

Non-Jews and the Beit Mikdash: The Case of Korbanot - Menachot 73a-b

The mishnayot of chapters 4 and 5 of Menachot mention flour offerings brought as korbanot by a non-Jews to the Beit Hamikdash. In this shiur, we will examine the logic and parameters of offerings by non-Jews inside and outside the Mikdash.

Questions? Comments? Email dinanddaf@gmail.com

1. ישעיהו נו:ז

וּבְנֵי הַנֶּכֶר הַנִּלְוִים עַל ה' לְשָׂרְתוֹ וְלֹאֲהַבָּהּ אֶת שֵׁם ה' לְהִיּוֹת לוֹ לְעֹבְדִים כָּל שְׁמֵר שַׁבָּת מִחֻלְלוֹ וּמְחַזְקִים בְּבְרִיתִי.

As for the foreigners who are joined to GOD, to render service, and to love GOD's name, to be devoted servants — all who keep the sabbath and do not profane it, And who hold fast to My covenant—

וְהִבִּיאֹתֶימָם אֶל הַר קְדוֹשִׁי וְשִׂמְחֹתֶימָם בְּבֵית תְּפִלָּתִי עוֹלֹתֵיהֶם וְזִבְחֵיהֶם לְרָצוֹן עַל מִזְבְּחִי כִּי בֵּיתִי בֵּית תְּפִלָּה יִקְרָא לְכָל הָעַמִּים.

I will bring them to My sacred mount and let them rejoice in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices shall be welcome on My altar; for My House shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

2. דברי הימים ב' לב:כב-כג

וַיֹּשַׁע ה' אֶת יְחִזְקִיָּהוּ וְאֶת יְשָׁבִי יְרוּשָׁלַם מִיַּד סַנְחֶרִיב מֶלֶךְ אַשּׁוּר וּמִיַּד כָּל וַיְנַהֲלֵם מִסָּבִיב.

Thus GOD delivered Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria, and from everyone—providing for them on all sides.

וְרַבִּים מְבִיאִים מְנַחָה לֵה' לִירוּשָׁלַם וּמִגְדָּנוֹת לִיְחִזְקִיָּהוּ מֶלֶךְ יְהוּדָה וַיִּנְשָׂא לְעֵינָיו כָּל הַגּוֹיִם מֵאַחֲרֵי כֵן.

Many brought tribute to GOD to Jerusalem, and gifts to King Hezekiah of Judah; thereafter he was exalted in the eyes of all the nations.

3. משנה מנחות ו:א

אֵלוּ מְנַחֹת נִקְמָצוֹת וְשִׁירֵיהֶן לְכַהֲנִים, מְנַחֹת סֹלֶת, וְהַמִּחְבֵּת, וְהַמְרַחֶשֶׁת, וְהַחֲלוֹת, וְהַרְקִיקִין, מְנַחֹת גּוֹיִם, מְנַחֹת נְשִׁים, מְנַחֹת הָעֹמֵר, מְנַחֹת חוּטָא, וּמְנַחֹת קְנָאוֹת. רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אוֹמֵר, מְנַחֹת חוּטָא שֶׁל כַּהֲנִים נִקְמָצוֹת, וְהַקֶּמֶץ קָרֵב לְעֹצְמוֹ, וְהַשִּׁירִים קָרְבִּין לְעֹצְמוֹ:

And these are the meal offerings from which a handful is removed and the remainder of the offering is eaten by the priests: The meal offering of fine flour; and the meal offering prepared in a pan; and the meal offering prepared in a deep pan; and the meal offering baked in an oven that is brought entirely of loaves; and the meal offering baked in an oven that is brought entirely of wafers; the meal offering of gentiles; and the meal offering of women; and the *omer* meal offering, i.e., the measure of barley brought as a communal offering on the sixteenth of Nisan; and the meal offering of a sinner; and the meal offering of jealousy, brought by a *sota*. Rabbi Shimon says: Although its remainder is not eaten by priests, as meal offerings of priests are burned in their entirety, as it is written: "And every meal offering of the priest shall be offered in its entirety; it shall not be eaten" (Leviticus 6:16), nevertheless, with regard to the meal offering of a sinner brought by one of the priests, a handful is removed. And the handful is sacrificed on the altar by itself, and the remainder is sacrificed on the altar by itself.

4. משנה שקלים א:ה

...העובד כוכבים והכותי ששקלו – אין מקבלין מידן. ואין מקבלין מידן קיני זבין וקיני זבות וקיני יולדות וחטאות ואשמות, אבל נדרים ונדבות מקבלין מידן. זה הכלל: כל שנידר ונידב – מקבלין מידן, כל שאין נידר ונידב – אין מקבלין מידן. וכן הוא מפורש על ידי עזרא, שנאמר: 'לא לכם ולנו לבנות את בית א-לוהינו!'

...A gentile or a Samaritan [*Kuti*] who contributed a shekel to participate in the communal offerings, they do not accept it from them. And likewise, they do not accept from a gentile or a Samaritan pairs of birds sacrificed in the purification ritual of a *zav*, pairs of birds of a *zava*, or pairs of birds of a woman who gave birth, all of which are brought for ritual purification, or sin-offerings or guilt-offerings. This is the principle: With regard to anything that can be brought to the altar as a vow or as a free-will offering, the priests accept it from gentiles and Samaritans, and with regard to anything that cannot be brought as a vow or as a free-will offering, they may not accept it from them. And this principle was similarly articulated by Ezra, when he recorded the Jewish leadership's rejection of the Samaritans' request to assist the Jews in the construction of the Second Temple, as it is stated: "[But Zerubbabel, and Joshua, and the rest of the heads of fathers' houses of Israel, said unto them:] You have nothing to do with us to build a house unto our God; [but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord the God of Israel, as King Cyrus the king of Persia has commanded us]" (Ezra 4:3).

5. ויקרא כב:יז-יח, כה

יז וַיְדַבֵּר יְהוָה אֶל-מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

GOD spoke to Moses, saying:

יח דַּבֵּר אֶל-אַהֲרֹן וְאֶל-בָּנָיו וְאֶל כָּל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאָמַרְתָּ אֲלֵהֶם אִישׁ אִישׁ מִבֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וּמִן-הַגֵּר בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיב קֶרְבָּנוֹ לְכָל-נִדְרֵיהֶם וּלְכָל-נִדְבוֹתָם אֲשֶׁר-יִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה לַעֲלֹה:

Speak to Aaron and his sons, and to all the Israelite people, and say to them:

When anyone of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, presents a burnt offering as their offering for any of the votive or any of the freewill offerings that are offered to GOD,

כה ומייד בן-נכר לא תקריבו את-לחם אלהיכם מקל-אלה כי משחתם בהם מום בם לא ירצו לכם: {ס}

nor shall you accept such [animals] from a foreigner for offering as food for your God, for they are mutilated, they have a defect; they shall not be accepted in your favor.

6. תוספתא שקלים א:ז

לוקחין מן הגוים קרבנות צבור בכסף, ומקבלין מהן עולות ושלמים עופות ומנחות עצים ולבונה ומלח, דברי ר' יוסה הגלילי. אמר לו ר' עקיבא: אפי' אתה יושב ודורש כל היום, אין מקבלין מהן אלא עולה ושלמים בלבד. אין מקבלין מהן נדבה להקדיש בדק הבית ואם הקדישו הקדישו הקדש.

It is lawful to buy congregational sacrifices from Gentiles for money. And one may accept from them burnt offerings and peace offerings, poultry, and grain offerings, wood, frankincense and salt [These are] words of R. Akiba. R. Jose the Galilean said to him: Even if you spend all day in interpreting the scripture [you will not find any proof of it]; one accepts only burnt offerings and peace offerings from them, but one does not accept a voluntary donation for the dedication of the temple repair fund; but if they have [already] consecrated it, their consecration is [valid] consecration.

7. תורת כהנים אמור ז:ב, מהדורת וייס צח.

...למה נא' איש איש להביא את הגויים שהם נודרים בנדרים ובנדבות כישראל... אשר יקריב לד' לעולה אין לי אלא עולה מנין לרבות את השלמים, תלמוד לומר נדריהם, מנין את התודה תלמוד לומר נדבותם, מנין לרבות את העופות והמנחות והיין והלבונה והעצים, תלמוד לומר נדריהם לכל נדריהם, נדבותם לכל נדבותם. א"כ למה נאמר אשר יקריבו לה' לעולה פרט לנזירות דברי ר' עקיבא. א"ל ר' יוסי הגלילי אפי' אתה מרבה כל היום אין כאן אלא עולה בלבד

...Why does it say "every man"? To include nonJews who may donate offerings like a Jew...who will sacrifice a burnt offering to God: this only refers to a burnt offering. Whence to include the peace offering? Hence, "their oaths." Whence to include a thanksgiving offering? Hence, "their donations." Whence to include birds, flour offerings, wine, frankincense, and wood? Hence, "their oaths, *for all of their oaths,*" "their donations, *for all of their donations.*" If so, why is "that they will offer to God as a burnt offering" said? To exclude (the offerings of) naziriteship, per R. Akiva. R. Yose the Galilean said to him: Even if you add inclusions all day, there is only a burnt offering here.

8. תורת כהנים אמור ז : יב, צט ע"א

מנין שאין מקבלין שקלים מן הגוי תלמוד לומד ומיד בן נכר לא תקריבו את לחם א-לוהיכם מכל אלה, אין לי אלא תמידים שהם קרויים לחם שנאמר את קרבני לחמי לאישי שאר כל קרבנות הצבור מנין? תלמוד לומר מכל אלה.

Whence do we derive that we do not accept *shekalim* (to pay for the public offerings) from a nonJew? Hence, “And from the hand of a gentile, you (*pl.*) shall not sacrifice the bread of your God from all these.” This only includes daily offerings, which are called “bread,” as is said, “My offering, my bread, by fire (Bamidbar 28:2)” - whence all public offerings? Hence, “from all these.”

9. מנחות עג:

דַּתְנִיָּא: “אִישׁ”, מָה תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר “אִישׁ אִישׁ”? לְרֵבּוֹת אֶת הַגּוֹיִם שְׁנוֹדְרִין נְדָרִים וְנִדְבוֹת כִּישְׂרָאֵל.

As it is taught in a *baraita*: The verse cited previously states: “Any man [*ish ish*] who is of the house of Israel, or of the strangers in Israel, that brings his offering, whether it be any of their vows, or any of their gift offerings, which they will offer to the Lord as a burnt offering.” The verse is now analyzed: The verse could have stated: A man [*ish*]. Why does the verse state the double expression “*ish ish*”? This serves to include the gentiles, demonstrating that they can vow to bring vow offerings and gift offerings like a Jew can.

“אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה לְעֹלָה” – אֵין לִי אֶלָּא עֹלָה, שְׁלָמִים מִנֵּין? תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר “נְדָרֵיהֶם”. תּוֹדָה מִנֵּין? תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר “נִדְבוֹתָם”.

When the verse states: “Which they will offer to the Lord as a burnt offering,” I have derived only that a gentile can vow to bring a burnt offering. From where is it derived that a gentile can vow to bring a peace offering? The verse states: “Their vows.” From where is it derived that he can bring a thanks offering? The verse states the seemingly superfluous clause: “Their gift offerings.”

מִנֵּין לְרֵבּוֹת הָעֹפּוֹת, וְהַיִּין, וְהַלְבוּנָה, וְהַעֲצִים? תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר “נְדָרֵיהֶם”, “לְקַל נְדָרֵיהֶם”, “נִדְבוֹתָם”, “לְקַל נְדָבוֹתָם”.

The *baraita* continues: From where is it derived that the verse means to include that a gentile can bring birds as burnt offerings, and wine libations, and the frankincense, and the wood for the arrangement upon the altar? The verse states not only: “Their vows,” but also the more comprehensive term: “Any of their vows”; and the verse states not only: “Their gift offerings,” but also the more comprehensive term: “Any of their gift offerings.”

אִם כֵּן מָה תִּלְמוּד לֹמַר “עֹלָה”, “עֹלָה” – פָּרֹט לְנִזְרוֹת, דְּבַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי הַגָּלִילִי. רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אוֹמֵר: “אֲשֶׁר יִקְרִיבוּ לַיהוָה לְעֹלָה” – אֵין לִי אֶלָּא עֹלָה בְּלֻבָּד.

The *baraita* asks: If so, what is the meaning when the verse states: “They will offer to the Lord as a burnt offering”? The *baraita* answers: This teaches that a gentile can bring a standard burnt offering, to the exclusion of a burnt offering of naziriteship. Since a

gentile is unable to assume the status of a nazirite, he is also unable to bring the offerings of a nazirite. This is the statement of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili. Rabbi Akiva says: When the verse states: "Which they will offer to the Lord as a burnt offering," it indicates that nothing other than a burnt offering alone may be brought by a gentile.

Private Altars

10. ירושלמי מגילה א:יא

הכל קרב בבמה. בהמה וחייה ועופות גדולים וקטנים זכרים ונקיבות תמימין [אבל לא] (ו) בעלי מומין. טהורים אבל לא טמאים. הכל קרב עולה ואין טעונו הפשט וניתוח. וגוים בזמן הזה רשאים לעשות כן...

Everything is brought on an altar: domestic and wild animals, large and small birds, male and female, whole [but not] (and) defective, kosher *animals and birds*, but not nonkosher. All are brought as burnt sacrifice and do not need stripping and partitioning. Gentiles today are permitted to do this." ...

רבי בא בשם רב יהודה. אסור לישראל לסייעו ואסור להיעשות לו שליח.
Rebbi Abba in the name of Rav Jehudah, it is forbidden to a Jew to help the nonJew sacrifice on a private altar or to become their agent for doing so.

11. בבלי זבחים קטז:

אמר מר: וגוים בזמן הזה רשאים לעשות כן. מנא הני מילי? דתנו רבנן: "דבַר אֵל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" – בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מְצוּיִן עַל שְׁחוּטֵי חוּץ, וְאֵין הַגּוֹיִם מְצוּיִן עַל שְׁחוּטֵי חוּץ.

§ The Master said in the *baraita* that discussed the sacrifice of offerings before the construction of the Tabernacle: And today gentiles are permitted to do so, i.e., to sacrifice offerings outside the Temple courtyard, despite the fact that this is forbidden for the Jews. The Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived? As the Sages taught with regard to the verses that prohibit the slaughter of offerings outside the Temple: "Speak to Aaron, and to his sons, and to all the children of Israel" (Leviticus 17:2). This indicates that only Jews are commanded with regard to offerings slaughtered outside the Temple, but gentiles are not commanded with regard to offerings slaughtered outside the Temple.

לפיכך כל אחד ואחד בונה לו במה לעצמו, ומקריב עליה כל מה שירצה. אמר רבי יעקב בר אחא אמר רב אסי: אסור לסייען ולעשות שליחותן. אמר רבה: ולאורינהו שרי.

Therefore, each and every gentile may, if he desires, construct a private altar for himself, and sacrifice upon it whatever he desires. Rabbi Ya'akov bar Aha says that Rav Asi says: Although it is permitted for gentiles to sacrifice offerings outside the Temple courtyard, it is prohibited for a Jew to assist them or to fulfill their agency in this matter, as sacrificing in this manner is forbidden for a Jew. Rabba said: But to instruct them how to sacrifice outside the Temple is permitted.

כי הא דאיפרא הורמיז אימיה דשבור מלכא שדרה קורבנא לרבא, שלחה ליה: "אסקוה ניהליה לשם שמים". אמר להו לרב ספרא ולרב אחא בר הונא: זילו ודברו תרי עולימי גולאי, וחזו היכא דמסקא ימא שירטון; ושקלו ציבי חדתי, ואפיקו נרא ממרא חדתא, ואסקוה ניהליה לשם שמים.

This is similar to that incident in which Ifera Hurmiz, the mother of King Shapur of Persia, sent an offering to Rava, with which she sent this message to him: Sacrifice this for me, for the sake of Heaven. Rava said to Rav Safra and to Rav Aḥa bar Huna: Go, take two gentile youths of the same age, i.e., similar to one another, so that the sacrifice will be performed with maximal beauty, and see where the sea currently raises silt [*sirton*], which is a place that no one has used before. And take new wood and bring out fire from new vessels, and the two youths will sacrifice the offering for her, for the sake of Heaven.

