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Nedarim Daf 91

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

Moshe Raphael ben Yehoshua (Morris Stadtmauer) o”h

Tzvi Gershon ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

False Claims

They inquired: If a woman tells her husband, “You have divorced me (*but I do not have the get*),” what is the *halacha*?

Rav Hamnuna said: This can be resolved from our *Mishna*, where the woman said, “I am defiled to you,” she is not believed according to the *Mishna*’s final ruling only because she knows that her husband does not know the truth, and therefore, she is not afraid to lie; however, in our case, she would not be so brazen to lie to her husband’s face, when she knows that he knows for certain if she is saying the truth or not, and therefore, she should be believed.

Rava said to him: On the contrary! The only reason that the initial ruling of the *Mishna* believed her is because she would not disgrace herself with such a claim if it wasn’t the truth; however, in our case (*where she is not embarrassing herself*), perhaps she will be brazen enough to lie directly to his face, for she might be stronger (*in her anger*) than her husband.

Rav Mesharshiya asked on Rava from our *Mishna*: If she said, “Heaven is between me and you (*my*

husband is impotent),” the initial ruling is that she is believed! Now, in this case, she doesn’t suffer any disgrace, and yet, she is believed!

The *Gemora* answers: Rava holds that since she would be required to say that his semen does not shoot like an arrow (*and that is an embarrassing claim to say in Beis Din*), if it would not be the truth, she would not have said it.

Then *Gemora* asks on Rav Hamnuna from the *Mishna*’s final ruling: If she said, “Heaven is between me and you (*my husband is impotent*),” the final ruling is that she is not believed! Here, she knows that he knows for certain if she is saying the truth or not, and yet, the *Mishna* rules that she is not believed!

The *Gemora* answers: Rav Hamnuna would hold that she would think that the husband is not certain if he shoots like an arrow or not, and therefore, she is not so concerned about lying. (91a)

Suspicious Incidents

A certain woman was accustomed to rise in the morning following cohabitation and wash her

husband's hands for him. One day she brought him water to wash, but, he exclaimed, "Nothing has taken place today!" She replied, "If so, it must have been one of the gentiles selling perfume, who were here today. If it wasn't you, it must have been one of them!"

Rav Nachman said: We assume that she has cast her eyes upon another man and we do not believe her.

A certain woman once displayed displeasure with her husband. He asked her, "Why did you change today?" She replied, "You have never caused me so much pain through intimacy as you did today." "But nothing has taken place today!" he exclaimed. She replied, "If so, it must have been one of the gentiles selling naphtha, who were here today. If it wasn't you, it must have been one of them!"

Rav Nachman said: We assume that she has cast her eyes upon another man and we do not believe her.

A certain man was secluded in a house with a married woman. Hearing the husband entering, the adulterer broke through some palm leaves (*in front of the husband*) and fled.

Rava said: The wife is permitted, for had he committed a sin, he would have hidden himself in the house (*instead of revealing himself to the husband*).

A certain adulterer visited a woman. Her husband came, whereupon the adulterer went and hid himself behind a curtain before the door. There was some cress lying there that a snake had ate from while the husband was away, and now the husband was about to eat from the cress without his wife's knowledge. The adulterer exclaimed, "Don't eat from it, because a poisonous snake has tasted it!"

Rava said: The wife is permitted, for had he committed a sin, he would have been pleased that the husband should eat from it and die, as it is written: *For they have committed adultery, and there is blood on their hands.*

The *Gemora* asks: Surely that is obvious?

The *Gemora* answers: I might have thought that he had committed a sin, and as for his warning, that is because he prefers the husband not to die, so that his wife may be to him as *stolen waters are sweet, and bread of secrecy is pleasant*; therefore Rava teaches otherwise. (91a – 91b)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU,
VE'EILU NEDARIM
AND TRACTATE NEDARIM IS CONCLUDED

DAILY MASHAL

Stolen Water is Sweet

A certain adulterer visited a woman. Her husband came, whereupon the adulterer went and hid himself behind a curtain before the door. There was some cress lying there that a snake had ate from while the husband was away, and now the husband was about to eat from the cress without his wife's knowledge. The adulterer exclaimed, "Don't eat from it, because a poisonous snake has tasted it!"

Rava said: The wife is permitted, for had he committed a sin, he would have been pleased that the husband should eat from it and die, as it is written: *For they have committed adultery, and there is blood on their hands.*

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The *Gemora* answers: I might have thought that he had committed a sin, and as for his warning, that is because he prefers the husband not to die, so that his wife may be to him as *stolen waters are sweet, and bread of secrecy is pleasant*; therefore Rava teaches otherwise.

Tosfos explains that although it is true that "stolen waters are sweet," an adulterer is not aware that this is the cause for his pleasure; rather, he thinks that his desires will be fulfilled if the husband dies and he can marry her publicly.

Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler in *Michtav M'Eliyahu* explains as follows: The reason that "stolen waters are sweet" is because the forbidden pleasures which the sinner desires are out of his reach. Once he reaches it and brings himself to the gratification that he was seeking, he loses his desire for that enjoyment.

The sinner, however, does not realize this. He thinks that he is genuinely attracted to that forbidden pleasure. He therefore deludes himself into thinking that finding a legal way to enjoy this forbidden pleasure will bring him the gratification that he desires.

Rava understood that this man did not realize what the driving force behind his desires is. This is why he ruled that the woman is permitted. If he indeed was an adulterer, he would have chosen the simple way for him to fulfill his desires; let the husband die. He did not do that, and that to Rava was an indicator that he was indeed innocent.