



פרשת ויקהל  
פרשת שקלים  
שבת מברכים  
בדר א תשפ"ב

## DOR LEDOR

After an extended break, Dor Ledor learning is back on this Shabbos.

We will be running a special 6-week series leading up to Yud Alef Nissan, the Rebbe's 120th birthday.

The program has been revamped with new refreshments, incentives and learning materials.

We will be learning the Tutaltz curriculum for kids on developing a Moshiach mindset. Learn the materials, take the weekly quiz and get a **special treat** at school!

Come for 4 out of 6 weeks and get invited to an exclusive Dor LEdor **Pizza party!**

After 4 years running Dor Ledor, Rabbi Lebenholz will be passing the baton to Chonye Morozow. On behalf of the Kollel, the boys and the fathers, we'd like to thank Rabbi Lebenholz for his amazing dedication to running a fantastic Dor Ledor program for all these years.

## THE SHABBOS AFTERNOON SHIUR

All men and women are invited to the weekly shiur after Mincha on Shabbos in the Yeshivah Shule.

The shiur is given by different presenters each week, with a different topic each week.

**This week's shiur will be given by Rabbi Yossi Gordon**

A collection of Torah thoughts produced by Kollel Menachem



A shiur at the Yeshivas Kayitz program

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## How to say sorry to your spouse

At the foot of Har Sinai, the Chuppah of the cosmic marriage forged between Hashem and the Jewish people, the bride did the unthinkable.

Having heard Hashem declare "I am Hashem your G-d" and "You shall have no other gods before Me", Bnei Yisroel built and worshipped the Golden Calf. Could there be a greater betrayal? How would they be able to restore the relationship?

Hashem told Bnei Yisroel that to atone for their sin they would need to pay an atonement.

The Midrash describes how at that moment, Bnei Yisroel began to despair "Why did we waste our time gathering the spoils in Egypt and at the Sea when we will now have to give it all away." So great was their betrayal, they knew they would not get off cheap.

Knowing what they were thinking, Hashem told Moshe to tell them not to fear: "I am not asking for 1,000, not 100, not fifty silver coins, not even 1 solitary Shekel. . .All I יתננו... מחצית השקל. asking is for a half Shekel."

Half a Shekel, that's all? Moshe was perplexed. How could a mere half Shekel be sufficient atonement?

The half Shekel was not about monetary value. Hashem was telling Moshe that this half Shekel would be worth far more than the thousands of silver coins that Bnei Yisroel thought would be required. Exactly half a Shekel would be the penalty without exception. The rich could not give more and the poor no less. Half and only half.

But why a half? Generally, our gifts to Hashem have to be whole and perfect, like a korban which cannot have any blemishes. So why a half?

Further, the Torah specifies that the weight of a full Shekel is 20 Gerah. If they were only giving a half Shekel, of what relevance is the value of a whole Shekel? The Torah should have said that the weight of the half Shekel is 10 Gerah?

The Torah seems to be teaching Bnei Yisroel that they should know that there is a full Shekel (which is 20 Gerah), but that of this whole Shekel, they are only giving half of it.

The Ariza"l explains that every soul is initially created comprising a feminine and a masculine element. The soul is then split in two; the feminine aspect being placed into a female and the masculine aspect into a male. They grow up as individuals, sometimes on other sides of the world, until Hashem brings them back together to unite under the Chuppah.

In their single lives each saw themselves as a "whole", living only responsible to and for themselves. Under the Chuppah, in order to become one, each partner must surrender their sense of "wholeness" to become a "half" once again. A half which completes and is completed by the other, achieving a far deeper level of "wholeness" than ever before.

When a spouse wrongs the other, it is because they have reverted back to the more familiar "whole" mode and lost sight of their other half. This is the greater betrayal that needs to be repaired.

The marriage between Hashem and the Jewish people is the same. To unite with Hashem means to surrender our ego, our own sense of independence as a "whole", and to see ourselves as being incomplete without our relationship with Him.

This is the power of the half Shekel. Lavish gifts may say "I'm sorry" or "I love you". But it is only parting with money. A half-Shekel apology carries the message that "I am incomplete without you, You complete me and I will try to not forget You again." Giving a half-Shekel is (re)devoting my very self.

After the tragic sin of the Golden Calf, Hashem asks for half a Shekel. He does not want to be "bought off" with lavish gifts. True atonement is internalising that without Him we are incomplete.

Hashem pulled out a fiery half Shekel from under His throne and showed it to Moshe. When we give our half, Hashem reciprocates. It is as though He is telling us "I will complete your lacking and make you whole."

Beyond that, Hashem's half Shekel says that just as I complete you, You complete Me. I need you, for without you, My deepest desire cannot be achieved. Together we create the Shekel Hakodesh.

# The weekly Halacha analysis

## The case of the shallow Mikvah

Rabbi Yonason Johnson

### The minimum volume of a Mikvah

When discussing the purification of a man who became impure, the Posuk<sup>1</sup> says “and he shall wash all of his flesh in water.” From this verse, our sages<sup>2</sup> learn that the volume of a Mikvah must be sufficient to immerse one’s entire body.

The Gemara teaches that this measure is 1 Amah by 1 Amah by a height of 3 Amos. Tosfos explains that the average height to the shoulders of a person is 3 Amos and the average width of a person is 1 Amah<sup>3</sup>. When converted to liquid measure these dimensions total a volume of 40 Se’ah.

There are a number of different opinions on how this is measured and how it converts to our system of measurements, with opinions ranging from as low as 332 Litres<sup>4</sup> to 576 Litres<sup>5</sup> and even 817 Litres<sup>6</sup>. Since Mikvah is connected to the purity of the Jewish people and a deficiency could result in a Kareis prohibition, we always strive to comply with all opinions.

(In addition to this dispute, there is also the concern of the rainwater becoming diluted or depleted over time. As a result of these concerns the Poskim rule that a Mikvah should have much more than these measures of rainwater).

Since this measure is derived from a Posuk, most of the Rishonim<sup>7</sup> learn that the volume of a Mikvah is a Biblical requirement. There is a minority view that the volume of 40 Se’ah is Rabbinic and that the derivation from the Posuk is merely an Asmachta (a supporting verse rather than a source)<sup>8</sup>.

There is a Machlokes whether this volume requirement also applies to immersing in a Maayan (a natural spring) or just to a Mikvah (a gathering of rainwater). The Shulchan Aruch<sup>9</sup> rules that for immersion of a person<sup>10</sup>, a Maayan must also have 40 Se’ah.

Technically, the dimensions of the Mikvah could be done in a different configuration, as long as the total volume remains the same<sup>11</sup>. For example, a Mikvah could also be built 3 Amos by 1 Amah with a height of 1 Amah<sup>12</sup>.

Note that these measurements are to calculate

the volume of the water. The actual walls of the Mikvah must be built higher in order to prevent the water leaving the Mikvah when the water level rises due to the displacement of the immerser. This would present an issue of Zochalin that would invalidate the Mikvah<sup>13</sup>.

### A Mikvah that is too shallow

Even though the Mikvah could be built with any dimensions, if the water is too shallow, one would not be able to immerse their entire body at one time, making it unusable as a Mikvah.

The Mishna<sup>14</sup> discusses the case of מקוה שמימינו מרודדין: “A Mikvah that is shallow, one may press down even bundles of sticks or even bundles of reeds so that the water level rises and then go down to immerse.” The weight of the objects placed in the Mikvah will cause the water level to rise so that the entire body of the person will be under water when they immerse.

### What about adding water?

The Halacha is that even though a Mikvah cannot be made with drawn water (שאובין), once a Mikvah has the required measure of rainwater, one may add additional drawn water. The Kosher Mikvah water renders the drawn water kosher as well. Seemingly this would be another way to raise the water level of a shallow Mikvah.

However, the Ra’ah<sup>15</sup> writes that in the case of a shallow Mikvah, one may not add drawn water. Support for this opinion is brought from the fact that the Mishna does not suggest adding water as a solution for a shallow Mikvah.

The rationale is that the measure of the Mikvah as derived from the Posuk is “water that the entire body can be immersed in at once”. If the water is unable to accommodate the entire body at once, even if it has more than 40 Se’ah, it is not considered a Mikvah at all. Since the shallow water is not a Mikvah, it cannot make the drawn water added to it kosher.

Based on this, some write that concern of the Ra’ah will not apply if the water is at least 1 Amah deep<sup>16</sup> which does allow for one to immerse the entire body at one time. Water that is deeper than 1 Amah would not be considered מרודדין and one could add extra water.

Others write that it is sufficient if one could im-

merse the whole body by lying completely horizontal and pressing themselves down to the floor<sup>17</sup>. Some are even more lenient that if the water is deep enough to cover even a baby, the Ra’ah’s concern will not apply.

The Rashba<sup>18</sup> argues with the entire ruling of the Ra’ah and writes that one may add drawn-water to a shallow Mikvah. The Mishna is giving solutions that could be implemented even where no additional water is available.

The later Poskim<sup>19</sup> are concerned for the stringency of the Ra’ah.

The above discussion is usually only relevant where one is immersing in the rainwater itself. Our Mikvaos are constructed with two Boros (tanks). One tank contains the rainwater and the other, the one in which we immerse, is filled with regular tap water. The rainwater Bor can be positioned either on the side or beneath the immersion Bor and is connected with a hole of a minimum size.

The concern of the Ra’ah will not apply if the water in the immersion Bor is shallow and additional drawn water may certainly be added to top-up the Mikvah.

However, there is still some Halachic application of the Ra’ah’s stringency in our Mikvaos;

1. The rainwater Bor of the Mikvah (whether positioned on the side or beneath the immersion Bor), should not be built with less than 1 Amah deep of water. If it was shallower, according to the Ra’ah it would not be considered a Mikvah and would be unable to validate the rainwater Bor that is connected to it.

2. In a Mikvah Zeriah, where the tap-water to fill the immersion Bor becomes ‘kosher’ by flowing through the rainwater Bor, care must be taken that the rainwater tank does not fall below 1 Amah depth.

3. Keilim Mikvahs are often built with only 1 Bor of rainwater. Care must be taken that the water does not drop below 1 Amah depth.

The Halachic concerns that apply if the water in the immersion Bor is either too shallow or too deep will be discussed in the next edition IYH.

1. Vayikra 15:16

2. Eiruvin 4b, Pesachim 109a, Yoma 31a, Chagigah 11a, Toras Kohanim Metzora

3. Yoma 31a ד"ה אמה

4. Based on measures of Rabbi Avrohom Chaim Noeh that 1 Amah is 48cm

5. Measure of Chazon Ish

6. Attributed to Chasam Sofer

7. Rashba, Rashi, Mordechai, Rivash

8. According to this view, any amount of water that covers the entire body suffices Biblically for a Mikvah, which

for a small person could be less than 40 Se’ah.

9. Y.D. 201:1

10. As opposed to immersing vessels for the laws of impurity. For Tevilas Keilim 40 Se’ah is still required.

11. Shulchan Aruch Y.D. 201:1

12. See Tosfos Yoma 31a ד"ה עין איטם

13. See Tosfos Yoma 31b continuation of ד"ה אמה

14. Mikvaos 7:7

15. Bedek Habayis 7:7

16. Divrei Malkiel 4:77

17. Chibur Letaharah

18. Mishmeres Habayis and Teshuvos 1:918

19. Chasam Sofer Y.D. 212,