

# Parsha Ponders

Acharei Mos/Kedoshim | April 27, 2023 | 7 Iyar 5783

## *The crack in the diamond*<sup>1</sup>

ואם האכל יאכל ביום השלישי פגול הוא לא ירצה

If he shall surely eat it on the third day, it is *pigul*, and it will not be desired<sup>2</sup>

The Torah prohibits something known as *pigul*. When the Kohen is slaughtering an offering, even if he does the procedure correctly, he can invalidate it. How so? He has to have the correct intent when slaughtering the animal. If he simply thinks in his mind<sup>3</sup> that this offering is going to be eaten outside the Temple, when in fact it is only permissible to eat it in the Temple, he has invalidated the offering. Alternatively, if he thinks that this offering is going to be eaten in a few days, when in fact every offering has a short time period when its consumption is permitted, he has invalidated the offering. These thoughts create a status on the offering known as *pigul*. Not only does the offering become invalid, but if someone were to eat it, they would incur *kares*, spiritual excision<sup>4</sup>. We see that *pigul* is a very grave sin.

There's something important to realize when it comes to *pigul*. The incorrect thoughts alone invalidate the offering. However, the penalty of *kares* is only incurred if everything else was done properly with the offering<sup>5</sup>. All of the stages of bringing an offering in the Temple need to be met. If the *Kohen* were to stop short and not complete the procedures for the offering, again, it would be invalid, but if someone ate this offering, they wouldn't incur *kares*.

If we look deeply, we'll realize that this principle is true everywhere in life. The more important something is, the more prominent, the more special, the slightest blemish becomes impossible to ignore. If there was a crack in a rock, no one would look twice. If there was a crack in a diamond, or the tiniest chip, that would be hard to ignore. The Torah is emphasizing this with the prohibition of *pigul*. Only if the offering is as perfect as possible is the blemish of *pigul* truly apparent.

If a soldier were to make a mistake in battle, it wouldn't be such a big deal. However, if the commanding general would make a mistake, it could cost them the entire war. This principal applies to the Jewish people as well. We say something astonishing in our *Selichos* prayers: We have sinned more than all the nations. Really?! If we realize just how special the Jews are, what a beacon of morality our nation embodies, this would really make sense. The tiniest sin on our part is very hard to ignore. It stands out. It's so noticeable that we appear to sin more than all the nations.

This is something very important that we ourselves have to be very cognizant of. Even if a tempting sin seems relatively insignificant, that would only hold true for an average person. The holy nation of the Jewish people always has to keep in mind that they're on a different plane. They're like a diamond or any other precious jewel. The tiniest chip can make all the difference. Good Shabbos

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<sup>1</sup> Based on [Emes L'Yaakov](#) to [Leviticus](#) 19:7

<sup>2</sup> [Leviticus](#) *loc. cit.*

<sup>3</sup> As [Tosafos](#) to [Bava Metziah](#) 43b s.v. החושב point out from many sources, *pigul* inducing thoughts actually have to be spoken out. See [Mesoras HaShas](#) *ad. loc.* for other [Tosafoses](#) that discuss this

<sup>4</sup> See [Rashi](#) to [Leviticus](#) *loc. cit.*, quoting [Zevachim](#) 28b and [Toras Kohanim](#) *ad. loc.*, that *kares* is only incurred when the *pigul* was caused due to thoughts of eating it after the designated time. Thoughts of eating it outside the designated place make it *pigul*, but eating this offering wouldn't incur *kares*. It's an interesting discussion as to why it should make a difference

<sup>5</sup> See [Rashi](#) to [Me'ilah](#) 2b s.v. ומשני הואיל and [Daf al Daf](#) to [Zevachim](#) *loc. cit.* See also [Mishneh LaMelech](#) to [Mishneh Torah](#) [Hilchos Pesulei HaMukdashin](#) 18:7, who is unsure if this rule applies to the case where the *Kohen* thought to eat it outside its designated place. Since there's no penalty of *kares* in such a case, perhaps there's a lower standard to give it a status of *pigul*. Although, I'm not knowledgeable in this topic enough to know why it should matter if it's *pigul* or not, if it's invalid anyways