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## HIGHLIGHTS

1. Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yochanan that the prophet Shmuel's children did not sin. When the *passuk* says they “turned after profit,” it merely means that they did not travel extensively to judge the Jewish people. Rebbe Meir said it means that they demanded that *maaser rishon* be given to them. Rebbe Yehudah said it means they did give investment money to people who later came to them for judgment. Rebbe Akiva said that they forcibly took an extra portion of *maaser*. Rebbe Yose said they forcibly took the gifts that were supposed to go to the Kohanim.
2. Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yochanan that King David did not sin with Bas Sheva. He was merely tempted to, but he restrained himself. He was faulted, however, for judging Uriah (Bas Sheva's husband) outside of Sanhedrin. Rav said that this was David's only fault, but he also said that David was faulted for accepting slander.
3. Rav said David accepted Tzivah's slander of his former master, Mipiboshes ben Shaul. Because of this, Mipiboshes questioned Hashem's justice, as did his father. Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav that it was because David accepted this slander that the Beis Hamikdosh was eventually destroyed. According to Shmuel, David did not accept the slander of Tzivah.
4. Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav

Yochanan that Shlomo Hamelech did not sin. When the *passuk* says that he built altars to foreign gods, it merely means that his wives, who were converts, built altars to foreign gods, and he failed to stop them. It was then that Rome began. When Yeraveam erected two idols of calves, Italy began.

5. Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yochanan that Yoshiahu did not sin. Although the *passuk* says that he returned to Hashem, implying that he sinned at some point, this means that he paid out of pocket for every case he had judged in the first 18 years of his reign, in case he misjudged a case. Rav disagreed, and said that Yoshiahu was one of the two greatest models of repentance in history. The other case was of Abba, Rebbe Yirmiah's father. Some say it was Achva, Abba's brother. Rav Yosef provides another model of repentance: Mar Ukva, the Reish Galusa.

## COMMENTARY

1. The terminology used in Tanach in describing the wrongs of great men is generally much more severe than the way we would describe the same sins today. For instance, the *passuk* says that “When Shmuel [the prophet] was old... his sons did not go in his ways, and they turned to profits, accepted bribes, and bent justice” (Shmuel I, 8:1,3). However, Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini, in the name of Rav Yochanan, explained that their actual sin was minute.



Shmuel himself would travel from town to town to judge every Jew where he lived. His children, however, chose to remain in their homes, and let those who needed judgment come to them, in order that their scribes and secretaries would make more money.

However, the *Gemora* cites a *baraisa* that indicates that the sin of Shmuel's sons was somewhat more severe. Rebbe Meir says that they would request the *maaser* given to the Leviim. Although they were of the tribe of Levi, it was inappropriate for them to ask explicitly for the gifts, since their status as revered figures meant that the people would always listen to them, leaving other Leviim without enough to live on. Rebbe Yehudah said that the *passuk* means that they would invest money with local businessmen. If those businessmen would then come to the children of Shmuel for judgment, they would be biased to give a favorable judgment, and it was therefore inappropriate. Rebbe Akiva said that they took an extra portion of *maaser* (presumably some sort of tax for their position as leaders of the nation). Rebbe Yose said they forcibly took "the gifts." Rashi's first explanation is that this refers to the gifts that should have gone to the Kohanim, instead of to Shmuel's children, who were Leviim. Another explanation that Rashi gives, however, is that they took the gifts of the Leviim. They were faulted for this because it is incorrect for Leviim to take the gifts forcibly. Instead, the owner must give it willingly.

2. Similarly, the *pesukim* give an account of King David that implies that he took a married woman, Bas Sheva, wife of Uriah the Chitti. Later, when Uriah returned from the war, David sent him back with orders that he be placed in the front lines of battle, where he would almost certainly be killed.

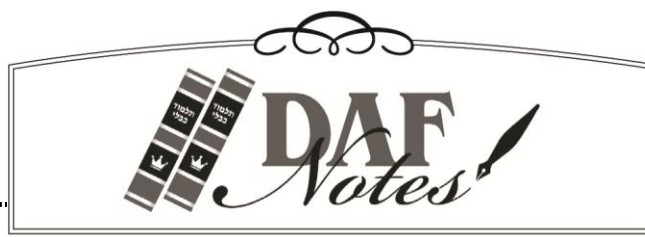
However, Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yochanan that David did not sin, neither as an adulterer or as a murderer. He

explains that every soldier in David's army would give a bill of divorce to his wife before leaving, so that if he died or disappeared, she would not suffer the negative legal consequences that might ensue (such as *yibum*, if she is childless, or being unable to remarry if her husband's status cannot be verified). Thus, Bas Sheva was not married at the time that David took her. (The initial terminology in the *Gemora* is that "he wanted to [sin], but restrained himself." See Rashi, who seems to understand that David almost took her before she received the bill of divorce.) Furthermore, Uriah was liable to the death penalty for an act that constituted rebellion. David's sole fault in the matter was that he did not judge Uriah before the Sanhedrin prior to carrying out his sentence.

The act that made Uriah liable to death is the subject of debate. Rashi understands that it is unforgivable to refer to someone as one's master before the king, since the implication of being someone's else's servant is an insult to the royalty. Thus, when Uriah said, "And my master Yoav, and the servants of my master, are in the fields..." (Shmuel II, 11:11), he insulted the king, an act which carries the death sentence. Tosafos understands that he was liable to death for refusing to return home when David had him go back to his wife.

Rav says that the sin of David in failing to consult the Sanhedrin before judging Uriah was the only sin David committed. However, the *Gemora* cites another statement of Rav that David also sinned by accepted the slander of Tzivah. The *Gemora* concludes that it is unclear how to resolve the two statements of Rav.

3. Rav said that David was guilty of accepting slander. When David's son Avshalom staged a coup, and he ran away from Yerushalayim, David asked Tzivah where his former master, Mipiboshes ben Shaul, was. Tzivah lied and told David that Mipiboshes remained in Yerushalayim because he hoped that



the rebellion would end with the house of Shaul reinstated. David responded by gifting Tzivah with some of Mipiboshes' estate. When David returned, he found Mipiboshes in a state of mourning. David understood that this was because he mourned that David had returned to power. According to Shmuel, David did not accept Tzivah's slanderous report, but rather relied on this show of mourning. The truth, however, was that Mipiboshes has accepted mourning upon himself until David would return to Yerushalayim, as a sign of his sadness at the rebellion.

In any case, when David showed that he did not fully accept Mipiboshes' explanation, Mipiboshes questioned the justice of Hashem. Similarly, his father Shaul had questioned Hashem when he had been commanded to completely wipe out Amalek. "[Even] if the adults have sinned, what sin have the children done?" (Rashi).

Rav Yehudah cited Rav as saying that it was because David accepted Tzivah's slander that his kingdom was later divided (into Yehudah, ruled by his descendants, and Yisrael, ruled by a descendant of Yosef), the weaker kingdom of Yisrael became attached to idolatry (amongst the nobility), and the Jews thus eventually were exiled from their land.

4. Another example of extreme language in Tanach: the *passuk* says that Shlomo, David's son, "did evil in Hashem's eyes," and built idolatrous altars.

However, Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini, in the name of Rav Yochanan, proved that Shlomo was considered righteous by Hashem, though not as great as his father. Therefore, the *Gemora* initially attempts to resolve the *pesukim* that indicate that he built altars by saying that Shlomo wanted to build them, but restrained himself. However, this explanation is disproved.

Later, the *Gemora* explains that Shlomo's wives,

foreigners whom he converted, built altars, while Shlomo failed to protest.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel that when Shlomo married the idolatrous Egyptian princess, the angel Gavriel drove a reed into the sea. Mud gathered around the reed, and eventually formed an island that became Rome, the enemy of the Jews. Similarly, when Yeraveam erected his two golden calves, a hut was built that eventually became Greek Italy.

5. Although the *passuk* does not say that Yoshiahu sinned, a casual reading of the phrase "a king who returned to Hashem with all his heart" (Melachim II, 23:25), would imply that he initially was a sinner. Therefore, Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini explained, citing Rav Yochanan, that it means that he was so careful in his judgments that he paid out of pocket for all cases that he judged in his early years. According to Rashi, this refers to the first 18 years of his reign, before the *sefer Torah* of Moshe Rabbeinu was found, causing a widespread attempt to be more careful with law. Since he was now more careful, he worried that in his early years, he may have issued a wrong judgment, so he paid all the litigants back himself. Rav, on the other hand, understands that Yoshiahu was initially a sinner, and became one of the greatest examples of repentance in history.

The other case is that of Abba, the father of Rebbe Yirmiah. Others say that Rav referred to Achva, the brother of Abba. Rav Yosef gives us another model of *teshuvah*: the Reish Gelusa (Exilarch), Mar Ukvah, who was referred to as Nosson *Detzutzisa* (see *Iyunim* 2). (56a – 56b)

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### *Soldiers Divorcing*

The *Gemora* explains that everyone who went to war for the



House of David would write a bill of divorce to their wives.

Rashi explains that this bill was conditional: if the husband returned at the end of the war, the divorce would not take effect. However, if the husband died, or failed to return at the end of the war, the couple would be considered divorced from the time that the bill was given. Thus, when David took Bas Sheva, the wife of Uriah, she was no longer married, since her husband later died in the war.

Although Uriah *did* return before he went back to the battlefield, Tosafos explains that Rashi understood the condition placed on the divorce to be whether the husband returned at the *end* of the war.

However, Tosafos points out that the *Gemora* (Gittin, 73a) cites an opinion stating that the woman's status during the time after she received the divorce is that of a fully married woman.

Tosafos thus points out that it would seem that, according to this opinion, Bas Sheva was indeed married when David took her.

Rabbeinu Tam therefore explains that the divorce was not conditional at all, but rather a full divorce. However, these women were referred to as "*potentially* married" because the divorces were not delivered publicly (in order that the woman not be married to someone else in the interim). Since it was unclear if any particular woman received such a divorce, they were called potentially married.

It would seem that, according to Rabbeinu Tam, the opinion cited earlier that gives these women the full status of married women is only based on the fact that we cannot assume they were divorced. Since Bas Sheva was actually divorced, however, David was in no way guilty of taking a married woman.

## DALY MASHAL

### *Model of Repentance*

The *Gemora* calls Mar Ukva a model of repentance, and calls him Nosson *detutzisa*.

Rav Yosef states that he dozed off while learning one day, and had a dream in which an angel's (Rashi) hand was outstretched to accept Mar Ukva in *teshuvah*.

In explaining the name *detutzisa*, Rashi explains that it comes from *nitzotz*, meaning a spark, since the angel of fire received him in repentance.

Tosafos explains that the "spark" under discussion refers to the fire that burned above his head wherever he went.

The source for this is Sanhedrin 31b, where Mar Ukva was sent a message addressed "To the one who glows like the son of Bisya [i.e. Moshe Rabbeinu]." Rashi there explains: "I found in a book of Aggada that Mar Ukva was a penitent, for he wanted to take a certain woman, and he became sick with love for her. She was married woman. Eventually, she had to borrow money from him, and because of her [poverty], she accepted his advances. However, he conquered his desire, and sent her away in peace, and he became healed. [Afterwards,] when he would go out into the market, a fire from Heaven would burn over his head. For this reason, he is called Nosson *detutzisa* in [*meseches*] Shabbos... because of the light that shone on him."

Rashi here provides yet another explanation of the name Nosson *detutzisa*: the angel Rav Yosef saw accepting his repentance seized him by the fringes – *tzitzis* – of his head.