



Aborting the Sotah Process

The *Mishnah* (3:3) teaches that until the point that the *megillat sotah* is wiped out in the water for *mei sotah*, the *sotah* can decide not to continue. This is the case even without admitting to the affair. Even though she can stop the process, they would need to be divorced and she would lose her *ketubah*. The *Mishnah* then explains what to do with the items that were prepared for the process.

The *Mishnah* explains that the *korban mincha* that she brought would not be offered. Instead, it is burnt on the *deshen* along with other *korbanot* that became invalid. The *megillat sotah* cannot be used for another *sotah* so it is “*nignezet*”. *Rashi* (20a) explains that it stored in the side of the *heichal* – in *geniza* – much like other *kitva kodesh* that can no longer be used. The *Tosfot* (20a) however cite the *Yerushalmi* that explains that the *megillah* was placed under the door hinge of the *heichal* so it could be ground.

The *Shayarei HaKorban* asks that we learn in *Makkot* (22a) that it forbidden to wipe out the name of *Hashem* (which was written on the *megillat sotah*). This is based on two *pasukim* following one after the other: “... you shall wipe out their names (of *avodah zarah*). Do not do so to *Hashem*...” (*Devarim* 12:3-4). That being the case, how does the *Yerushalmi* understand that it was put in a place in order for it to be ground. It would be prohibited for anyone to open or close that door.

The *Shayarei HaKorban* suggests that the *Yerushalmi* does not agree with that exposition of the *Gemara*. He uses this understanding to answer a question posed by the *Kesef Mishnah*. The *Kesef Mishnah* ask why the *Rambam* omitted this detail of where the *megillah* was placed when it is mentioned in both the *Yerushalmi* and *Tosefta*. The *Shayarei HaKorban* answers that since the *Rambam* rules like the *Gemara* in *Makkot*, he cannot rule like the *Yerushalmi* which contradicts it.

The *Ridbaz* however explains that the *Yerushalmi* earlier (2:4) maintains that the *megillat sotah* does not makes hands *tameh*. Recall that the *Chachimim* made a *gezeira* such that *kitvei kodesh* makes hands *tameh*. The *Yerushalmi* maintains

that the *megillat sotah* is not defined as *kitvei kodesh* because from the outset it was written to be wipe out in the *mei sotah*. Consequently, there is not issue with it being ground.

The *Ein Yitzchak* (OC 5:27 however explains that while the answer is sufficient to allow wiping the general text, it does not justify the destruction of the name of *Hashem*. Furthermore, he finds the answer of the *Shayarei Korban* difficult considering that the *Yerushalmi* earlier in *Sotah* implies that the prohibition of wiping the name of *Hashem* also applies to the *megillat sotah*. The *Ein Yitzchak* therefore explains that the biblical prohibition is only when the name was written *be'kedusha*. He explains that when the *kohen* wrote the *megillah* we would have stipulated that the name would only get *kedusha* if the process continued till it was wiped in the *mei sotah*. Since the process was stopped, it did not have *kedusha*, so the prohibition does not apply.

The *Chazon Ish* (*Yadayim* 8:17) explains that the prohibition of wiping out *Hashem* name applies even in a case where it should not have been written. In this case, since the *sotah* process was stopped, it is now clear that it should have not been written. He however explains that the *megillah* would have been folded and taken time for it to wear. Consequently, the grinding would be defined as indirect – *gerama*. In this case where it should not have been written, it is permitted through *gerama*.

The *Yalkut Biurim* however cite the *Tifferet Tzion* who has a different understanding of the follow of the *Yerushalmi*. The question above has been based on the following reading. “The *megillah* was placed under the *tziro* (hinge) of the *heichal*. Why? For it be ground. The was a small window there in which the water was poured away...” He however suggests that the *Yerushalmi* should be read as follows. “The *megillah* was placed under the *tziro* of the *heichal*. Why?! For it get ground?! [That would be prohibited! Rather] there was a small window there [in which it was placed]. The water was poured away...” With that reading, the *Yerushalmi* rejects the idea that the *megillah* was destroyed and the original question no longer applies.¹

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¹ Nevertheless, the question would still apply regarding the *Tosefta* that clearly explains that the *megillah* was ground under the hinge.

Revision Questions

סוטה ב' ה' – ד' ג'

- About what would the *sotah* respond “*amen, amen*”? (ב' ה')
- Complete the follow rule and explain: (ב' ג')
"כל _____ לא היה מתנה עמה"
- What was done with the *sotah's korban*? (א' ג')
- When during the process was the *sotah's korban* offered? (ב' ג')
- Until when can the *sotah* refuse to take part in this procedure? (ג' ג')
- Does the procedure continue if after the point discussed in the previous question the *sotah* admits that she is *tameah*? (ג' ג')
- If the *sotah* pulls out, can the *megillat ha'sotah* be used for another *sotah*? (ג' ג')
- If a *sotah* was guilty, how long would it take for the *mei sotah* to have an effect? (ד' ג')
- Which are the four people that *R' Yehoshua* describes as being *m'chalei olam*? (ד' ג')
- Explain the debate regarding whether *mei sotah* can have a delayed effect. (ה' ג')
- After which point is a *sotah's mincha* offering that became *tameh* burnt? What happens to the *mincha* offering if it became *tameh* before this point? (ו' ג')
- What is different about the *mincha* offering of a *sotah* who is the wife of a *Kohen*? (ו' ג')
- What are the four differences listed between a *Kohen* and a *Kohenet*? (ז' ג')
- What are two differences between men and women when it comes to the laws of *nazir*? (ח' ג')
- What are two differences between men and women when it comes to death penalty? (ח' ג')
- Can an *arusa* become a *sotah*? From which *pasuk* is this law derived? (ט' ד')
- Can a *gerusha* that married a *kohen* become a *sotah*? (ט' ד')
- Which four women listed, do not become a *sotah* yet are divorce without receiving a *ketubah*? (י' ב')
- What is the debate between *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* regarding a *sotah* whose husband dies? (י' ב')
- What is a *meuberet chaveiro* and explain the debate regarding this case? (י' ד')
- Explain the debate regarding whether a *zkeina* can become a *sotah*. (י' ד')

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Sotah 2:5-6	Sotah 3:1-2	Sotah 3:3-4	Sotah 3:5-6	Sotah 3:7-8	Sotah 4:1-2	Sotah 4:3-4

