

BACKGROUND

Omer meal-offering – מנחת העומר – The omer meal-offering was one-tenth of an ephah of barley, offered in the Temple on the sixteenth of Nisan, the second day of the Passover festival. The sacrifice was brought irrespective of whether the sixteenth of Nisan was a Shabbat or a weekday. The omer was harvested from the newly ripe barley on the night following the first day of Passover, and was prepared as roasted flour. A handful was burned on the altar; the rest was eaten by the priests. In addition to the omer, a male sheep was sacrificed as a burnt-offering, together with a wine libation and two-tenths of an ephah of wheat flour as a meal-offering. Once the omer was offered, it was permitted to eat grain from the new harvest. It is a mitzva by Torah law to count the days from the sixteenth of Nisan until the festival of *Shavuot*.



Priests preparing the omer meal-offering

NOTES

He says that it is impure and the priests bring another meal-offering – **אומר ומביאים אחרת** – Why is a replacement offering brought? After all, even according to the approach that impurity is overridden in cases involving the public, a replacement should not be necessary, since the first offering was accepted (*Sha'ar HaMelekh*). Some commentaries explain that based on the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua, failure to fulfill every detail of an offering prevents that offering from effecting atonement (*Me'il Shmuel*). Rashi in tractate *Menachot* explains that a replacement is brought to underscore to the public the severity of ritual impurity, so that they may learn that in a case involving an individual, impurity is not overridden.

Remnants of the offering designated for eating – שרידים – **לאכילה**: The permissibility of sacrificing an offering in impurity pertains to the service on the altar and in the Temple; however, it remains prohibited for priests to eat sacred food while impure. Therefore, the *halakha* is not that the impurity is completely nullified; it is merely permitted in the Temple.

The meal-offering accompanying the sacrifice of bulls – מנחת פרים: Why does the cited case address the meal-offering accompanying the bulls rather than addressing the bulls themselves? It is because one is allowed to bring a meal-offering several days after the offering that it accompanies. Therefore, there is no rush to bring the meal-offering on that very day, and it need not be offered in impurity (*Zikhron She'erit Yosef*).

What, is it not referring to the bulls, rams, and sheep of the festival of *Sukkot* – **מאי לאו פרים אילים וכבשים דחג**: Of course, the Gemara could have suggested that the offerings are those sacrificed on the other Festivals, Passover or *Shavuot*; however, *Sukkot* was chosen because of the great number of offerings sacrificed then (*Tosefot Ri HaLavan*).

דכל טומאת מת בעיבור – רחמנא שרייה.

אמר רב ששת: מנא אמינא לה – דתניא: היה עומד ומקריב מנחת העומר ונטמאת בידו – אומר, ומביאין אחרת תחתיה. ואם אין שם אלא היא אומרין לו: הוי פקת, ושתוק.

קתני מיהת: אומר, ומביאין אחרת תחתיה! – אמר רב נחמן: מודינא היכא דאיכא שרידים לאכילה.

מיתבי: היה מקריב מנחת פרים ואילים וכבשים ונטמאת בידו, אומר ומביאין אחרת תחתיה. ואם אין שם אלא היא – אומרין לו: הוי פקת, ושתוק.

מאי לאו – פרים אילים וכבשים דחג!

אמר לך רב נחמן: לא, פרים – פר עבודה זרה, אף על גב דעיבור הוא, כיון דלא קביע ליה זמן – מהדרין. אילים – באילו של אהרן, דאף על גב דקביע ליה זמן, כיון דיחיד הוא – מהדרין. כבשים – בכבש הבא עם העומר, דאיכא שרידים לאכילה.

as in all situations of impurity imparted by corpses in cases involving the public, the Merciful One permits those who are impure to perform the Temple service.

The Gemara analyzes the rationale behind the two opinions. **Rav Sheshet said: From where do I derive to say that impurity is overridden in cases involving the public? It is as it was taught in a baraita: If a priest was standing and sacrificing the omer meal-offering^b and it became impure in his hand, the priest, who was aware of what transpired, says that it is impure and the priests bring another meal-offering in its stead. And if the meal-offering in his hand is the only meal-offering available there, the other priests say to him: Be shrewd and keep silent; do not tell anyone that it is impure.**

In any case, it is teaching that he says that it is impure and the priests bring another meal-offeringⁿ in its place. Apparently, when it is possible to perform the service in a state of purity, even in cases involving the public, it is preferable to do so, and the prohibition of ritual impurity is not permitted. **Rav Nahman** rejected the proof and said: **I concede that in a case where there are remnants of the offering designated for eatingⁿ it must be performed in purity wherever possible. Although it is permitted to sacrifice an offering when impure, the mitzva to eat portions of the offering must be performed in a state of purity. Therefore, in cases where portions of the offering are eaten, the preference is to sacrifice the offering in a state of purity.**

The Gemara raises an objection to the opinion of **Rav Nahman** from the *Tosefta*: **If a priest was sacrificing the meal-offering accompanying the sacrifice of bulls,ⁿ rams, or sheep, and the meal-offering became impure in his hand, the priest says that it is impure and the priests bring another meal-offering in its stead. And if the meal-offering in his hand is the only meal-offering available there, the other priests say to him: Be shrewd and keep silent; do not tell anyone that it is impure.**

What, is it not referring to the bulls, rams, and sheep of the festival of *Sukkot*,ⁿ which are communal offerings that are not eaten? Apparently, even in cases of communal offerings, the priests seek to perform the service in a state of purity and the prohibition of impurity is not permitted but merely overridden.

Rav Nahman could have said to you: **No, the bulls mentioned in the Tosefta are not standard communal offerings. Rather, the reference is to the bull sacrificed when the entire community engages in idolatry unwittingly. Although this offering is a communal offering, since it has no specific time fixed for its sacrifice, we seek out a pure meal-offering in its stead.**

Similarly, **the rams mentioned in the Tosefta are not additional offerings of the Festival. Rather, the reference is to the ram of Aaron sacrificed on Yom Kippur. Although it has a specific time fixed for its sacrifice, since it is an offering brought by an individual, the High Priest, we seek out a pure meal-offering in its stead, as service in a state of impurity is permitted only for communal offerings.**

The sheep mentioned are not those for the daily offerings or the additional offerings of the Festival. Rather, the reference is to the sheep that accompanies the omer meal-offering, as in that case, there are remnants designated for eating. Therefore, the meal-offering must be offered in purity.

מיתבי: דם שנטמא וזרקו, בשוגג –
הורצה, במזיד – לא הורצה! כי תנא
היא – דיחיד.

The Gemara raises an additional objection to the opinion of Rav Nahman: With regard to **blood that became impure** and a priest sprinkled it on the altar, if he did so **unwittingly**, the offering is accepted. If he sprinkled the blood **intentionally**, the offering is **not accepted**. Apparently, even in cases involving the public, performing service in the Temple in a state of impurity is not permitted. This objection is rejected: **When that baraita was taught**, it was with regard to the offering of an **individual**, where the prohibition of impurity is certainly in effect.

תא שמע: על מה הציץ מרצה – על
הדם ועל הבשר ועל החלב שנטמא,
בין בשוגג בין במזיד, בין באונס בין
ברצון, בין ביחיד בין בצבור. ואי סלקא
דעתך טומאה היתר היא בצבור – למה
לי לרצוי?

The Gemara continues: **Come and hear** a different argument based on that which was taught in a *baraita*. **For what does the frontplate worn by the High Priest effect acceptance?**^h It effects acceptance **for the blood, for the flesh, and for the fat** of an offering **that became impure** in the Temple, **whether** it became impure **unwittingly** or **whether** it became impure **intentionally**, **whether** it was **due to** circumstances **beyond his control** or **whether** it was done **willfully**, **whether** it was **in** the framework of an **individual** offering or **whether** it was **in** the framework of a **communal** offering. **And if it enters your mind that impurity is permitted** in cases involving the **public**, **why do I** need the frontplate to **effect acceptance**? If the prohibition of impurity is permitted, no pardon is necessary.

אמר לך רב נחמן: כי קתני הציץ מרצה –
אדיחיד. ואיבעית אימא: אפילו תימא
בצבור, בהנך דלא קביע לה זמן.

The Gemara responds that Rav Nahman could have said to you: **When the baraita teaches that the frontplate effects acceptance** it is not referring to the entire list of items cited in the *baraita*; it is referring to an **individual** offering brought in impurity, not to a communal offering. The communal offering is mentioned only in the sense that in that case too, impurity is permitted, albeit for a different reason. Or **if you wish**, say instead: **Even if you say** that the frontplate effects acceptance for a **communal** offering, it is only for those offerings that **lack a fixed time**. Rav Nahman concedes that with regard to those communal offerings that have no specific time fixed for their sacrifice, the prohibition of performing the service in impurity remains in effect and requires the acceptance effected by the frontplate.

מיתבי: ונשא אהרן את עון הקדשים
וכי איזה עון הוא נושא? אם עון פיגול –
הרי כבר נאמר "לא ירצה", ואם עון
נותר – הרי כבר נאמר "לא יחשב",

The Gemara raises an objection. It is stated: **"And Aaron will gain forgiveness for the sin committed in the sacred things that the children of Israel shall hallow in all their sacred gifts, and it shall be always upon his forehead that they may be accepted favorably before the Lord"** (Exodus 28:38). **And for which sin does the frontplate gain forgiveness?** If it is for the **sin of piggul**,ⁿ an offering disqualified by the intention to sacrifice or eat it after the permitted time, **it has already been stated**: **"And if it is eaten at all on the third day, it is piggul; it shall not be accepted"** (Leviticus 19:7). There is no acceptance of an offering that became *piggul*. **And if it is for the sin of notar**, meat of an offering left after the permitted time for eating it passed, **it has already been stated**: **"And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings is eaten on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be credited to he who offered it"** (Leviticus 7:18).

HALAKHA

For what does the frontplate worn by the High Priest effect acceptance – על מה הציץ מרצה: The frontplate effects acceptance for individual and communal offerings sacrificed in

impurity. Even for offerings that were unfit to have their blood sprinkled due to impurity, the frontplate effect acceptance after the fact (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Pesulei HaMukdashin* 1:34).

NOTES

Piggul – פיגול: *Piggul* represents a severe disqualification of an offering, and one who eats from its meat is liable to receive *karet*. *Piggul* may take effect during one of the four sacrificial rites: Slaughter, receiving the blood,

carrying the blood, and sprinkling the blood. If, during one of these four rites, the priest declares his intention to sacrifice the animal after its allotted time, the offering is irreversibly disqualified.

NOTES

Which was exempted from its general prohibition in cases involving the public – שהותרה מכללה בציבור – The phrase: From its general prohibition, means that there are exceptions with regard to a particular halakhic principle. For example, the *halakha* prohibiting sacrifice of an offering in a state of impurity is overridden in cases involving the public. The principle is that a prohibition without exceptions is more severe than one with exceptions.

This poses a difficulty to the opinion of Rav Sheshet – וקשיא וקשיא: Some versions of the Gemara omit this phrase. In fact, one commentary explains that this *baraita* poses a difficulty to the opinion of Rav Nahman, since his opinion is that impurity is permitted in matters involving the public, which obviates the need for the frontplate (Rabbi Elyakim; *Dikdukei Soferim*).

It shall be always upon his forehead that they may be accepted – תמיד לרצון: The punctuation of the verse links the word “always” to the phrase: “It shall be on his forehead,” contrary to the interpretation of the Gemara. This reading supports Rabbi Shimon’s opinion that perforce, “always” cannot be interpreted according to its plain meaning, and the frontplate effects acceptance independent of whether it is on the High Priest’s forehead.

Wearing the frontplate – לבישת הציץ: In the Jerusalem Talmud, there is an amoraic dispute whether the High Priest wore the frontplate every day or only on Shabbat and Festivals. That dispute is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon, who says that the frontplate effects acceptance whether or not it is on the High Priest’s forehead.



Front and back view of the High Priest wearing the frontplate

Doesn't he need to sleep – ומי לא בעי מינים: Some commentaries prove from this statement that the High Priest was permitted to wear the frontplate even when he was not in the Temple or engaged in Temple service. If that were not the case, the Gemara would have simply asked: Does the High Priest ever leave the Temple? Similarly, why doesn't Rabbi Shimon cite support for his opinion that the frontplate was not perpetually on the High Priest's forehead from the case of Yom Kippur, when he obviously does not have the frontplate on his forehead? Perhaps Yom Kippur is an exception, as the High Priest is specifically commanded to remove the frontplate during the service. Therefore it does not contradict the word “always,” which here means whenever the High Priest is commanded to have the frontplate of his forehead (*Leviyat Hen; Ohel Moshe*).

הא אינו נושא אלא עון טומאה שהותרה מכללה בציבור. וקשיא לרב יששת! הנאי היא. דתנאי: ציץ, בין שישנו על מצחו בין שאינו על מצחו – מרצה, דברי רבי שמעון.

רבי יהודה אומר: עודהו על מצחו – מרצה, אין עודהו על מצחו – אינו מרצה. אמר לו רבי שמעון: כהן גדול ביום הכפורים יוכיח, שאין עודהו על מצחו ומרצה!

אמר לו רבי יהודה: הנח לכהן גדול ביום הכפורים, שטומאה הותרה לו בציבור. מכלל דרבי שמעון סבר – טומאה דחוייה היא בציבור.

אמר אביי: בנשבר הציץ – דכולי עלמא לא פליגי דלא מרצה. פי פליגי – דתלי בסוכתא. רבי יהודה סבר: על מצח ונשא.

ורבי שמעון סבר: תמיד לרצון לפני ה'. מאי תמיד? אילימא תמיד על מצחו, מי משבחת לה? מי לא בעי מיעל לבית הכסא, ומי לא בעי מינס? אלא תמיד מרצה הוא.

Apparently, the frontplate gains forgiveness only for the sin of impurity, which was exempted from its general prohibition in cases involving the public.^{NH} This poses a difficulty to the opinion of Rav Sheshet,^N who said that the prohibition of impurity is overridden in cases involving the public, as the *baraita* clearly states that impurity is permitted. The Gemara responds: According to Rav Sheshet, the question of whether the prohibition of impurity is permitted or overridden in cases involving the public is the subject of a dispute between *tanna'im*, as it was taught in a *baraita*: The frontplate effects acceptance whether it is on the High Priest's forehead or whether it is not on the High Priest's forehead when the offering becomes impure. This is the statement of Rabbi Shimon.

Rabbi Yehuda says: As long as it is on his forehead it effects acceptance; if it is no longer on his forehead it does not effect acceptance.^H Rabbi Shimon said to Rabbi Yehuda: The case of the High Priest on Yom Kippur can prove that your statement is incorrect, as on Yom Kippur when the High priest wears only four linen garments the frontplate is no longer on his forehead, and it still effects acceptance.

Rabbi Yehuda said to him: Leave the case of the High Priest on Yom Kippur, as the atonement of the frontplate is unnecessary because the prohibition of performing the Temple service in impurity is permitted in cases involving the public. Learn by inference that Rabbi Shimon holds that impurity is overridden in cases involving the public, and that is why the atonement of the frontplate is necessary. The dispute between Rav Sheshet and Rav Nahman is based on a tannaitic dispute, and the *baraita* cited above is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda.

The Gemara proceeds to analyze the tannaitic dispute between Rabbi Shimon and Rabbi Yehuda. Abaye said: In a case where the frontplate broke, everyone, including Rabbi Shimon, agrees that the frontplate no longer effects acceptance. When they disagree is in a case where the frontplate is not on his forehead but is hanging on a peg. Rabbi Yehuda holds that the verse: “And it shall be on the forehead of Aaron and Aaron shall gain forgiveness for the sin committed in the sacred things” (Exodus 28:38) means that the frontplate atones for sin as long as it is on his forehead.

And Rabbi Shimon holds that emphasis should be placed on the end of that verse: “It shall be always upon his forehead that they may be accepted^N before the Lord.” From this, Rabbi Shimon derived that the frontplate always effects acceptance, even when it is not upon the High Priest's forehead, as what is the meaning of the word always in the verse? If we say that it means that the frontplate must always be on the High Priest's forehead,^N do you find that situation in reality? Doesn't he need to enter the bathroom, when he must remove the frontplate bearing the name of God? Similarly, doesn't he need to sleep,^N at which time he removes the priestly vestments? Rather, it means that the frontplate always effects acceptance, whether or not it is on his forehead.

HALAKHA

Which was exempted from its general prohibition in cases involving the public – שהותרה מכללה בציבור: The frontplate effects acceptance for the impurity of offerings that are eaten but not for the definite impurity of people, with the exception of impurity whose prohibition is overridden in matters involving the public, for which the frontplate effects acceptance (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Biat HaMikdash* 4:7).

When does the frontplate effect acceptance – מתי מרצה

הציץ: The Rambam rules in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda that the frontplate effects acceptance only when it is in place on the High Priest's forehead. This is consistent with the principle that the *halakha* is ruled in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda in disputes with Rabbi Shimon. Although the Rambam ruled in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Shimon with regard to impurity in cases involving the public, the two disputes are not linked (Rambam *Sefer Avoda, Hilkhot Biat HaMikdash* 4:7 and *Kesef Mishne* there).

חייב – A person must touch the phylacteries on his head – **אדם למשמש בתפילין**: A person must frequently touch his phylacteries to maintain perpetual awareness of their presence. One need not do so during prayer (*Magen Avraham*). With regard to what length of time constitutes a lapse of awareness, one may rely on the statements of Rabbeinu Yona and the Rosh that only idle conversation and the like constitute a lapse of awareness with regard to phylacteries (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 28:ו).

ולרבי יהודה נמי, הא כתיב 'תמיד' – ההוא תמיד שלא יסיח דעתו ממנו, כדרבה בר רב הונא. דאמר רבה בר רב הונא: חייב אדם למשמש בתפילין בכל שעה ושעה, קל וחומר מציץ.

The Gemara asks: **And according to Rabbi Yehuda as well, isn't it written: "Always"?** Clearly it does not mean that the frontplate must always be on his forehead. The Gemara answers: **That term: "Always,"** teaches that the High Priest must always be aware that the frontplate is on his head, and **that he should not be distracted from it.** This is in accordance with the statement of **Rabba bar Rav Huna, as Rabba bar Rav Huna said: A person must touch the phylacteries on his headⁿ and on his arm each and every hour,** to maintain awareness of their presence. This is derived by means of an *a fortiori* inference from the frontplate:

Perek I
Daf 8 Amud a

ומה ציץ, שאין בו אלא אכרה אחת, אמרה תורה "על מצחו תמיד" – שלא יסיח דעתו ממנו, תפילין שיש בהן אכרות הרבה – על אחת כמה וכמה.

Just as with regard to the frontplate, which has only one mention of God's name, the Torah said: "It shall be always upon his forehead," teaching that **that he should not be distracted from it,** with regard to phylacteries, which have numerous mentions of God's name in their four passages from the Torah, **all the more soⁿ one may not be distracted from them.**

ולרבי שמעון דאמר תמיד מרצה, והא כתיב "על מצחו ונשא" – ההוא לקבוע לו מקום הוא דאמא.

The Gemara asks: **And according to Rabbi Shimon, who says that the verse: "It shall be always upon his forehead,"** teaches that the frontplate **effects acceptance** even when it is not on the High Priest's forehead, **isn't it also written: "On his forehead... and shall gain forgiveness"?** The Gemara answers: **That verse comes to establish the place** where the High Priest should position the frontplate, not to indicate that it effects acceptance only when it is on his forehead.

ורבי יהודה, לקבוע לו מקום מנא ליה? נפקא ליה מ"על מצחו". ורבי שמעון נמי תיפוק ליה מ"על מצחו"! אין הכי נמי.

The Gemara asks: **And according to Rabbi Yehuda, from where does he derive the halakha to establish the frontplate's place on the High Priest's forehead?** The Gemara answers: **He derives it from that which is written: "On his forehead."** The Gemara asks: **And Rabbi Shimon, too, let him derive the placement of the frontplate from: "On his forehead."** The Gemara responds: **Yes, it is indeed so;** that is Rabbi Shimon's source.

אלא "על מצחו ונשא" מאי עביד ליה? אמר לך: ראוי למצח – מרצה, שאינו ראוי למצח – אינו מרצה, לאפוקי נשבר הציץ, דלא מרצה.

The Gemara asks: **Rather, if so, with regard to the verse: "On his forehead... and shall gain forgiveness,"** what does Rabbi Shimon do with that verse? The Gemara responds that Rabbi Shimon could have said to you: **The frontplate that is intact and fit for placement on the High Priest's forehead effects acceptance;ⁿ that which is not fit for placement on the High Priest's forehead does not effect acceptance.** This comes to exclude a case where **the frontplate broke, in which case it does not effect acceptance.**

ולרבי יהודה, נשבר הציץ מנא ליה? נפקא ליה מ"מצח" "מצחו". ורבי שמעון: "מצח" "מצחו" לא משמע ליה.

The Gemara asks: **And according to Rabbi Yehuda, from where does he derive the ruling that in a case where the frontplate broke it does not effect acceptance?ⁿ** The Gemara responds: **He derives it from the fact that the Torah did not say forehead, and instead said his forehead,** teaching that it must be fit for the forehead of the High Priest. **And Rabbi Shimon does not learn anything from the difference between forehead and his forehead.**

NOTES

All the more so – על אחת כמה וכמה: See *Tosafot*, who challenge this *a fortiori* inference. In *Sefer Yere'im* it is explained that the purpose of touching the phylacteries is to be constantly aware of them lest they fall and be trampled, in which case their leather casing would not protect them. That resolves the question asked by *Tosafot* as well.

The frontplate that is fit for placement on the High Priest's forehead effects acceptance – ראוי למצח מרצה: This statement is seen as the principal source for Rabbi Zeira's *halakha*

that even with regard to actions that are not obligatory, if the action cannot be performed at all, failure to perform that action invalidates the matter. Here, according to Rabbi Shimon, the frontplate is effective even when not on the High Priest's forehead; nevertheless, if it is broken, it does not effect acceptance (Rav Shmuel Strashun).

From where does he derive the ruling that in a case where the frontplate broke it does not effect acceptance – נשבר ליה: At first glance this question seems unnecessary,

since Rabbi Yehuda holds that the frontplate effects acceptance only when it is on the High Priest's forehead, and a broken frontplate cannot be worn. Some commentaries suggest that the Gemara is asking how Rabbi Yehuda knows that the verse is teaching the position of the frontplate, and not that the frontplate must be whole. If he derives that it must be whole, Rabbi Yehuda is left without a source to teach that the frontplate must be on the High Priest's forehead (*Tosafot Yeshanim; Tosafot Rid; Tosafot HaRosh*).