

# PTDT

**PhiloTorah D'var Torah**

## **Good, solid Mashal... but**

Rashi, based on the teachings of Rabi Moshe HaDarshan, makes a solid case for Para Aduma being a kapara (atonement) for the sin of the golden calf. He brings a MASHAL of a king who had a maidservant whose infant son soiled the palace; the king calls to the maid servant to clean up the mess her son made.

So too, the Para Aduma is called to clean up, to atone for, her son, the calf, who soiled the King's Palace.

Many details of the p'sukim are highlighted to flesh out the MASHAL. Conclusion: The Para Aduma is a kapara for Cheit HaEigel.

Just one problem. The potion made with the ashes of the Para Aduma serve to purify one who has become T'MEI MEIT, ritually defiled from contact with a dead body. Being TAMEI is NOT a sin. In fact, those who prepare a body for burial - the Chevra Kadisha - are performing a very special mitzva, and become Tamei in the process. So, as perfect as the MASHAL is, it seems to not fit - Why

is it said that the Para Aduma is an atonement for the Sin?

To suggest an answer to this, let us ponder the reason that the Torah considers a corpse to be AVI AVOT HATUM'A - the highest source of spiritual impurity.

During one's lifetime, the GUF (body) and the Neshama (soul) are partnered. The body, as receptacle for the soul, should seemingly not be a source of TUM'A. Rather it should be an empty shell, perhaps like an eggshell or the peel of an orange, to be discarded, having fulfilled its function in this world. In the case of a human body - created in the image of G-d, proper burial, etc. is required. But why the TUM'AT MEIT?

The NESHAMA that is within us, is TAHOR. We acknowledge so every morning. In another MASHAL, the soul is compared to a princess; the body into which it enters is like a peasant. The King (HKBH) says to the peasant that He expects him to treat His princess (a NESHAMA is CHEILEK ELOKUT) like a princess should be treated. Not like a peasant treats a peasant wife.

In the context of the GUF-NESHAMA partnership, the body is charged with doing mitzvot and chesed, following G-d's laws enthusiastically. This is

how the body is supposed to treat its NESHAMA. Every time a person sins, he has betrayed G-d. Since there is no person who is without sin, it is the GUF that accumulates marks against itself the results in it becoming a major source of TUM'A, when its soul departs.

That being so, the concept that Para Aduma, which is used to purify one from TUM'AT MEIT, can be seen indeed to be a KAPARA for sin, in general, and for the Sin of the Golden Calf, in particular. **PTDT**