

yoma chapter 4

משנה יומא ד':א'

¹ **Chava Shapiro:** This word seems to have an unknown origin (according to Jastrow and Klein dictionaries). This leaves me curious about the practice of lot drawing and where it came from. Yet another example of "unknown origins" or "outside origins" in the temple practices, which I love because it points to our co-creation with other communities being an ancient part of Jewishness and Jewish practice.

² **Azariah Betzalal:** Rabbi Jhos linked this back to the two groups at the end of chapter 3, with names remembered for blessing and those for rot. Perhaps the wilderness is where those parts that need to rot can rot so that we return as ourselves to be a blessing

טַרְף בַּקְלָפִי¹ וְהָעֵלָה שְׁנֵי גוֹרְלוֹת אֶחָד כְּתוּב עָלָיו לְשֵׁם וְאֶחָד כְּתוּב עָלָיו לְעִזְאֵזֶל² הַסֵּגֶן בִּימִינוֹ וְרֹאשׁ בֵּית אָב מִשְׁמָאלוֹ אִם שָׁל שֵׁם עָלָה בִּימִינוֹ הַסֵּגֶן אוֹמֵר לוֹ אִישִׁי כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל הַגִּבֵּה יְמִינְךָ וְאִם שָׁל שֵׁם עָלָה בְּשְׁמָאלוֹ רֹאשׁ בֵּית אָב אוֹמֵר לוֹ אִישִׁי כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל הַגִּבֵּה שְׁמָאלְךָ נִתְּנוּ עַל שְׁנֵי הַשְּׁעִירִים וְאוֹמֵר לִי חֲטָאת רִבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל אוֹמֵר לֹא הִזָּה צָרִיךְ לוֹמֵר חֲטָאת אֶלָּא לִי וְהֵן עוֹנִין אֶחָדָיו בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

[The High Priest] shook the container and drew out two lots. Upon one was written, "For Hashem". And upon the other one was written, "For Azazel".¹ The deputy [was] to [the High Priest's] right, and the head of the patrilineal family [was] to his left. If [the lot] for The Name came up in his right hand, the Deputy would say to him, "My master, High Priest, raise your right hand." And if [the lot] for The Name came up in his left hand, the head of the patrilineal family would say to

בִּימִינוֹ... מִשְׁמָאלוֹ

BM: Truth be told, repetitive ritual staging can be very artistic and meaningful. Consider the Sufi whirling dervish or the Catholic mass for example, or the taking up of tzitzit at the recitation of Shema. But today I found myself compelled by the prefixes in our choreography. Don't run, I promise this will get interesting 😊 The phrase "to the right" or "to his right" is בִּימִינוֹ, which would more literally translate as "in his right" or "by means of his right". The phrase "to the left" or "to his left" is מִשְׁמָאלוֹ, which would more literally translate as "from his left". The ה here implies a kind of intimacy and closeness, whereas the ה here

³ **Azariah Betzalal:** I'm wondering about the possible divination layers. If Hashem comes up in the right will it be year of mercy? If the left, does that mean a year in which might will be required?

him, "My master, High Priest, raise your left hand." Then [the High Priest] placed [the two lots] upon the two goats and he would say, "For God, as a sin-offering."³ Rabbi Yishmael says, "He would not need to say, 'As a sin-offering.' Rather, [he would just say] 'For God.'" And [the priests and the people] respond after the High Priest, "Blessed is the Name, whose honored reign will be for all eternity."

implies a kind of distance or remove. Why are we using different prefixes for the directions? Is it just idiom, or is there something deeper going on?

משנה יומא ד'ב'

¹ **Krythe-Elaine (she/fae):** The journey backwards through the etymology for ומתודה mirrored for me the internal work I go on to accept responsibility and agency for the harm I put out into the world. First noticing the prefixes, seeing and owning the small harms I've done - often out of a place of not processing and owning the larger harms. And then having a breakthrough upon figuring out the structure, the stem form of the word, realizing how my

קשר לשון של זהורית בראש
שעיר המשתלח והעמידו כנגד בית
שלוחו ולנשחט כנגד בית שחיטתו
כא לו אצל פרו שניה וסומך שתי
ידיו עליו ומתודה¹ וכך הנה אומר
אנא השם עויתי פשעתי חטאתי
לפניך אני וביתי ובני אהרן עם
קדושיך אנא השם כפר נא לעונות
ולפשעים ולחטאים ושעויתי
ושפשעתי ושחטאתי לפניך אני
וביתי ובני אהרן עם קדושיך כפתוב
בתורת משה עבדך (ויקרא טז) כי
ביום הזה יכפר עליכם לטהר

המשתלח

RE: The tying of silk here is happening to the scapegoat, the one being sent out into the wilderness for the mysterious Azazel. Azazel in Torah and Mishnah is understood to be a place, though there's not a lot of info...Azazel is described in the Book of Enoch as a fallen

perspectives and my behaviors are affecting others around me. Before finally coming to a deeper understanding of the sentence through a fuller comprehension of the nuances and connotations of the word as a whole greater than it's parts, coming to acceptance and ownership of the harms I've done through a fuller comprehension of how my perspectives and behaviors affect others. It is through this journey that I then arrive at a place of genuine, heartfelt confession. Confession that carries the weight of that journey, gifting me with the momentum to craft my confession into growth and change through connection with the divine.

¹ **Shelly F. Cohen:** I appreciate how these three words in Hebrew have very different valences, even though they can all be translated into English as "sin." There seems to be an arc from the text in Leviticus,

אַתֶּכֶם מִכָּל חַטֹּאתֵיכֶם לִפְנֵי יי
תִּטְהָרוּ וְהֵן עֹנִין אֶתְּרֵי בָרוּךְ שֵׁם
כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:²

[The High Priest] tied a strip of crimson silk on the head of the scapegoat & placed it towards the location of its sending off, and for [the goat chosen] to be slaughtered, [it was placed] towards the location of its slaughter. [The High Priest] goes beside his bull a second time, and places his two hands upon it, and confesses¹. "Please, God, I have done wrong, I have rebelled, and I have failed before You I and my family and the children of Aaron, your sacred people. Please God, grant atonement, please, for the wrongdoings, and for the rebellions, and for the failures, that I have done wrong, and rebelled, and failed before You, I, and my family, and the children of Aaron, your sacred people. As it is written in the Torah of Moses, your servant, 'For on this day atonement shall be made for you

angel and a corrupting force—especially through creating ostentatious materialism. Interestingly, he's often visually depicted as part goat! Perhaps Hashem chose this goat because Hashem could tell that there was a bit of Azazel in the goat, some demonic corrupting force that only Hashem can sense.

אָנִי וּבֵיתִי

JS: I am struck by the tender humanness shown here. What does it take for a person of elevated status—in whom great trust has been invested, and who bears a tremendous responsibility to an entire people—to stand before their

which includes only טוּן, to these three categories, to the long lists in the Al Cheit and Ashamnu. In so doing, it reinforces the idea that we are atoning for our actions, rather than for being inherently bad people.

² **Anonymous:** Looking at all the choreographic portions of Temple service, we wondered if we could engage congregants in new ways if we could add some new choreography elements to accompany the ancient words that we still say today.

to cleanse you of all your errings; you shall be clean before Hashem." And they answered after him, "Blessed is the honored name, Its kingdom will be forever."²

constituency and admit shortcomings, failure, and even intentional wrongdoing? How can we find the courage and support to show up like this in our communities today? What is the healing technology being shared here, and how might we tap into it?

משנה יומא ד'ג'

¹ **Anonymous:** What are the rabbis hoping we'll gain from all of these little details? Are they sincerely wishing that the temple will be rebuilt, and so details need to be preserved? Or are

שֶׁחֲטֹו וְקִבֵּל בַּמִּזְרֶק אֶת דָּמֹו וְנִתְּנוּ לְמִי שֶׁהוּא מְמַרֵס בּוֹ עַל הָרֶכֶד הָרְבִיעִי שֶׁבִּהִיכָל כָּדִי שְׁלֹא יִקְרָשׁ נֹטֵל מִחֻמָּה וְעָלָה לְרֹאשׁ הַמִּזְבֵּחַ וּכְפָה גִחְלִים אֵילָךְ וְאֵילָךְ וְחֻמָּה מִן הַמַּעֲפָלוֹת הַפְּנִימִיּוֹת וְיָרַד וְהִנִּיחָהּ עַל הָרֶכֶד הָרְבִיעִי שֶׁבַּעֲזָרָה:¹

בַּמִּזְרֶק

HG: The word מִזְרֶק, coming from the same root as "to sprinkle", also shows us how intentional each item was. Not just any bowl, but the sprinkling bowl. Someone noted in the chat that the Torah version of this ritual involves one person (Aharon), and our Mishnah's version

they trying to show that they're not doing anything too new by still talking about temple sacrifice?

[The High Priest] slaughtered [the bull] and receive its blood in a bowl, and give it to the one who stirs it. [The stirrer was] on the fourth row [of tiles] in the Sanctuary, [and stirred the blood] lest it coagulate. [The High Priest] took a coal pan and ascended to the top of the altar. And he cleared [the upper layer of] coals side to side, and scooped from the consumed, inner [coals]. And he would descend and place [the coal pan] on the fourth row [of tiles] in the Temple courtyard.

involves many people. Perhaps this is pointing to the importance of each person in the community, how the Rabbis wanted to emphasize that we cannot and should not do this/any spiritual stuff alone. That we need each other. I definitely have felt that in the last five years at MC, how each one of you have had a particular role in building and sustaining this community. B"H!

משנה יומא ד:ד'

¹ **Anonymous:** This is a massive quantity of coals to be carrying while wearing sandals, at best. What about gloves? Was there any kind of temple OSHA to keep the priests safe?

בְּכֹל יוֹם הָיָה חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל כֶּסֶף וּמַעֲרָה בְּתוֹךְ אֵשׁ זָהָב וְהַיּוֹם חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל זָהָב וּבֹהַ הָיָה מִכְנִיס בְּכֹל יוֹם חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל אַרְבַּעַת קָבִין וּמַעֲרָה בְּתוֹךְ אֵשׁ שְׁלֹשֶׁת קָבִין וְהַיּוֹם חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל שְׁלֹשֶׁת קָבִין וּבֹהַ הָיָה מִכְנִיס¹ רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר בְּכֹל יוֹם חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל סָאָה וּמַעֲרָה בְּתוֹךְ אֵשׁ שְׁלֹשֶׁת קָבִין וְהַיּוֹם חוֹתֶה בְּשֵׁל שְׁלֹשֶׁת קָבִין וּבֹהַ הָיָה

קבין

JS: The ancients would tell you that it is 1/4 of a Se'ah. Not helpful today. Modern scholars say it is somewhere between 48 to 100ish liquid ounces of volume, or 1.5 to 3 1/8 quarts. According to Adin

² **Anonymous:** The violent nature of the grinding to make something fine and the smoothness of the fine product create an interesting tension.

מִכְנִיס בְּכָל יוֹם הַיְּתָה כְּבִדָּה וְהַיּוֹם
קֹלָה בְּכָל יוֹם הַיְּתָה יָדָה קִצְרָה וְהַיּוֹם
אַרְכָּה בְּכָל יוֹם הַיְּתָה זְהָבָה יְרוּק וְהַיּוֹם
אָדָם דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מְנַחֵם בְּכָל יוֹם מִקְרִיב
פָּרָס בְּשִׁחְרִית וּפָרָס בֵּין הָעֲרִבִים
וְהַיּוֹם מוֹסִיף מְלֵא חֶפְנָיו בְּכָל יוֹם
הַיְּתָה דָּקָה וְהַיּוֹם דָּקָה מִן הַדָּקָה:²

On every other day, [a priest] would scoop up [the coals with a coal pan made] of silver and pour [the coals] into a [pan] of gold. But on the day [of Yom Kippur], [the High Priest] scooped with [a coal pan] of gold. And with [the pan] he would bring [the coals into the Holy of Holies]. On every other day, he scoops [using a coal pan] of four kav, and pours [the coals] into [a pan of] three kav. But the day [of Yom Kippur], [the High Priest] scoops with [a pan of] three kav, and with [that pan] he would bring [the coals into the Holy of Holies]. Rabbi Yosei says, "On every other day, [a priest] uses a coal pan of a se'a (which is six kav), and then pours [the coals] into [a pan] of three kav. But the day [of Yom Kippur], [the High Priest] scoops with [a pan of] three kav, and with [that pan] he

Steinsaltz, z"l, a kav is equal to 24 egg-bulks (another common Talmudic reference point), but we don't know what kind of eggs!! He admits that there is a fair amount of difference depending on if we are talking quail or turkey...

קִצְרָה

ODT: I went to the Gemara (Yoma 44b) hoping it would tell me exactly how short is k'tzarah and how long ah'roo'ka. But alas, they don't even ask there. The sages do say that the reason the arm of the coal pan is long is so that the High Priest's own arm can חֲסִיעֵתוֹ / m'sa'yaye'toh / "aid, assist; accompany, join a caravan,

would bring [the coals into the Holy of Holies].” On every other day, [the coal pan] was heavy. But on this day [of Yom Kippur], it was light. On every other day, its handle was short. But on this day [of Yom Kippur], it was long. On every other day, it was a greenish gold. But on this day [of Yom Kippur], it was a red-gold. These are the statements of Rabbi Menakhem. On every other day, a priest sacrificed a peras [of incense] in the morning, and a peras in the afternoon. But on this day [of Yom Kippur, the High Priest] adds a handful [and burns it in the Holy of Holies]. On every other day, [the incense] was ground fine, but on this day [of Yom Kippur] it was superfine.²

escort him.” This feels like an important practical consideration to make sure that, after fasting and staying up all night, he doesn’t drop the coals and catch the curtain on fire! I wonder what we might play around with making longer on Yom Kippur in this age? The yad for reading Torah? Maybe something which might aid us in doing the work of the day...

משנה יומא ד'ה'

¹ **Anonymous:** The similarities to the Pesach seder are so clear. I am now thinking about every holiday in terms of

בְּכָל יוֹם¹ כְּהִנָּם עוֹלִים בְּמִזְרָחוֹ
 נֶשֶׁל כָּבֵשׁ וַיּוֹרְדִין בְּמַעְרְבוֹ וְהַיּוֹם
 כְּהֵן גָּדוֹל עוֹלָה בְּאַמְצַע וַיּוֹרֵד
 בְּאַמְצַע רַבִּי יְהוֹדָה אוֹמֵר לְעוֹלָם

כָּבֵשׁ

MB: The plain verb-root כָּבַשׁ means to press or squeeze. Taken through it's various

"what makes this night different from all other nights?"

¹ **Azariah Betzahal:** Humans have a fascinating need for stability and change. We need the daily routine and novelty. It's wonderful how we have ritual to step in and facilitate that balance.

¹ **Anonymous:** "On all (other) days ... but today..." Temporal contrast feels potent here. This contrast between the ordinary and the exceptional day emphasizes the radical shift in practice and meaning on Yom Kippur. The syntax elevates Yom Kippur not just ritually, but grammatically — it interrupts the Mishnah's rhythm, just as it interrupts

כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל עוֹלָה בְּאַמְצַע וַיִּוֶּרֶד
בְּאַמְצַע בְּכָל יוֹם כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל
מִקֵּדֶשׁ יָדָיו וַרְגָּלָיו מִן הַכִּיּוֹר
וְהַיּוֹם מִן הַקִּיתוֹן שֶׁל זָהָב רַבִּי
יְהוּדָה אֹמֵר לְעוֹלָם כִּהֵן גָּדוֹל
מִקֵּדֶשׁ יָדָיו וַרְגָּלָיו מִן הַקִּיתוֹן
שֶׁל זָהָב:

On every [other] day,¹ priests ascend on the eastern side of the ramp and descend on its western side. But on Yom Kippur, the High Priest ascends in the center [of the ramp] and descends in the center. Rabbi Yehuda says, "The High Priest always ascends in the middle of the ramp and descends in the middle." On every [other] day, the High Priest sanctifies his hands and his feet from the laver. But on this day [he sanctifies his hands and feet] from the golden flask. Rabbi Yehuda says, "The High Priest always sanctifies his hands and

meanings, it can also mean "to conquer or oppress," "to restrain," "to make pickles," or, as is most closely related to this use, "to grade or pave a road." In modern Hebrew, this root is the basis of the term כְּבִישׁ for a highway or major road. Here, the כָּבַשׁ, the "pressed-down-thing," refers to the earthwork ramp in the Temple leading up to the altar.

הַכִּיּוֹר

ODT: I'm thinking about the act of washing hands and feet as not just washing them but making them holy and ready to do the work of Temple service. It's like that song "G  D prepare me, to be a sanctuary," the act

the liturgical and communal rhythm of the year.

his feet from the golden flask."

transforms the High Priest's hands and feet into tools of ritual purpose, like the coal pan.

משנה יומא ד'ו'

¹ Azariah Betzalal:

The lack of consensus here helps me appreciate the rabbis' commitment to preserve our tradition even knowing that some details had already been lost.

² **Anonymous:** If the arrangements of wood are to ensure adequate burning, and ritual completion, then again this seems like a debate over how much extra care and prudence, or risk avoidance (or burning problems) is needed on YK vs ordinary days

בְּכָל יוֹם הָיוּ שָׁם אַרְבַּע מַעֲרֻכּוֹת

וְהַיּוֹם חָמֵשׁ דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר¹

רַבִּי יוֹסֵי אוֹמֵר בְּכָל יוֹם שְׁלֹשׁ

וְהַיּוֹם אַרְבַּע רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר

בְּכָל יוֹם שְׁתֵּי מֵעֲרֻכּוֹת וְהַיּוֹם שְׁלֹשׁ²

"On every other day there were four arrangements [of wood] there [upon the altar], but on Yom Kippur there were five." This is the statement of Rabbi Meir.¹ Rabbi Yosei says, "On every other day there were three [arrangements of wood on the altar], but on Yom Kippur there were four." Rabbi Yehuda says, "On every other day there were two [arrangements of wood on the altar], but on Yom Kippur there were three."²

מַעֲרֻכּוֹת

RF: This comes from the root ע-ר-כ, which most originally meant to connect or join. It comes to mean arrange or pile, but I can't help but wonder about that original meaning. There's an abundance of Hebrew words whose most inside meaning is "to join", so I assumed this would be the case of many of our temple service nouns. However, it appears that this is the first one with that origin! What is it about these bundles of wood that is connective?