

SHEDDING SIN: THE SCAPEGOAT RITUAL OF YOM KIPPUR
Rachel Friedman

1

Rabbi Samuel Ben Meir (Rashbam)
Leviticus 16:10

lib kappu p'ae

Nahmanides (Ramban)
Leviticus 16:8

3

n:sl kappu p'au

רש"ם (י) לשלח אותו לעזאזל המדבר, לפי פשוטי לשלח אותו חי' אל
העזים אשר במדבר כמו שמצינו בצפרי מצורע ושלח את הצפור
החיה על פני השדה (לעיל יד ז), לשהר מסומנתו אף כאן
לשהר את ישראל מעונותם משלחו אל המדבר

פסוק לג), ע"כ אגדה זו. והנה הודיענו שמו ומעשהו⁴⁰ ונתן סוד
הענין כי היו עובדים לאלהים אחרים, הם המלאכים, עושים להם
קרבנות והם להם לריח ניחוח כענין שנאמר ושמי וקטרתו נתת
לפניהם ולהמי אשר נתתי לך סולת ושמן ודבש האכלתו
ונתחתיו לפניהם לריח ניחוח ויהי נאם ה' אלהים ויחנקל טו
יה-טו). ואתה צריך להחבינו בכתוב במקרא ובמסורת⁴¹. והנה
החורה אסרה לומר קבלת אלהותם וכל עבודה להם. אבל צוה
הקב"ה ביום הפפורים שנשלח שיעיר במדבר לשר המושל
במקומות החרב, והוא הראוי לו מפני שהוא בעליו ומאצילות
כחו יבוא חרב ושמוון כי הוא העלה למוכבי החרב והדמים
והמלחמות והמריבות והפצעים והמכות והפיוד והחרב, והכלל
נפש לגלגל מאדים⁴², וחקק פן האומות הוא עשו שהוא עם
היושר החרב והמלחמות, ומן הבהמות השעירים השונים⁴³

רמב"ן

2

Rabbi Abraham Ibn Ezra
Leviticus 16:8

n:sl kappu p'ae

זה המפרש
אמר כי השעיר ישלח במדבר, כי כן כתוב ושלח את השעיר
במדבר (להלן פסוק כב), ושעמו כטעם צפור המטהר מהצרות
שהוא על פני השדה²¹, מקום שאין שם ישוב, והעד אל ארץ גורד
(שם)²², ואמתו השיבונו, כי השעיר ישלחו במדבר כאשר הוא
כתוב, וידרוק אחריו עד שיבירה יעל על הצור, על כן אמרו חז"ל
והחפ"י²³, ואמר רב שמואל²⁴, אעפ"י שכתוב בשעיר החטאת

שהוא לה, גם השעיר המשתלח הוא לה, ואין צורך, כי ראב"ע
המשתלח אינו קרבן, כי לא ישחט, ואם יכולת להבין הסוד
שהוא אחר מלת עזאזל תדע סודו ומד שמו, כי יש לו חברים
במקרא. ואני אגלה לך קצת הסוד ברמו בהיותך בן שלשים
ועלש חרעני²⁵.

5

Nahmanides
Leviticus 1:9

lib kappu p'au

כדי שיחשוב אדם בעשותו כל
אלה כי חטא לאלהיו בגופו ובפשו, ודאי לו שישפך דמו
ישרף גופו ללא חסד הבורא שלקח ממנו תמורה וכופר
הקרבן הזה שהוא דמו תחת דמו, נפש תחת נפש.

4

Maimonides - Rambam
Guide to the Perplexed III:46

p'au
lib kappu

[No one has any
doubt that sins are not bodies that may be transported from the back of
one individual to that of another. But all these actions are parables serving
to bring forth a form in the soul so that a passion toward repentance should
result: We have freed ourselves from all our previous actions, cast them
behind our backs, and removed them to an extreme distance.]

10 while the goat designated by lot for Azazel shall be left standing alive before the LORD, to make expiation with it and to send it off to the wilderness for Azazel.

11 Aaron shall then offer his bull of sin offering, to make expiation for himself and his household. He shall slaughter his bull of sin offering, 12 and he shall take a panful of glowing coals scooped from the altar before the LORD, and two handfuls of finely ground aromatic incense, and bring this behind the curtain. 13 He shall put the incense on the fire before the LORD, so that the cloud from the incense screens the cover that is over [the Ark of] the Pact, lest he die. 14 He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger over the cover on the east side; and in front of the cover he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times. 15 He shall then slaughter the people's goat of sin offering, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with its blood as he has done with the blood of the bull: he shall sprinkle it over the cover and in front of the cover.

16 Thus he shall purge the Shrine of the uncleanness and transgression of the Israelites, whatever their sins; and he shall do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which abides with them in the midst of their uncleanness. 17 When he goes in to make expiation in the Shrine, nobody else shall be in the Tent of Meeting until he comes out.

When he has made expiation for himself and his household, and for the whole congregation of Israel, 18 he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and purge it: he shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the goat and apply it to each of the horns of the altar; 19 and the rest of the blood he shall sprinkle on it with his finger seven times. Thus he shall cleanse it of the uncleanness of the Israelites and consecrate it.

ועשהו חטאת: 10 והשעיר אשר עלה עליו הגורל לעזאזל יעמוד חי לפני יהוה לכפר עליו לשלח אתו לעזאזל המדברה

11 והקריב אהרן את פר החטאת אשר לו וכפר בעדו ובעד ביתו ושחט את פר החטאת אשר לו: 12 ולקח מלא המחתה גחלי אש מעל המזבח מלפני יהוה ומלא חפניו קטרת סמים וקח והביא מבית לפרכת: 13 ונתן את הקטרת על האש לפני יהוה וכסה ענן הקטרת את הפפרת אשר על העדות ולא ימות: 14 ולקח מדם הפר והזה באצבעו על פני הפפרת קדמה ולפני הפפרת יזה שבע פעמים מן הדם באצבעו: 15 ושחט את שעיר החטאת אשר לעם והביא את דמו אל מבית לפרכת ועשה את דמו כאשר עשה לדם הפר והזה אתו על הפפרת ולפני הפפרת:

16 וכפר על הקדש משמאת בני ישראל ומפשעיהם לכל חטאתם וכן יעשה לאהל מועד השכן אתם בתוך טמאתם: 17 וככל אדם לא יהיה באהל מועד בבאו לכפר בקדש ערצאתו

וכפר בעדו ובעד ביתו ובעד כל קהל ישראל: 18 ויצא אל המזבח אשר לפני יהוה וכפר עליו ולקח מדם הפר ומדם השעיר ונתן על קרנות המזבח סביב: 19 והזה עליו מן הדם באצבעו שבע פעמים וטהרו וקדשו משמאת בני ישראל:

11 You shall put the Israelites on guard against their uncleanness, lest they die through their uncleanness by defiling My Tabernacle which is among them.

32 Such is the ritual concerning him who has a discharge: concerning him who has an emission of semen and becomes unclean thereby, 33 and concerning her who is in menstrual infirmity, and concerning anyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and concerning a man who lies with an unclean woman:

16 AHAREI MOT The LORD spoke to Moses after the death of the two sons of Aaron who died when they drew too close to the presence of the LORD. 2 The LORD said to Moses:

Tell your brother Aaron that he is not to come at will into the Shrine behind the curtain, in front of the cover that is upon the ark, lest he die; for I appear in the cloud over the cover.

3 Thus only shall Aaron enter the Shrine: with a bull of the herd for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.—4 He shall be dressed in a sacral linen tunic, with linen breeches next to his flesh, and be girt with a linen sash, and he shall wear a linen turban. They are sacral vestments; he shall bathe his body in water and then put them on.—5 And from the Israelite community he shall take two he-goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.

6 Aaron is to offer his own bull of sin offering, to make expiation for himself and for his household. 7 Aaron shall take the two he-goats and let them stand before the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting; 8 and he shall place lots upon the two goats, one marked for the LORD and the other marked for Azazel. 9 Aaron shall bring forward the goat designated by lot for the LORD, which he is to offer as a sin offering;

11 והזהרתם את בני ישראל משמאתם ולא ימתו בטמאתם בטמאתם את משפתי אשר בתוכם: 12 ואת תורת הזב ואשר תצא ממנו שכבת זרע לטמאה בה: 13 והיה בנדתה והזב את זובו לזכר ולנקבה ולאיש אשר ישקב עם טמאה:

טז אחרי מות

וידבר יהוה אל משה אחרי מות שני בני אהרן בקרבנתם לפני יהוה ויקמו: 2 ויאמר יהוה אל משה דבר אל אהרן אחיה ואל יבא בכל עת אל הקדש מבית לפרכת אל פני הפפרת אשר על הארון ולא ימות בי בעון אראה על הפפרת: 3 ובאות יבא אהרן אל

הקדש בפר בן בקר לחטאת ואיל לעלה: 4 בקנת פד קדש ילפש ומכנסי בד יהיו על בשרו ובאבנט בד יחגר ובמצנפת בד יצנף בגדי קדש הם ורחץ במים את בשרו ולבשם: 5 ומאת ערת בני ישראל יקח שני שעירי עזים לחטאת ואיל אחד לעלה:

6 והקריב אהרן את פר החטאת אשר לו וכפר בעדו ובעד ביתו: 7 ולקח את שני השעירים והעמיד אתם לפני יהוה פתח אהל מועד: 8 ונתן אהרן על שני השעירים גרלות גורל אחד ליהוה וגורל אחד לעזאזל: 9 והקריב אהרן את השעיר אשר עלה עליו הגורל ליהוה



has been anointed and ordained to serve as priest in place of his father shall make expiation. He shall put on the linen vestments, the sacred vestments. 33He shall purge the innermost Shrine; he shall purge the Tent of Meeting and the altar; and he shall make expiation for the priests and for all the people of the congregation. 34This shall be to you a law for all time; to make atonement for the Israelites for all their sins once a year.

17 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying:

22Speak to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelite people and say to them:

31This is what the Lord has commanded: If anyone of the house of Israel slaughters an ox or sheep or goat in the camp, or does so outside the camp, and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to present it as an offering to the Lord, before the Lord's Tabernacle, bloodguilt shall be imputed to that man; he has shed blood; that man shall be cut off from among his people. 5This is in order that the Israelites may bring the sacrifices which they have been making in the open—that they may bring them before the Lord, to the priest, at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and offer them as sacrifices of well-being to the Lord; that the priest may dash the blood against the altar of the Lord at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and turn the fat into smoke as a pleasing odor to the Lord; and that they may offer their sacrifices no more to the goat-demons after whom they stray. This shall be to them a law for all time, throughout the ages.

8Say to them further: If anyone of the house of Israel or of the strangers who reside among

20When he has finished purging the Shrine, the Tent of Meeting, and the altar, the live goat shall be brought forward. 21Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat and confess over it all the iniquities and transgressions of the Israelites, whatever their sins, putting them on the head of the goat; and it shall be sent off to the wilderness through a designated man. 22Thus the goat shall carry on it all their iniquities to an inaccessible region; and the goat shall be set free in the wilderness.

23And Aaron shall go into the Tent of Meeting, take off the linen vestments that he put on when he entered the Shrine, and leave them there. 24He shall bathe his body in water in the holy precinct and put on his vestments; then he shall come out and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, making expiation for himself and for the people. 25The fat of the sin offering he shall turn into smoke on the altar.

26He who set the Azazel-goat free shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that he may reenter the camp. 27The bull of sin offering and the goat of sin offering whose blood was brought in to purge the Shrine shall be taken outside the camp; and their hides, flesh, and dung shall be consumed in fire. 28He who burned them shall wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after that he may re-enter the camp.

29And this shall be to you a law for all time: In the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall practice self-denial; and you shall do no manner of work, neither the citizen nor the alien who resides among you. 30For on this day atonement shall be made for you to cleanse you of all your sins; you shall be clean before the Lord. 31It shall be a sabbath of complete rest for you, and you shall practice self-denial; it is a law for all time. 32The priest who

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וַיִּשְׁמַע ה' אֶת-קוֹל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּזְעַק ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיכֶם מָה אַתֶּם עוֹשִׂים

בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּזְעַק ה' אֶל-מֹשֶׁה וְאֶל-אַהֲרֹן וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיכֶם מָה אַתֶּם עוֹשִׂים
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21 When the Canaanite, king of Arad, who

dwell in the Negeb, learned that Israel was coming by the way of Atharim,⁴ he engaged Israel in battle and took some of them captive. ²⁷Then Israel made a vow to the Lord and said, "If you deliver this people into our hand, we will proscribe their towns." ²⁸The Lord heeded Israel's plea and delivered up the Canaanites; and they and their cities were proscribed. So that place was named Hormah.

⁴They set out from Mount Hor by way of

the Sea of Reeds⁴ to skirt the land of Edom. But the people grew restive on the journey,⁵ and the people spoke against God and against Moses, "Why did you make us leave Egypt to die in the wilderness? There is no bread and no water, and we have come to loathe this miserable food."

⁶The Lord sent serpents against the people. They bit the people and many of the Israelites died. ⁷The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you. Intercede with the Lord to take away the serpents from us!" And Moses interceded for the people. ⁸Then the Lord said to Moses, "Make a *seraphim* figure and mount it on a standard. And if anyone who is bitten looks at it, he shall recover." ⁹Moses made a copper serpent and mounted it on a standard; and when anyone was bitten by a serpent, he would look at it, he shall recover.

The Israelites marched on and encamped at Oboth. ¹¹They set out from Oboth and encamped at Iye-abarim, in the wilderness bordering on Moab to the east. ¹²From there they

set out and encamped at the wadi Zered. ¹³From there they set out and encamped beyond the Arnon, that is, in the wilderness that extends from the territory of the Amorites. For the Arnon is the boundary of Moab, between Moab and the Amorites. ¹⁴Therefore the Book of the Wars of the Lord speaks of "Wahab in Suphah, and the wadis: the Arnon ¹⁵with its tributary wadis, stretched along the settled country of Ar, hugging the territory of Moab..."

¹⁶And from there to Beer, ¹⁷which is the well where the Lord said to Moses, "Assemble the people that I may give them water." ¹⁷Then Israel sang this song:

Spring up, O well—sing to it—
¹⁸The well which the chieftains dug,
Which the nobles of the people started
With maces, with their own staffs.
And from Midbar¹⁹ to Mattanah, ¹⁹and from Mattanah to Nahal²⁰, and from Nahal²⁰ to Bamoth, ²⁰and from Bamoth to the valley that is in the country of Moab, at the peak of Pisgah, overlooking the wasteland.

²¹Israel now sent messengers to Sihon king of the Amorites, saying, ²²"Let me pass through your country. We will not turn off into fields or vineyards, and we will not drink water from wells. We will follow the king's highway until we have crossed your territory." ²³But Sihon would not let Israel pass through his territory. Sihon gathered all his people and went out against Israel in the wilderness. He came to Jahaz and engaged Israel in battle. ²⁴But Israel put them to the sword, and took possession of their land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as [Azi] of the Ammonites, for Azi marked the

boundary between the land of the Amorites and the land of the Canaanites. ²⁵Then Sihon said to Israel, "I will fight against you." ²⁶Israel fought against Sihon and took possession of his land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the city of Dibon. ²⁷Then Israel sent messengers to Heshbon, saying, "We will not turn off into fields or vineyards, and we will not drink water from wells. We will follow the king's highway until we have crossed your territory." ²⁸But Heshbon would not let Israel pass through his territory. Heshbon gathered all his people and went out against Israel in the wilderness. He came to Jahaz and engaged Israel in battle. ²⁹But Israel put them to the sword, and took possession of their land, from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the city of Dibon.