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The *Minchat Choteh*

One of the cardinal components of the *korban mincha* (meal offering) is the addition of olive oil and the spice *levonah*. The *minchat choteh* is listed as one of two exceptions where neither olive oil nor *levonah* is added (*Menachot* 5:4). The *minchat choteh* refers to the sacrifice brought by a poor person who cannot afford to bring an animal offering for a *korban chatat* to atone for a sin carried out unintentionally¹.

In understanding why olive oil and *levonah* are not offered with the *minchat choteh*, the *Gemara* in *masechet Sotah* (15a) explains since the *minchat choteh* is brought in response to the commission of a sin, it should not be brought with the same grandeur as a regular *mincha* offering. The *Sefer HaChinnuch* (*Mitzvah* 125) writes that olive oil and *levonah* are representative of wealth and opulence. Additionally, olive oil is a symbol of pompousness in that it floats above all liquids. Olive oil and *levonah* are not offered with the *minchat choteh* as the traits they represent do not reflect the humbled and shamed demeanour that would be expected from someone bringing a *minchat choteh*.

In contrast to this punitive tone, the *Sfat Emet* (*Parashat Vayikra* 5642) discussing the *korban mincha* in general, presents a positive quality to its offering. The *Sfat Emet* writes that a *mincha* offering underscores profound honesty and truth.

While the *korban mincha* may be viewed as inferior to the offering of an animal *korban*, the recognition of one's own limitations resonates beyond the type of *korban* offered. Offering a *korban mincha* that is honest of one's financial situation, disregarding external influences to bring a more lavish *korban*, is heralded "as if the person if the person sacrificed himself, which is the highest form of sacrifice".

This approach of the *Sfat Emet* may be seen as presenting an important supplementary role to the reasons why olive oil and *levonah* are not offered with the *minchat choteh*. While it is important to discipline and express discontent to those who sin by not allowing them to offer olive oil and *levonah* with their *minchat choteh*, the offering of a *korban mincha* in favour of an animal *korban* is an honest evaluation of one's character which is critical function in achieving atonement.

Support for this understanding may be found in the *Sefer HaChinnuch* (*mitzvah* 95). The *Sefer HaChinnuch* writes that it is not enough to merely express regret over committing a sin; appropriate actions need to be taken. Offering a *korban* allows a person to sincerely comprehend the gravity of his actions. The introspection from bringing a *minchat choteh* can most surely provide the impetus for truly appreciating one's actions.

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¹ Ed. note: This option of bringing a *minchat choteh* is only available for a select few sins. See *Vayikra* 5:1-14.

Revision Questions

מנחות ה' ב' – ו' א'

- Does the prohibition against allow a *mincha* offering to become *chametz* also apply to the *shira'im*? (ה' ב') (ה' ב')
- How many transgressions would one violate if he baked a *chametz mincha* offering that was meant to be *matzah*? (ה' ב') (ה' ב')
- Which *mincha* offerings requires: (ה' ג')
 - Both oil and frankincense?
 - Only oil?
 - Only frankincense?
 - Neither?
- How many transgression would one violate if they included both oil and frankincense in a *mincha* that did not require it? (ה' ד') (ה' ד')
- Regarding the previous question, do these prohibitions apply to the *shira'im*? (ה' ד') (ה' ד')
- Which *mincha* offerings require:
 - Waving and *hagasha*?
 - Only Waving? (ה' ו') (ה' ו')
 - Only *hagasha*? (ה' ה') (ה' ה')
 - Neither? (ה' ו') (ה' ו')
- Of the three *mitzvot* (*semicha*, *tenufah shechutim* and *tenufah chayim*) which apply to: (ה' ז') (ה' ז')
 - *Shalmei yachid*?
 - *Zivchei shalmei tzivur*?
 - *Asham metzora*?
- What is the difference between a *minchat machavat* and a *minchat marcheset*? (ה' ח') (ה' ח')
- Explain the debate regarding what method can be employed to a bake a *minchat ma'afah tanur*? (ה' ט') (ה' ט')
- On which *Menachot* is *kemitzah* performed and the remainder given to the *kohanim*? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- From which *Menachot* do the *kohanim* not receive anything? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- From which *Menachot* is nothing placed on the *mizbeach*? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- How many times is oil added regarding a *minchat marcheset*? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- Explain the debate regarding when the *minchat ma'afeh tanur* is mixed with oil? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- Explain how *petitah* is performed for both a *minchat Yisrael* and a *minchat kohen*? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- What two processes are required to be performed to the wheat of all *mincha* sacrifices? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- According *R' Yehuda* which *mincha offering* are brought in numbers of ten and how does *R' Meir* argue? (ה' י') (ה' י')
- How much flower was required for the following sacrifices and how were they refined: (ה' י') (ה' י')
 - *Omer*?
 - *Shte Halechem*?
 - *Lechem Ha'panim*?

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
6 th July ג' תמוז	7 th July ד' תמוז	8 th July ה' תמוז	9 th July ו' תמוז	10 th July ז' תמוז	11 th July ח' תמוז	12 th July ט' תמוז
Menachot 6:7-7:1	Menachot 7:2-3	Menachot 7:4-5	Menachot 7:6-8:1	Menachot 8:2-3	Menachot 8:4-5	Menachot 8:6-7

