The generations of the heavens were created from the heavens — הַמָּעָלִים. This opinion indicates that the heavens comprise the upper worlds, which are of a different nature than the earth and all physical objects. Conversely, the Rabbis maintain that an element of sanctity unites the material and the spiritual, and therefore Zion is the center of the world from which both the spiritual heavens and physical earth were created (Rabbi Yoshaia Pinto; Ye'or Tora).

It was taught in a baraita that Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: “These are the generations of the heaven and the earth when they were created, on the day that the Lord God made earth and heaven” (Genesis 2:4) means that the generations of the heavens, i.e., all things found in the heavens, were created from the heavens, while the generations of the earth were created from the earth.

And the Rabbis say: Both these and those were created from Zion, as it is stated: “A Psalm of Asaph. God, the Lord God has spoken and called the earth, from the rising of the sun to its place of setting,” and it says: “Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God has shined forth,” i.e., from Zion the beauty of the world was perfected, which includes both the generations of the heavens and the generations of the earth.

The Gemara asks: From where are these matters, that the sprinklings do not actually touch the Ark cover, derived? Rav Aha bar Yaakov said that Rabbi Zeira said: The verse states with regard to the goat sacrificed as a sin-offering: “And he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it upon the Ark cover and before the Ark cover” (Leviticus 16:15). The verse should not say downward, i.e., “before the Ark cover,” with regard to the goat, as this is unnecessary; this requirement is derived from the term downward in connection with the bull.

Since the rite performed with the blood of the goat is compared to the rite of the blood of the bull, why is the requirement that the High Priest must sprinkle downward stated twice? It is to juxtapose the phrase “upon the Ark cover” to “before the Ark cover”; just as before means that it is not actually on the Ark cover but merely in front of it, so too, “upon” means that it is not actually on the Ark cover but in front of it, and the High Priest simply turns his hand upward.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: On the contrary, the verse should not say upward, i.e., “before the Ark cover,” with regard to the bull, as this is unnecessary; it is derived from the term upward stated in connection to the goat. Since the verse equates the two rituals, why does it state the upward sprinkling of the blood of the bull? It is to juxtapose the phrase “before the Ark cover,” stated with regard to the bull, to “upon the Ark cover,” stated with regard to the goat; just as “upon” stated by the goat means actually upon, as indicated by the literal meaning of the verse, so too, “before” means actually upon it, i.e., the blood of the goat should touch the thickness of the Ark cover.
The Gemara expresses surprise at this suggestion: What is this comparison? Granted, if you say that downward is mentioned to juxtapose it to upward stated with regard to the bull, one needs the phrase “upon the Ark cover,” which deals with the blood of the bull, for that which the school of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov taught: “Upon [penet] the Ark cover to the east” (Leviticus 16:14); this forms an analogy that applies to the entire Torah: Any place where it is stated “face [penet],” it is referring to nothing other than the eastern side.8 However, if you say, as suggested by the question, that upward with regard to the bull is mentioned to juxtapose it to “upward” stated with regard to the goat, for what purpose does downward stated with regard to the goat come? what do we learn from this phrase? Rather, the first interpretation of the verse must be correct.

§ The Sages taught: “And sprinkle it upon the Ark cover and before the Ark cover” (Leviticus 16:15). We have thereby learned how many times the High Priest must sprinkle upward for the goat, that is, one sprinkling, as it states: “And sprinkle.” However, with regard to the sprinkling downward for the goat, before the Ark cover, I do not know how many times he must sprinkle.

I therefore derive the halakha from the verses. It states that blood is sprinkled downward in the case of the bull, and it states that blood is sprinkled downward in the case of the goat. Just as the blood that he sprinkles downward in the case of the bull consists of seven sprinklings, as the verse explicitly states: ‘And before the Ark he shall sprinkle seven times’ (Leviticus 16:14), so too, the sprinkling of the blood downward in the case of the goat is performed seven times.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: Or one can go and reason this way: It states that blood is sprinkled upward in the case of the goat, and likewise it states that blood is sprinkled downward in the case of the goat. Just as with regard to sprinkling upward in the case of the goat there is one sprinkling, so too, with regard to sprinkling downward in the case of the goat there is only one sprinkling. The Gemara comments: Let us see what case this resembles: One derives an act performed downward from another act that is downward, and one does not derive an act performed downward from an upward act.

The Gemara retorts: On the contrary, one derives one aspect of a matter from another aspect of that same matter, i.e., one should infer the halakha with regard to the blood of the goat from another halakha involving that same blood, and one does not derive the halakha of that matter from an external matter. Therefore, the verse states: “And he shall do with its blood as he did with the blood of the bull” (Leviticus 16:15). As there is no need for the verse to state: ‘As he did,’” because the whole process is explicitly stated a second time, what then is the meaning when the verse states: ‘As he did”? It comes to teach that all his actions should be alike, down to every detail. Consequently, just as the sprinklings downward in the case of the bull are seven, so too, the sprinklings downward in the case of the goat are seven.

We have thereby learned how many sprinklings are performed downward in the case of the bull and by the goat: Seven. However, I do not know how many times the High Priest must sprinkle upward in the case of the bull. And I therefore derive the halakha as follows: It states that blood is sprinkled upward in the case of the goat, and it states that blood is sprinkled upward in the case of the bull. Just as with regard to the sprinkling upward in the case of the goat he sprinkles one time, as stated explicitly, so too, in the case of the bull he sprinkles upward one time.

NOTES

Face [penet] is referring to nothing other than the eastern side – וְלָכַּהוּ שֶׁאֵינוּ לָכַּהוּ. The converse to this claim is that every instance of “before the Lord” is referring to the Divine Presence, which is located in the west. Since this expression appears in the previous verse, it is necessary to teach that the vessels themselves were faced eastward.
The manner of sprinkling and counting—halakha

The Gemara raises a difficulty: Or one can go and reason this way: It is stated that blood is sprinkled downward in the case of the bull, and likewise it is stated that blood is sprinkled upward in the case of the bull. Just as with regard to sprinkling downward in the case of the bull there are seven sprinklings, so too, with regard to sprinkling upward in the case of the bull there should be seven sprinklings. The Gemara comments: Let us see what case this resembles: One derives an act performed upward from another act that is performed upward, and one does not derive an act performed upward from a downward act.

The Gemara retorts: On the contrary, one derives one aspect of a matter from another aspect of that same matter, and one does not derive the halakha of that matter from an external matter. Therefore, the verse states: “And he shall do with its blood as he did.” As there is no need for the verse to state: “As he did,” because the whole process is explicitly stated a second time, what then is the meaning when the verse states: “As he did”? It comes to teach that all his actions should be alike: Just as the sprinklings downward in the case of the bull are seven, so too, the sprinklings downward in the case of the goat are seven; and just as the sprinkling upward in the case of the goat is one, so too, the sprinkling upward in the case of the bull is one.

The Gemara comments: They do not disagree about the matter itself that the High Priest sprinkles once upward and seven times downward. Rather, this Sage rules in accordance with the norm in his place, and this Sage rules in accordance with the norm in his place. In one place they counted the smaller number first, while in the other place they would count the larger number first.

The Gemara asks: In any case, everyone, both Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehuda, agrees that the first sprinkling upward must be counted together with each and every one of the subsequent sprinklings. What is the reason for this? Why can’t the High Priest count the downward sprinklings separately? The Sages debated this matter. Rabbi Elazar said: The reason is so that he does not err in the sprinklings. If the High Priest were to count downward without including the first upward sprinkling, he might mistakenly think that his calculation includes the first sprinkling, which would lead him to add another one.

Rabbi Yohanan said that the reason is that the verse states: “And he shall sprinkle it with his finger upon the Ark cover, and before the Ark cover he shall sprinkle” (Leviticus 16:14). As there is no need for the verse to state: He shall sprinkle again, what is the meaning when the verse states: “He shall sprinkle”? This teaches with regard to the first sprinkling that it must be counted with each and every subsequent one, i.e., he must mention the first sprinkling every time.

The Gemara asks: What is the practical difference between these two explanations? The Gemara answers: The practical difference between them concerns a case where he did not count the first sprinkling and did not err. That is acceptable according to the opinion of Rabbi Elazar, whereas according to Rabbi Yohanan the High Priest acted incorrectly, as it is mitzva to count the first one.
The Gemara asks: What is the meaning of the phrase: Due to a mixture? Ray Yosef said: It means due to the possible mixture of obligatory nests with free-will ones. There was concern lest the priests mix the money given for obligatory nests, which are sacrificed as a sin-offering and a burnt-offering, with the money for free-will nests, which are sacrificed as a pair of burnt-offerings. Mixing the funds in this way would disqualify the birds. Abaye said to him: And let us prepare two collection horns and write on them which is the container for obligatory offerings and which is the one for free-will offerings. The Gemara answers: Rabbi Yehuda does not accept that one may rely on writing in a situation where an error is possible. As we learned in the mishna that Rabbi Yehuda says: There was only one pedestal in the Temple on which to place the blood. What is the reason that they did not place two pedestals there? The reason is because the pedestals might be exchanged for one another, and he might take the goat’s blood instead of that of the bull. But in that case, let us place two pedestals and write on them which one is for the bull and which is for the goat. Rather, it is clear that Rabbi Yehuda does not accept that one may rely on writing in a situation where error is possible.

The Gemara raises an objection against this conclusion: There were thirteen collection horns in the Temple, and they were each inscribed with different names. On one container was written: New shekels. In this horn they placed shekels that were donated at the correct time that year. And on another horn the phrase old shekels was written, referring to coins from the past year that did not reach the Temple during the allotted period. On the other horns, the following phrases were written: Nests, for obligatory offerings consisting of pairs of pigeons or turtledoves; young birds for burnt-offerings; wood, for anyone who wished to donate wood; frankincense; and gold for the Ark cover. And there were six additional boxes designated for communal free-will offerings of all kinds.

Collection horns [shofarot] – מיקוון: Rashi explains that these were called shofarot because they resembled the shape of a shofar, with narrow openings at the top but wide underneath. The boxes were fashioned in this shape to thwart thieves from trying to steal from the funds while appearing to donate money; it took a great deal of effort to steal from narrow-mouthed boxes (see Jerusalem Talmud; Babylon Halakhot Gedolot).

Gold for the Ark cover – מיקוון: According to Rashi, this was a container for donating gold to be used for Temple vessels in general. Other commentators suggest that the gold was used mainly for plating the Holy of Holies chamber, also known as the Ark cover chamber, as it is taught that the donation surplus was reserved for this purpose (Tosafot Yeshanim).

Six for communal free-will offerings – מיקוון: Rashi explains that there were six containers for general donations, one for each of the six families of every priestly watch. The Rambam writes that each of these containers was designated for a specific purpose. A similar explanation is stated in tractate Shekalim (see the Hoshanot section).

Thirteen collection horns – מיקוון: There were no collection horns for any other purposes, as one could not pay for an obligatory animal offering in this manner. The reason is that one who brings an obligatory offering must place his hands on it, which means he must be present when it is sacrificed. Likewise, there were no donation horns for other types of offerings, as these were uncommon; permanent horns were established only for frequently sacrificed offerings (Maimonides).
HALAKHA

One who sends his sin-offering from overseas – קֶרֶם צְבָאֹת שִׁבְעֵת צְבָאֹת. If one sends a sin-offering from overseas, the priests sacrifice it on the presumption that he is alive (Rambam Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Pesulei HaMukdashin 4:14).

One who buys wine from among the Samaritans – שֶׁאֲנִי בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה. One who owns one hundred log of untithed wine must separate terumot and tithes before he may drink any of the beverage. He may not stipulate beforehand that the remaining wine shall serve as terumot and tithes, as the principle of retroactive clarification is not accepted with regard to a Torah requirement. The halakha is in accordance with the majority opinion, as explained in tractate Beitzah (Kessef Mishne; Radbaz; Rambam Sefer Zera‘im, Hilkhot Ma‘aserot 7:1).

The Gemara explains: New shekels, these are the shekels of each and every year that arrive on time; old shekels, these are for one who did not donate a shekel the previous year, who must donate the next year; nests, these are the turtle-doves brought as offerings; young birds for burnt-offerings, these are pigeons; and all these birds are burnt-offerings; this is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda. Rabbi Yehuda maintains that there was no container for nests of obligatory sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, due to the potential mixture between the two. In any case, this shows that Rabbi Yehuda does rely on inscriptions written on containers, which contradicts the above claim that he does not rely on writing in these situations.

When Rav Dimi came from Erezy Yisrael to Babylonia he said: They say in the West, Erezy Yisrael, that this is a rabbinic decree due to the possible presence in the mixture of a sin-offering whose owners have died. Since a sin-offering of this kind must be left to die, if one of the donors of the coins in the sin-offering horn passes away, his funds cannot be used. The Gemara asks: And are we concerned about the possible death of a donor? But didn’t we learn in a mishna: With regard to one who sends his sin-offering from overseas,9 they sacrifice it for him on the presumption that he is alive, although he might have died in the meantime. This shows that the possibility of death is not taken into account.

Rather, Rabbi Yehuda’s concern is due to a sin-offering whose owner has certainly died, lest it be confirmed that one of the people who donated money for a sin-offering bird has indeed died. The Gemara asks: Even so, this can be rectified, as let us select four zuz, the price of such an offering, and throw them into the water to be destroyed. It may be said that the money removed from the box was the money for the sin-offering whose owner died, and these other coins will be permitted. It will be clarified retroactively that these coins were designated for that purpose. The Gemara answers: Rabbi Yehuda does not accept the rule of retroactive clarification.8 In his opinion, one cannot issue a designation after the fact. Consequently, he rejects this solution.

The Gemara asks: From where do we derive that this is indeed Rabbi Yehuda’s opinion? If we say it is derived from that which we learned in the following mishna, there is a difficulty. The mishna states: With regard to one who buys wine from among the Samaritans,10 who do not tithe their produce properly, on Shabbat eve at nightfall and has no time to separate the tithe before Shabbat and to place the separated portions in distinct locations, he may arise and say: Two log of the one hundred log present here, which I will separate in the future, after Shabbat, shall be the teruma gedola given to a priest, as the Sages mandated that one-fiftieth of one’s produce constitutes an average measure of teruma.

NOTES

One who sends his sin-offering – קֶרֶם צְבָאֹת שִׁבְעֵת צְבָאֹת. It has been suggested that this is referring specifically to the offering of a woman or a bird brought as a sin-offering. As in the case of other sin-offerings, the donor is required to place his hands on the animal prior to its slaughter. Admittedly, this site is not indispensable, but it is still preferable for the donor to be present (Avot).

Retroactive clarification – קְרֶּבֶּן. The concept of retroactive clarification features in various halakhic contexts. The issue is as follows: Once an event has happened, may one behave as though its outcome was predetermined, thereby making the result retroactively correct? For example, may the wine remaining in a jug be considered teruma retroactively? In all cases of retroactive clarification it is not merely a matter of discovering the previous status but of behaving as though something that was determined only later was actually in effect at an earlier point in time. The halakhic conclusion is that one may not apply the concept of retroactive clarification to cases involving Torah law, but one may with regard to rabbinic law.

One who buys wine from among the Samaritans – שֶׁאֲנִי בְּנֵי יְהוּדָה. The halakhic status of Samaritans was uncertain in mishnaic times. Some rabbis maintain that Samaritans were proper converts and therefore halakhically Jewish. Nevertheless, because they rejected all the books of the Bible other than the Torah, as well as the authority of the Oral Law, they were viewed as sinful Jews who could not be trusted completely. Other rabbis label them lion converts, in reference to the fact that they converted only due to fear of the lions that attacked them, which rendered their conversion somewhat questionable (see II Kings, chapter 17). Yet others consider their behavior so deviant that they were no better than gentiles. The early commentators debate which approach is accepted by the mishna cited here. On the one hand, this mishna permits the purchase of wine from Samaritans, which suggests that they are not considered gentiles, as wine of gentiles is classified as wine poured as a libation to idolatry and may not be drunk. On the other hand, the mishna rules that terumot and tithes must be separated from their wine. See Tosafot for several ways to reconcile this apparent contradiction.