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Mishna

The Exodus from Egypt is to be mentioned (*in the third paragraph of the shema*) at night. Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah: Behold, I am like seventy years old (*for, in truth, he was not that old; he merely had the appearance of an old man*), and I have never merited to find a reason (*a Scriptural source*) why the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned at night until Ben Zoma expounded as follows: For it is written: *That you may remember the day when you came out of the land of Egypt, all the days of your life. 'The days of your life' would require (that the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned) by day; but 'all the days of your life' would require (that the Exodus should be mentioned) by night as well. The Sages, however, say: 'The days of your life' would require (that the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned) in this world; but 'all the days of your life' includes a requirement (that the Exodus from Egypt should be mentioned even) in the Messianic era. (12b)*

Primary and Secondary

The Gemora cites a braisa: Ben Zoma said to the Sages: And are we going to mention the Exodus from Egypt during the Messianic era? Doesn't it say: [Yirmiyahu 23:7-8]: *Behold, the days are coming, the word of Hashem, and people will not swear anymore, "As Hashem lives, Who has brought the Children of Israel from the land of Egypt." But rather, [they will say], "As Hashem lives, Who has brought up and Who will bring the offspring of the House of Israel from the Northern land and from all the lands to which He had dispersed them"?* They said to him: It does not mean that the Exodus from Egypt will be uprooted from its place, but rather that the redemption from other kingdoms will be the primary mention, and the redemption of Egypt will be secondary to it.

Similarly, the Torah writes [Bereishit, 35:10] (*referring to the incident where Yaakov fought with the angel of Esav and won*): *Your name will not be called anymore, Yaakov, but rather Yisrael shall be your name.* It does not mean that the name Yaakov shall

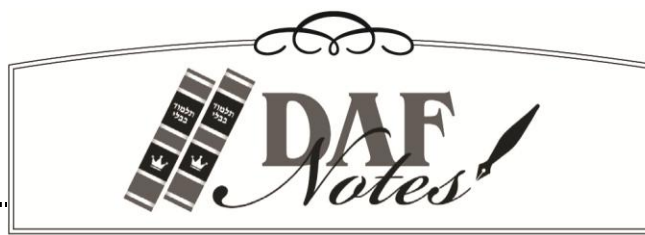
be completely uprooted from its place, but rather, Yisroel shall be his principal name, and Yaakov will be secondary to it.

The Sages continue: And so it is written [Yeshayah 43:18-19] (*regarding the Messianic era*): *Do not remember former occurrences, and do not contemplate events from before. 'Do not remember former occurrences' is referring to the dominion of the kingdoms. 'And do not contemplate events from before' is referring to the Exodus from Egypt.*

The verse continues: *Behold, I will be doing (a miracle) something new, now it will sprout.* Rav Yosef taught a braisa that this is referring to the war of Gog and Magog (*which are the battles that will occur before the redemption*).

The Sages have said a parable to what this (*that the salvation which will occur in the future will be the primary focus of mention; it will overshadow the redemption from Egypt*) is similar to. It is comparable to a person who was travelling on a road and a wolf came upon him and he was saved from it. He then was relating to everybody the incident with the wolf. As he continued on the road, a lion came upon him, and he was saved from it as well. He went about relating the incident with the lion. A snake then came upon him, and he was saved from it as well. He forgot the incidents of both of them (*the wolf and the lion*) and was relating to everybody the incident with the snake. So to with Israel; the later sufferings cause them to forget about the previous ones.

[*The Tosefta continues with the citing of other instances where the changing of a name does not mean that the original one was completely eliminated.*] It is written: *Avram, who is Avraham.* In the beginning, he was a father to (*the nation of*) Aram, and now he became a father to all the people of the world (*but nevertheless, the name Avram was not eliminated completely*). Similarly, Sarai is the same as Sarah. At first she became a princess to her own



people, but later she became a princess to all the people of the world.

Bar Kappara taught a *braisa*: Whoever calls Avraham “Avram” transgresses a positive commandment, since it is written: *And your name shall be Avraham*. Rabbi Eliezer says: He transgresses a negative commandment, since it is written: *Your name shall no more be called Avram*.

The *Gemora* asks: But if that is so, then the same should apply to one who calls Sarah “Sarai” (*for it is written: Do not call her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name*)?

The *Gemora* answers: There, the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Avraham (*only*): As for Sarai your wife, you shall not call her Sarai, but Sarah shall be her name (*but that prohibition does not apply to anyone else*).

The *Gemora* asks: But if that is so, the same should apply to one who calls Yaakov “Yaakov” (*and not Yisroel*)?

The *Gemora* answers: There is a difference in his case, because the Torah itself restored the name Yaakov to him, as it is written: *And God spoke to Yisroel in the visions of the night, and He said, “Yaakov, Yaakov.”*

Rabbi Yosi bar Avin, or some say that it was Rabbi Yosi bar Zevida, asked from the following verse: *You are Hashem, the God who choose Avram!* [*We see that the Torah itself restored his name to Avram!?*]

The *Gemora* answers: There, the prophet is arranging the praises of the All Merciful, and relates that which was the case originally. (12b – 13a)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, MEI’EMASAI

Mishna

If one was reading from the Torah (*the section of the shema*), and the time for its recital arrived, the *halachah* is as follows: If he directed his mind, he has fulfilled his obligation.

[Generally, one is prohibited from interrupting his recital of the *shema*; the *Mishna* now discusses cases where one may interrupt his recital for various reasons.] If one is at the point of the breaks (*between the sections of shema and its blessings*), one may give

greeting out of respect (*to an esteemed person, one who it is proper to greet first*) and return a greeting; if, however, he is in the middle (*of a section of shema or one of its blessings*), one may give greeting out of fear (*to someone who might kill him if he does not greet him first*) and return it; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah says: If one is in the middle (*of a section of shema or one of its blessings*), he may give greeting out of fear and return it out of respect; if, however, he is at the point of the breaks (*between the sections of shema and its blessings*), one may give greeting out of respect and return greeting to anyone.

The breaks (*between the paragraphs*) are as follows: between the first blessing (*before kerias shema*) and the second; between the second and *Shema*; between *Shema* and *v’hayah im shamo’a* (*and it will be if you listen; the second paragraph of shema*); between *v’hayah im shamo’a* and *va’yomer* (*the third paragraph of shema*); and between *va’yomer* and *emes ve’yatziv* (*the beginning of the first blessing after the recital of shema*). Rabbi Yehudah says: Between *va’yomer* and *emes ve’yatziv*, one should not interrupt.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karchah said: Why was the section of *Shema* placed before that of *v’hayah im shamo’a*? It was done that way in order that one should first accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven (*by proclaiming that Hashem is our God, and He is One*), and then accept upon himself the yoke of the commandments. Why does the section of *v’hayah im shamo’a* come before that of *va’yomer*? It was done that way because the section of *v’hayah im shamo’a* is applicable both to the day and to the night (*for Torah should be studied day and night*), whereas the section of *va’yomer* is applicable only to the day (*for the mitzvah of tzitzis does not apply at night*). (13a)

Intention to Fulfill the Mitzvah

The *Gemora* notes: This (*when the Mishna stated that if one was reading from the Torah the section of the shema, and the time for its recital arrived, the halachah is that if he directed his mind, he has fulfilled his obligation*) proves that *mitzvos* must be performed with intent (*to fulfill the mitzvah, and otherwise, he will not discharge his obligation; this contradicts that which Rabbah said elsewhere that if one blows shofar on Rosh Hashanah for the sake of music, he has discharged his obligation of shofar – but why? He did not intend to fulfill the mitzvah!?*).

The *Gemora* disagrees with the proof by saying that the *Mishna* meant that he had intention to recite the words (*of shema*); *but it is not necessary for him to intend to fulfill the mitzvah*.



The *Gemora* asks: To recite? But surely he is reciting (*the Torah, so obviously, he is saying the words*)?

The *Gemora* answers that the *Mishna* is referring to a case where one was reading a scroll in order to correct (*any mistakes he may find in it; and therefore, if he did not intend to recite the words – even if he is saying the words to check that there are no mistakes, he is not “reciting” at all; he will only discharge his obligation if his intention is to recite the words; accordingly, there is no proof from our Mishna that one must direct his heart to fulfill the mitzvah in order to discharge his obligation*). (13a)

Language of Shema

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rebbe maintains that *shema* must be recited in Hebrew. The *Chachamim* hold that it can be recited in any language.

The *Gemora* cites Scriptural sources for their respective opinions. Rebbe learns from the verse that states: *And they shall be*. This implies that the words shall be as they are now (*in Hebrew*).

The *Chachamim* derive their opinion from the word, *Shema, hear*. This implies that it can be recited in any language that you understand.

Rebbe derives from the word *Shema* that a person must recite *shema* in a loud enough voice that he can hear what he is saying.

The *Chachamim* maintain that he has fulfilled his obligation even if he doesn't hear what he is saying.

The *Chachamim* learn from the verse, *And they shall be*, that the words of *shema* must be recited in its proper sequence.

Rebbe learns that *halachah* from the extra letter *hey* in the word *hadevarim*.

The *Chachamim*, however, do not expound the extra letter.

The *Gemora* asks: Shall we say that Rebbe holds that the Torah (*the Torah reading on Shabbos according to Rashi, or on special Biblically mandated occasions according to Tosfos*) may be read in any other language, for if it would enter your mind that it must be recited in the Holy Tongue, why would it be necessary for the

Torah to write *And they shall be* to teach us that *shema* must be recited in Hebrew?

The *Gemora* states that this is not necessarily the case. It is necessary to teach that the *shema* must be recited in Hebrew, for since it says *Shema*, we might have thought that it could be recited in any language (*even though the Torah must be read in Hebrew*).

The *Gemora* asks: Shall we say that the *Chachamim* maintain that the Torah must be read in the Holy Tongue, for if it would enter your mind that it may be read in any language, why would it be necessary for the Torah to write *Shema* to teach us that *shema* may be recited in any language?

The *Gemora* states that this is not necessarily the case. It is necessary to teach that the *shema* may be recited in any language, for since it says *And they shall be*, we might have thought that it must be recited in Hebrew (*even though the Torah may be read in another language*). (13a)

Intent and Reciting

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *And they shall be*. This teaches us that the words of *shema* must be recited in its proper sequence. *The words ... upon your heart*. One might have thought that the entire first section requires *kavanah (intent)*; therefore the Torah states: *these*. Up to this point intent is necessary; from this point and on, intent is not required; these are the words of Rabbi Eliezer. Rabbi Akiva said to him: Behold it is written: *Which I command you this day shall be you're your heart*. From this you learn that the entire (*first*) section requires to be recited with intent.

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The *halachah* follows Rabbi Akiva.

There were some who taught this statement in reference to that which was taught in the following *braisa*: One who recites the *Shema* must direct his mind to what he is saying (*in the first two sections*). Rav Acha said in the name of Rabbi Yehudah: If he has directed his mind to the first section, he does not need to do so for the rest. Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The *halachah* follows Rav Acha in the name of Rabbi Yehudah.

The *Gemora* cites another *braisa*: *And they shall be*: This teaches us that they must not be recited out of sequence. *Upon your heart*. Rav Zutra says: Up until this point (*the first section*) extends the



requirement of intent; from this point and on (*the second section*) the requirement of reciting applies. Rabbi Yoshiyah says: Up until this point extends the requirement of reciting; from this point and on the requirement of intent applies.

The *Gemora* asks: What is different about ‘from this point and on’ that there exists a requirement of reciting? Presumably, it is because it is written: to **spea**k of them; here too (*in the first section*), it is written: and you shall **spea**k of them?

The *Gemora* answers: Rav Zutra meant as follows: Up until this point, the requirement of both intent and reciting applies; from this point and on, the requirement of reciting applies without the intent.

The *Gemora* asks: And what is different about ‘until this point’ that there exists a requirement of intent and reciting? Presumably, it is because it is written: upon your **heart** ... to **spea**k of them; here too (*in the second section*), it is written: upon your **heart** ... to **spea**k of them?

The *Gemora* answers: That verse (*written in the second section*) was required for that which was taught by Rabbi Yitzchak, who said: *You shall place these words of Mine [upon your heart].* This teaches us that it is requisite that the placing (*of the arm tefillin*) should be opposite the heart (*high up on the arm*).

The master stated above: Rabbi Yoshiyah says: Up until this point extends the requirement of reciting; from this point and on the requirement of intent applies.

The *Gemora* asks: What is different about ‘from this point and on’ that there exists a requirement of intent? Presumably, it is because it is written: upon your **heart**; here too (*in the first section*), it is written: upon your **heart**?

The *Gemora* answers: Rabbi Yoshiyah meant as follows: Up until this point, the requirement of both intent and reciting applies; from this point and on, the requirement of intent applies without the reciting.

The *Gemora* asks: And what is different about ‘until this point’ that there exists a requirement of intent and reciting? Presumably, it is because it is written: upon your **heart** ... to **spea**k of them; here too (*in the second section*), it is written: upon your **heart** ... to **spea**k of them?

The *Gemora* answers: That verse (*written in the second section*) is in reference to words of Torah, and what the Merciful One is saying is as follows: Teach your children Torah, so that they may be able to study them.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *Hear, O Israel, Hashem is our God, Hashem is the One and Only.* Up to this point (*only in the first verse*), concentration of the heart is required; these are the words of Rabbi Meir.

Rava said: The *halachah* follows Rabbi Meir. (13a – 13b)

How to Recite the Shema

It has been taught in a *braisa*: Sumchos says: Whoever prolongs (*for the sake of concentration*) the word *echad* (*One and Only*) has his days and years prolonged.

Rav Acha bar Yaakov said: The letter ‘*dalet*’ is the one which should be prolonged. [*The word ‘echad’ is spelled: ‘alef,’ ‘ches,’ ‘dalet.’ The word has no meaning until the ‘dalet’ is pronounced; that is why it should be prolonged.*] Rav Ashi said: This is provided that he does not slur over the letter ‘*ches*.’

Rabbi Yirmiyah was once sitting before Rabbi Chiya bar Abba, and the latter saw that he was prolonging the word ‘*echad*’ a great deal. Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said to him: Once you have (*in your mind*) declared His Kingship over all that is above and below, and over the four directions of the heaven, no more is required.

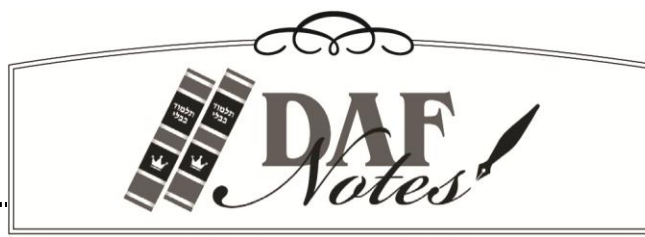
Rav Nassan bar Mar Ukva said in the name of Rav Yehudah: *Upon your heart* must be recited while standing (*in one place – even according to Beis Hillel that one can recite the Shema while walking or working, this verse requires concentration*).

The *Gemora* asks: Is it at all logical to think that this should apply only by the reciting of the words: *upon your heart*?

The *Gemora* answers: Rather say: Up until the words upon your heart must be recited while standing (*in one place*); from there and on, it is not necessary.

Rabbi Yochanan, however, said: The entire (*first*) section must be said standing (*in one place*).

The *Gemora* notes: And Rabbi Yochanan in this is consistent, for Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The



halachah follows Rav Acha in the name of Rabbi Yehudah (*that the first section requires intent*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *Hear, O Israel, Hashem is our God, Hashem is the One and Only*; this was Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi's recital of the *Shema*. [*Since he was studying torah the entire day, he said only this verse and no more.*]

Rav once said to Rabbi Chiya: I did not see Rebbe (*Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi*) ever accept upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven (*for he began to teach his students before the proper time of recital, and once the time had arrived, he did not interrupt his teaching to recite the Shema*). He replied to him: Son of nobles! In the moment when he passed his hand over his eyes (*saying the first verse*), he accepted upon himself the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The *Gemora* inquires: Did he finish it afterwards or did he not finish it afterwards?

Bar Kappara said: He did not finish it afterwards; but Rabbi Shimon, the son of Rebbe, said: He did finish it afterwards.

Bar Kappara said to Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe: Now, according to my view that he did not finish it afterwards, it is understandable why Rebbe would always seek out to teach a lesson in which there is mention of the Exodus from Egypt (*for this way, he would be mentioning it instead of the last section of Shema*); but according to your view that he did finish it afterwards, why did he seek out to teach such a lesson?

Rabbi Shimon answered: It was in order that he mention the Exodus from Egypt at the proper time (*when one could recite the Shema*).

Rabbi I'la the son of Rav Shmuel bar Marta said in the name of Rav: If one said: *Hear, O Israel, Hashem is our God, Hashem is the One and Only*, and was then overcome by sleep (*reciting the remainder of Shema while he was half-asleep*), he has, nevertheless, discharged his obligation.

Rav Nachman said to his slave Daru: For the first verse, prod me (*if you see that I am dozing off*), but do not prod me for more than that (*after the first verse*).

Rav Yosef said to Rav Yosef, the son of Rabbah: What did your father do (*in order to stay awake*)? He replied: For the first verse

he used to trouble himself to remain awake; for the rest, he would not trouble himself.

Rav Yosef said: A man lying on his back should not recite the *Shema*.

The *Gemora* notes that this implies that it is only that he may not recite the *Shema* lying on his back, but there is no concern to his sleeping in this position.

The *Gemora* asks: But didn't Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi curse anyone who slept lying on his back (*for he might become aroused in his sleep, and become shamed if he becomes exposed*)?

The *Gemora* answers: With regard to sleeping, it is acceptable if he turns over a little on his side, but to recite the *Shema* in such a manner, it is forbidden.

The *Gemora* asks: But Rabbi Yochanan turned over a little and recited *Shema*?

The *Gemora* answers: Rabbi Yochanan was an exception, because he was very corpulent. (13b)

DAILY MASHAL

Bow Like a Snake

The *Gemora* (Bava Kamma 16) cites a *braisa*: The spine of a deceased person becomes a snake after seven years, if he does not bow down for the *modim* prayer.

Tosfos explains that this is measure for measure. Rav Sheishes (Brochos 12b) said that when he bowed down during *Shemoneh Esrei*, he would bow like a rod (in one swift motion), and when he straightened up, he would straighten up like a snake (which raises its head first and then slowly raises the rest of its body). A person's punishment is that his spine turns into a snake.

What is behind the bowing down like a rod and straightening up like a snake?

Kollel Iyun HaDaf explains this based upon the Maharsha and the Maharal: The point of "*Modim*" is to show one's humility before Hashem, Who grants a person everything he needs for his daily life. The *Gemora* in *Sotah* (9b) teaches us that Hashem originally made the snake the king of the beasts, but the snake was not grateful and it became arrogant and wanted even more. Hashem



punished the snake, saying, "I originally created you to walk with an upright stature, but now that you did not humble yourself, you will walk upon your stomach." The snake, therefore, is a symbol of the punishment that befalls a person who does not humble himself and does not recognize that everything he has is a gift from Hashem. When a person bows down, he should bow like a rod, reminding himself that there is a Master in Heaven Whose word he must obey (for a king rules with his stick; see Sotah 40a and Shabbos 52b).

When a person rises after bowing, he must remember that even when standing erect, he should not do so in an arrogant manner. The Gemora here teaches us that if a person does not bow during Modim and thereby commits the sin of the snake, by standing erect and not recognizing Hashem's dominion; after he dies, his spine that did not bend, will turn into a snake.

Tosfos brings another explanation: The Midrash says that there is a vertebra in the spine of a person from which he is resurrected in the World to Come. This bone is so strong and hard that fire cannot consume it. And now, when that bone becomes a snake, he will not be resurrected and will therefore not live in the World to Come.

Tosfos rejects this explanation, for it is not logical to say that one will be punished so harshly for committing this minor transgression, for we have learned that all of Israel has a share in the World to Come.

Rav Shamshon Raphael Hirsch wrote in a letter: Anyone who reads this Gemora finds it laughable, but Pliny says the same statement almost word for word, "After a number of years the human spine turns into a snake" Chazal, however, used this to teach a mussar lesson. To any mind it is clear that every similarly surprising statement of Chazal, if we look into it, was accepted as true by the scholars of the time.