

# Tractate Brachos

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First read through the Gemorah as is. Ponder it for a few seconds, and see how you understand it. Then move on and we will learn it.

**The Master said, From the time that Kohanim enter to eat their Terumah. Now, when do Kohanim eat Terumah? From the time the stars appear.** [The Tanna] is teaching us something in passing. **When are Kohanim permitted to eat Terumah? From the time the stars appear. And this is what [he] means to teach us; That the atonement does not hold back. As it was taught in a Baraita; and when the sun comes and has passed “Vetaher”. The setting of his sun holds him back from eating Terumah, but his atonement does not hold him back from eating Terumah. And on what [do you base] that this, “And when the sun comes...”, means the setting of the sun, and this, “Passed” (vetaher), means the passing of the day. (Page 2b) Perhaps it means the coming of the light. And what [is] “vetaher”? The person should make himself “tahor”? Rabbah bar Rav Shila said: If so, let the verse say “veyitaher”. What is “vetaher”? The passing of the day. As people say: The sun has set and the day has passed.**

### Explanation of the Gamorah:

**The master said** [the Tanna of our Mishnah] **from the time that Kohanim enter to eat their Terumah. Now** [let us see] **when do Kohanim [enter] to eat their Terumah?** [This is an example of how the tanna speaks in an almost codified way, and why the Gamorah is needed in order to completely understand the holy words of the Mishnah - here the Tanna is indicating to us that it is the time of the evening Terumah meal of the Kohanim. However, there is no set time for the Terumah, and therefore, our Tanna is pointing out a particular type of Kohan. He is referring to a Kohen who is tamei (unclean), because such a Kohen is not permitted to eat of the Terumah until he has cleansed himself. The way of cleansing is by immersing oneself into a mikvah (ritual bath), and then, only with the setting sun does he become clean, and thus, he may now partake of the Terumah meal]. **From the time the stars appear. Let the Mishnah [then] state, from the times the stars appear!** [Why does the Tanna need to mention the Kohen and his Terumah? If he means to say night time, let him say... from the time the stars appear].

[He] **teaches us something in passing** [the reason why the Tanna makes mention of the Kohanim and their Terumah, is obviously because he wishes to teach us something additional, while he sees the opportunity to do so. This is what he wishes to teach:] **When are Kohanim allowed to eat terumah? From the time the stars appear. And this is what the Tanna means to teach us: That the atonement** [We shall take the worst case in the event of a tamei Kohen... There are certain types of tumah (contamination which renders one unclean) which cannot be resolved with immersion into the mikvah. But rather, the Kohen must immerse into the mikvah, and then, on the following day, he must give an offering - atonement. Then he will be tahor (clean - pure).] **does not hold [him] back** [A Kohen who is tamei, and has immersed into a mikvah, does not need to wait until the following days atonement to eat the Terumah. Even though he is not completely tahor (clean), he may still partake of the Terumah. This is what our Tanna is trying to teach us. Besides the lesson of the Shema, we also learn about the laws of Terumah).]

[The Gamorah will now try and explain it's source of reasoning about a Kohen who is tamei, and then immerses himself in a mikvah:] **As it was taught in a baraita** [a baraita is an unwritten ruling which all are familiar with] **And when the sun comes and passed “vetaher”, the setting of his sun holds him back from eating Terumah** [the baraita is saying, in simple language: after his immersion, it is the sun which is preventing him from becoming pure enough to eat the Terumah. Notice also how the verse plays with the word “vetaher” and it's similarity to “tahor”, pure.] **But his atonement does not hold him back from eating Terumah** [here we have the source for the Gamorah's reasoning, the sun holds him back from eating the Terumah, but the following day's atonement offering does not. The Gamorah will now make sure it understands the above verse, “and when the sun...”, correctly:] **And on what [basis do you hold] that this [verse], “and when the sun comes [and has passed]...” means the setting of the sun, and this “vetaher”**

**means “the passing of the day** [this verse can be translated to mean something completely different. When the sun comes and has passed. To what time frame are we referring? For example, does it mean “tonight”. Or does it mean “tomorrow morning”. If the Gamorah is not certain of the correct meaning of this verse, then it may not be used as a reliable source either. And then this line of reasoning may not be followed in our pursuit of understanding the Mishnah].

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**Perhaps it** [or verse “when the sun..”] **means the coming of the light** [tomorrow morning]. **And** [if it does mean the coming of the light] **what does “vetaher”** [mean]? [The meaning is] **That the person should make himself “tahor”** [only then can he eat the Terumah, thus making this baraita obsolete, because the Tanna made clear that the time that the Kohanim may eat is evening, not morning. The Gamorah will now resolve this issue:] **Rabbah bar Rav Shila said: If so** [if this verse means that the Kohen cannot eat of the Terumah until after his complete service, i.e., immersion, and then giving the atonement offering in the morning], **Let the verse say “veyitaher”** [this is the proper command form of the word. If the verse is commanding that the completion of tahor must be made, it would have used the command form of it], **what is “vetaher”**? [What then does our form of the word mean?]

**The passing of the day** [night time]. **As people say: The sun has set and the day has passed.** [The Aramaic word used in this common expression, “the sun has set and...,” for “passed”, is a translation of the Hebrew word “taher” both meaning pure and dean. The Gamorah is pointing this out to us as support for the view that the word “vetaher” in our verse is an idiomatic expression for the complete passing of the day.]