

The Weekly Daf



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Week of 15-21 Cheshvan, 8-14 October

Avodah Zarah 30-36

Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

When Appearances Count

	Case 1	Case 2
The Cases:	The ban on deriving any benefit whatsoever from an animal offered as a sacrifice to an idol includes even the undigested food found in the entrails of the slaughtered animal. Any transaction made with such material will therefore be considered invalid since nothing of legal value was given.	The ban on deriving any benefit whatsoever from a bull which has gored a man to death and has consequently been condemned to execution does not apply to the undigested food found in the entrails of that animal. A transaction conducted with such material is considered valid because he gave something of legal value (e.g. making the act of <i>kiddushin</i> through the medium of giving the woman something of monetary value).
The Problem:	If undigested food in the body of an animal is considered an integral part of the animal then the transaction should be invalid in both cases. Why do we differentiate between the two?	
The Resolution:	The undigested food still in the body of an animal gives it a fuller appearance. An idol worshipper is interested in this fuller appearance which makes his sacrifice seem more substantial. This material therefore constitutes an instrument of idol worship and comes under the ban on benefiting from such a sacrifice. No such interest applies in the case of the goring bull and the undigested food found in its body is not covered by the ban on benefiting from the animal itself.	

Avodah Zarah 34b



The Fragrant Flask

A Torah scholar, says Rabbi Nachman the son of Rabbi Chisda based on a passage in Shir Hashirim, is comparable to a flask containing fragrant oil. When it is opened the flask emits a pleasant fragrance but when it is closed no fragrance is enjoyed.

Maharsha explains that the flask is the body of the scholar and the fragrant oil is his Torah knowledge. Should the scholar be tempted to lock his Torah within himself and not share it with others so that he will stand out with his scholarship he is reminded to reflect on the flask. Only when the oil is poured from the flask does it emit the fragrance it absorbed from the oil which it cannot achieve so long as the oil is locked up inside it. In similar fashion the scholar who teaches others by pouring out the wisdom contained in him will emit a fragrance by acquiring even more Torah knowledge while if he keeps his Torah locked up inside him he will not enjoy the fragrance of acquiring more Torah knowledge.

Avodah Zarah 35b

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