



## PhiloTorah D'var Torah

### Atonement? Yes!

Rashi on the perek about Para Aduma looks just like Rashi on all of the Torah - selected words and phrases followed by Rashi's comments, explanations, etc.

After his comments on many of the 22 p'sukim of the perek, we find something else. Rashi says that the above commentary is based on the meaning of the words and the halachot related to Para Aduma.

And now I am copying the Midrash Aggada based on Rabi Moshe haDarshan... (He was a contemporary of Rashi, perhaps older than Rashi - both from France.)

Not to go through the whole thing, but here is the general statement:

Para Aduma - This can be compared to the son of a maidservant who soiled the king's palace. They said, "Let his mother come and clean up the mess." Similarly, let the cow come and atone for the calf.

Just as the calf defiled all those who were involved in it, so does the cow render unclean all those involved with it.

And just as they were cleansed through its ashes, as it says, "[he]

scattered [the ashes of the burned calf] upon the surface of the water", so [with the cow], "They shall take for that unclean person from the ashes of the burnt purification offering...

This midrash makes a very strong case for the connection between the Para Aduma and the Eigel HaZahav, and that the Para Aduma is a KAPARA (atonement) for the sin of the golden calf. Very solid multi-point connection.

Except for one 'small' thing.

The Para Aduma Potion (PAP) is used to purify one who became defiled (TAMEI) from contact with a dead body. It is not a sin to be TAMEI. In fact, sometimes it is a great mitzva. And purification from a state of impurity is not the same as atonement for sin.

So here is an idea to match up Para Aduma and CHEIT (sin).

The body is the receptacle of the person's soul during his lifetime, or the partner of his soul - if you prefer to see it that way. When the soul leaves the body, the body should simply be viewed as having fulfilled its task in the world and should be respectfully discarded by burial, having been created in the image of G-d. But not more than that. Why is the dead body considered AVI AVOT HATUM'A - the greatest source of impurity?

The answer is - SIN. There is a famous mashal (parable) about a king who had a beautiful daughter who fell in love with a common peasant. And he with her. They wanted to be married. Rather than try to break them apart (or maybe failing to break up their romance), the king met with the peasant and warned him that he had better treat his daughter like the princess she was, and not like the wife of a common peasant.

HKBH warns the body - so to speak - that it had better treat the soul in it with the highest degree of spirituality - via a life of Torah and Mitzvot. And that it should not sin, which is a betrayal of the body's charge to treat the soul properly.

It is sin that causes the fact that a dead body is TAMEI. And so, it is the double-function of the Para Aduma Potion, to both purify the defiled AND to (partially) atone for the Sin of the Golden Calf in particular, but for all sin, in general.

Rashi makes a good case for Para Aduma being the Kapara for Cheit HaEigel. The details fit nicely. **PTDT**