

Inside the Daf

If someone comes into contact with a dead body, that person becomes טָמֵא (impure). To become טָהוֹר (pure) again, the פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה (Red Heifer) ceremony must be performed. Part of this ceremony includes sprinkling upon the טָמֵא person a mixture of the פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה's ashes and fresh spring water. This mixture is called "מִי חֲטָאת."

The ashes and water must be kept pure at all times. That means they may not come near even an olive-sized piece of a dead body.

Once, someone was taking these ashes and water across the Jordan river in a boat. An olive-sized piece of a human body was found on the floor of the boat. Since the water and ashes passed over this piece, they became טָמֵא and unfit for use in the פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה ceremony. Because of that incident, the Sages made a rule that פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה ashes and water may not be taken across the Jordan river in a boat.

Some say, that because of that incident the Sages ruled that one may not carry the פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה ashes and water in any way that is like carrying them across the Jordan river, that is, in any way when the feet of the carrier do not touch the ground. So, one may not throw the water and ashes from one side of a river to another, or float them across the water.



Did You Know...

The Sages decreed that one should not take the ashes and water that will be used in the פֶּרֶה אֲדוּמָה ceremony and ride with them upon an animal, unless his feet touch the ground (see, "Inside the Daf").

הַפָּרָה אֲדוּמָה (The Red Heifer)

In the times of the Second **בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ** (Holy Temple) there were a group of Jews called the **צְדוּקִים** (Sadducees). These Jews did not believe in the **תּוֹרָה שְׁבֻעַל פֶּה** (Oral Law) and would try to insert their Torah interpretations and practices into the ceremonies in the **בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ**.

For example, the **צְדוּקִים** held that only a completely **טָהוֹר** (pure) **כֹּהֵן** could perform the **פָּרָה אֲדוּמָה** ceremony (see pg.1). If a **כֹּהֵן** became **טָמֵא** (impure), the Sadducees held he must immerse himself in a **מִקְוֵה** (ritual bath) and wait until nightfall to become **טָהוֹר**, again.



The Sages held that the **כֹּהֵן** could perform the ceremony right after he immersed in a **מִקְוֵה** *without* having to wait until nightfall.

Just to make a point, the Sages used to take the **כֹּהֵן** who

would be performing the **פָּרָה אֲדוּמָה** ceremony, and touch a dead rat to him, making him **טָמֵא** *on purpose*. That **כֹּהֵן** would then immerse in a **מִקְוֵה** and perform the ceremony without first waiting until nightfall.

A Moment מְדוּת

The week was almost over and Simon was feeling grand. His class had just taken part in Operation: Correction, a week-long event where everyone took upon himself to correct a character trait. Simon had chosen anger. And, if he did say so himself, he had done quite a good job controlling his rage.

That is, until that morning, when he found out his little sister had taken his calculator without his permission. Again. Simon flew into a rage at his sister.

"Clam down, Simon," said his mother. "You've worked so hard controlling your anger all week. Don't ruin it now! Even an olive-sized piece of a dead body can make someone impure. Keep that in mind: All the hard work in the world can be ruined by something small."

WORDS OF THE DAY:

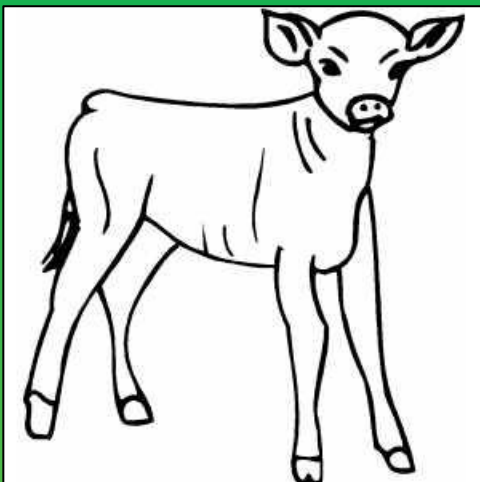
אֶלָּא

"BUT / RATHER"

Games

COLOR IT IN!

Color the red heifer



חגיגה דף כ"ג – Review Questions

1. What is **חֲטָאת**?

2. Who were the **צְדוּקִים**?

3. How may one *not* carry the ashes and water of the **פָּרָה אֲדוּמָה**?