it does not leak).

B. Two openings of one Tefach width are left uncovered. These holes create the Hashakah connection between the upper and lower *Boros*. One hole is technically sufficient. The second hole is a precaution lest one hole be covered by a person’s foot. A hole the size of a Tefach is double to required size. The preferred placing for these holes is under the stairs, not like as depicted below.

C. Rainwater enters the Mikvah falling into the *אוצר מי גשמים*. Customarily the rainwater first flows through a Hamshacha channel (not depicted) before entering the Mikvah.

D. Once the lower Mikvah has been filled with rainwater and covered, regular tap water is used to fill (and refill) the upper Mikvah.

E. As an extra hiddur, all water coming into the Mikvah flows through a Hamshacha channel of at least 3 Tefachim. This channel is constructed of a concrete mix or earth which is able to absorb water. This hiddur has many halachic benefits to ensure the kashrus of the Mikvah.

F. A pump is used to drain the tap water from the upper Mikvah when required. The pump, and similar devices such as a handrail or heater radiator, should be suspended from above and not drilled into the wall below the water level. This is to prevent weakening the concrete which could lead to problematic leaking.

