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Sotah Daf 42

Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

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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

Flattery

And Rabbi Elozar says: Any congregation that has in it flattery is as disgusting as a menstruating woman (*regarding impurity*). This is indicated by the verse: *For a congregation of flatterers is galmud*, and in some cities by the sea, they refer to a menstruating woman as a galmudah.

The Gemora asks: How is this meaning (a niddah) indicated by the word galmudah? It is an acronym for: ‘gemula da’ (she is separated) from her husband.

And Rabbi Elozar says: Any congregation that has in it flattery will end up going into exile. It is written here: For a congregation of flatterers is forlorn, and it is written there: *And you will say in your heart: Who has begot me these children, for I have been bereaved and forlorn, an exile and a wanderer etc.*

Rabbi Yirmiyah bar Abba says: There are four groups of people (i.e., sinners) who are not accepted before the *Shechinah (Divine Presence)*: the group of scorners, the group of flatterers, the group of liars, and the group who say *lashon hara (evil words about others)*.

He cites the Scriptural sources to prove this: This is true regarding the group of scorners, as indicated by the verse: *He retracted His hand from the scorners*. This is true by the group of flatterers, as indicated by the verse: *For a flatterer will not come before Him*. This is true regarding the group of liars, as indicated by the verse: *One who tells lies will not be established before My eyes*. This is true

regarding the group of people who say *lashon hara*, as indicated by the verse: *For You are not a God who wants evil; evil will not dwell by You*. This means that You, Hashem are righteous, and therefore evil cannot dwell in Your presence. (42a1)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, EILU NE’EMARIN

Mishna

When the one (Kohen) anointed for the war addresses the people, he speaks in the Holy Tongue (Hebrew). This is as it states: *And it shall be when you will get near to the battle, and the Kohen shall approach*. This refers to the Kohen who was anointed for war. *And he shall speak to the people* – this implies that he must do so in the Holy Tongue.

And he shall say to them: Hear O Israel etc. Against your enemies – but not against your brothers; this is not a war between Yehudah and Shimon (*two Jewish tribes*), nor Shimon and Binyamin, in which case if you fall into their hands, they will have mercy on you. This is as stated in the verse (following the war between Yehudah and Israel): *The men who have been mentioned by name got up and they took the captives, and all who were naked among them they clothed from the spoil, and they dressed them, and they shod them and they gave them food and drink and they anointed them, and they carried on donkeys all those who stumbled, and they brought them back to Jericho, the city of dates, to their brethren, and they returned to Shomron*. But you are going (to wage battle)

against your enemies, where if you fall in their hands, they will not have mercy on you.

Your heart should not become faint, do not be scared and do not panic, etc. Your heart should not become faint - this means from the neighing of the horses and the clash of the swords. *Do not be scared* - this refers to the clashing of the shields (the noise heard from afar, when the enemy claps their shields together) and the marching of the soldiers. *Do not panic* - this refers to the sound of their battle horns. Do not become broken – this refers to the sound of their battle cries.

For Hashem, Your God, Who goes with you. They come with the strength of flesh and blood, and you come with the strength of the Omnipresent. The Philistines came with the strength of Goliath. What happened to him in the end? At the end, he fell by the sword and they fell with him. The Ammonites came with the strength of Shovach. What happened to him in the end? At the end, he fell by the sword and they fell with him. But you are not like that - *For Hashem, Your God, Who goes with you*; this refers to the camp of the Ark of the Covenant. (42a3 – 42a4)

The Holy Tongue

The *Gemora* asks: What does the *Mishna* mean (when it says that the speech must be in the Holy tongue because the verse states: and he shall speak to the people)?

The *Gemora* answers: This is derived from the word: *and he shall speak*, and elsewhere it states: *Moshe will speak and Hashem will answer him with a voice*. Just as there, he (Moshe) spoke in the Holy Tongue, so too here, he (the Kohen) speaks in the Holy Tongue. (42a4)

The Kohen Speaks

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *And the Kohen shall approach and he shall speak to the people*. One might have thought that this could be done by any *Kohen* who chooses to do so. The verse therefore states: *and the officers shall*

speak. Just as the officers are appointed to their position, so too, the *Kohen* must be appointed to his position.

The *Gemora* asks: Perhaps then this is referring to the *Kohen Gadol*?

The *Gemora* answers: This cannot be, as he must be similar to an officer. Just as an officer has someone appointed over him, so too, the *Kohen* must have someone appointed over him.

The *Gemora* asks: Doesn't the *Kohen Gadol* have the king above over him (*so he should fit this description*)?

The *Gemora* answers: He does not have anyone above him in his service (in the Temple).

The *Gemora* asks: So let us say that it is referring to the assistant *Kohen Gadol* (*who takes over if the Kohen Gadol receives a blemish or dies, and he does have someone appointed over him in his area of service*)?

The *Gemora* answers: The assistant is not appointed, as it was taught in the following *braisa*: Rabbi Chanina ben Antignos said: Regarding what was the assistant *Kohen Gadol* appointed? It is in order that if the *Kohen Gadol* (suddenly) becomes disqualified, the assistant can serve in his place (*and as he wasn't Biblically appointed, he did not hold a position of prominence*).

And he shall say to them: Hear O Israel.

The *Gemora* asks: Why does the *Kohen* use this specific term of 'Hear O Israel'?

Rabbi Yochanan answers in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai: The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Israel: Even if the only mitzvah you have fulfilled is the recitation of the *shema* in the morning and evening, you will not be given over to their hands.



Your heart should not become faint, do not be afraid.

The Gemora cites a *braisa states*: He (the Kohen) speaks to them twice: once at the border (*of Eretz Yisroel, as they are going out to war*), and once by the actual battle. What does he say at the border? Hear the words of the war regulations and return home (those who are exempt). What does he say at the battle? *Your heart should not become faint, do not be scared and do not panic, and do not be broken*. This corresponds to the four things that the idolaters do (to instill fear in their enemies by a battle): They clash their shields together, blow their battle horns, shout battle cries, and cause their horses to stamp (and neigh). (42a4 – 42b1)

Philistines

The Mishna had stated: The Philistines came with the strength of Goliath.

Goliath. Rabbi Yochanan said (in explaining why he was called that): He stood open faced (*challenging*) before the Holy One, Blessed be He, as the verse states: *Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me*. The word 'man' signifies none other than the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is said: *The Hashem is a man of war*. [Evidently, Goliath challenged God Himself to a battle.] The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: Behold, I will bring about his downfall through the hand of "the son of a man" (a mere lad), as it is said: *And David was the son of that man of Ephraim*.

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Meir: In three places the tongue of that wicked one (Goliath) trapped himself (*and he unknowingly implied his downfall*). One place is the verse: *Choose a man for yourselves, and let him come down to me (implying that he – David will come down upon him and defeat him)*. Another example is the verse: *If he be able to fight with me, and smite me*, etc.

The third example is the verse where he (Goliath) said to David: *Am I a dog that you come upon me with staves?*

The Gemora asks: But didn't David also say: *You come upon me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a javelin?* [Although he used the same terminology, he was not overcome!?!]

The Gemora answers: David said afterwards: *But, I come upon you in the name of Hashem, Master of Legions, the God of the armies of Israel, which you have ridiculed*.

And the Philistine drew near morning and evening. Rabbi Yochanan said: This was in order to stop them from reciting the Shema in the morning and evening.

And he stood forty days. Rabbi Yochanan said: This corresponds to the forty days in which the Torah was given.

And the beinayim man went out of the camp of the Philistines etc. What does "beinayim" mean here? Rav says: He was built, free from any blemish. Shmuel says: He was the middle in proportions) from amongst his brothers. From the academy of Ravi Shila it was said: He was made (strong) like a building. Rabbi Yochanan says: He was born from one hundred stepfathers and one father. [Goliath's mother cohabited with one hundred men in one night; one of them was his father.]

And his name was Goliath from Gas. Rav Yosef taught: [He was referred to as being "from Gas"] For everyone would press down upon his mother (when they cohabited with her) like a wine press.

It is written: (from) *the caves – me'aros* (of the Philistines), but it is read as: *the regiments – ma'aracos* (of the Philistines). [Why?] Rav Yosef taught: Because everyone would cohabit (*he'eru*) with his mother.

It is written: *Harafah* (his mother's name), but it is written in another place: *Orpah*. [Why?] Rav and Shmuel argue. One says: Her name was really Harafah, and why was she also called Orpah? This is because everyone would sodomize her from behind. And one says: Her name was Orpah, and why was she called Harafah? This is because everyone crushed her like crushed kernels of wheat. And so it says: *And the woman took and spread the covering over the well's opening, and she scattered crushed kernels of wheat* (harifos). An alternative source is from here: *If you crush a fool in a mortar with a pestle among crushed kernels of wheat* (harifos).

These four were born to Harafah in Gas; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants. Who were they? Rav Chisda said: Saf, Madon, Goliath, and Yishbi b'Nov.

And they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants. This is as it is written: *And Orpah kissed her mother-in-law (Naomi), but Rus cleaved to her.* Rabbi Yitzchak said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: May the sons of the woman who was kissed come and let them fall by the hand of the sons of the woman who cleaved.

Rava expounded: As a reward for the four tears that Orpah shed (when she left her mother-in-law), she merited having four warriors emerge from her. This is as the verse states: *And they lifted their voice and cried again.*

It is written: *the shaft (cheitz) of his spear*, and it is read: *the wood (eitz) of his spear*. [Why?] Rabbi Elozar says: We still did not reach to half (cheitz) of the (physical) praise of this wicked one (Goliath). From here we see that it is forbidden to praise wicked people.

The Gemora asks: Why, then, is even some of his praise mentioned in the verse?

The Gemora answers: This is to be used to tell the praise of David. (42b1 – 42b4)

The Mishna had stated: The Amonites came with the strength of Shovach.

It is written: Shovach (meaning dovecote), and elsewhere it is written: Shofach (meaning pouring). Rav and Shmuel argue. One says: His name was Shofach, and why was he called Shovach? It is because he was built like a dovecote (with great height). And one said: His name was Shovach, and why was he called Shofach? It is because Whoever saw him would be poured out before him (through terror) like (from) a flask.

Its ashpah is an open grave; they are all mighty men. Rav and Shmuel argue; another version is: Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Assi argue. One said: At the time when they (these warriors) shot an arrow, they made heaps upon heaps (ashpasos) of corpses; and should you say that this was only because they were skilled in fighting (but not on account of their great strength), there is a verse which states: *they are all mighty men*. The other said: At the time when they attended to their needs (when they would defecate), they made heaps and heaps of excrement; and should you say that this was due to a sickness of the bowels, there is a verse which states: *they are all mighty men*.

Rav Mari said: Infer from this that whoever has excessive excrement suffers from a sickness of the bowels.

The Gemora asks: What is the practical purpose of this?

The Gemora answers: He should bother himself (to find a cure).

Dread in the heart of a man, let him squash it (yashchenah). Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Assi argue. One said:

Let him dismiss it from his mind. And the other said: Let him talk of it with others. (42b4 – 42b5)

The Mishna had stated: But you are not like that (*For Hashem, Your God, Who goes with you*).

The Gemora asks: Why all this?

The Gemora answers: Because the Name (of Hashem) and all His substituted Names were deposited in the Ark.

And so (that the Ark went with Israel during war) it states: *And Moshe sent them, a thousand of every tribe, to the war, them and Pinchas – ‘them’ refers to the Sanhedrin; ‘Pinchas’ was the (Kohen) Anointed for War; ‘with the sacred vessels’ - this is the Ark and the Tablets that were in it; ‘and the trumpets for a blast’ - the shofaros.*

A Tanna taught: It was not for naught that Pinchas went to the battle (against Midian), but rather, it was to exact judgment on behalf of the claim of his mother's father (Yosef); as it states: *And the Midianites sold him into Egypt* etc.

The Gemora asks: Is this to say that Pinchas was a descendant of Yosef? But behold it is written: *And Elozar, Aaron's son, took for himself a wife from the daughters of Putiel*. Is it not to be supposed, then, that he was a descendant of Yisro, who fattened (piteim) calves for idolatry?

The Gemora answers: No; he was a descendant of Yosef who scorned (pitpeit) his passion.

The Gemora asks: But didn't the other tribes despise him, saying: Look at this son of Puti, the son whose mother's father fattened calves for idolatry; he killed a prince in Israel!?

The Gemora answers: If his mother's father descended from Yosef, then his mother's mother descended from Yisro; and if his mother's mother descended from Yosef, then his mother's father descended from Yisro.

This is also proved as a conclusion from what is written: *One of the daughters of Putiel* (spelled with an extra 'yud'), from which are to be inferred two (lines of ancestry); indeed, you may draw this conclusion. (42b5 – 43a2)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Addressing in Hebrew

The *Mishna* states: The *Kohen* must speak to the nation before the war in the Holy Tongue.

The *Ir Binyamin* explains why he was required to address them in Hebrew.

The *Gemora* below states: Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai: Hashem is communicating to Bnei Yisroel that even if you only say *Kerias Shema* at morning and night, I will ensure you do not fall in their hands. [*This does not mean they do not have to keep the other commandments, but rather that they do not have to study Torah during the war more (if they do not have time to do so) more than the minimum of reciting Shema every morning and night.*]

It can be suggested that Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai is following his own opinion, for he says (Menachos 99b): Even if only recites the *shema* in the morning and at night, he has discharged his obligation of studying Torah day and night. And then he adds: It is forbidden to say this over to an *am ha'aretz* (*ignorant person; for then, they will not study Torah; they will only recite kerias shema*).



It is now understandable why the *Kohen* addresses the nation only in Hebrew. Since he is informing them that it is sufficient if they merely recite *shema* in the morning and at night, even if they do not study Torah the remainder of the day, he must speak in Hebrew, a language that the ignorant people do not understand.

DAILY MASHAL

True Protection

Our Gemara describes the processes that were followed when a Jewish army went into battle. Initially the officers announced that anyone who was afraid of going into battle, due to sins he had committed, should turn back. The Gemara on 44b expounds that even if they had violated the Rabbinic transgression of speaking between Yishtabach and Yotzer Ohr that was sufficient reason for a soldier to leave the army. Later, when the troops were being galvanized, the Priest anointed for battle encouraged them with the guarantee that even of the only mitzvah to their credit was the reciting of the Shema in the morning and evening, that was enough of a merit to ensure their victory in battle.

How can we reconcile these 2 statements?

The Mincha Chareivah answers that the intention of the Gemara is not the merit of Krias Shema, it is the merit of learning Torah. This is supported by the Gemara in Menachos 99b that the recitation of the Shema in the morning and evening suffices as a fulfillment of the mitzvah that Torah should never cease from your mouth. As the Gemara in Sanhedrin 49a says, if not for the Torah of King David, his general Yoav would not have been successful on the battlefield.

The Kli Yakar answers that the reference to the Shema is an allusion to the mitzvah of Tefillin that contains the Shema, as the Gemara says in Berachos 6a, the verse that

“All the nations of the world will see the name of Hashem declared over you and they will fear you” is referring to the Tefillin shel rosh.

The Igra D’kallah answers that teshuva cleanses us from all our sins, however there are different levels of teshuva required depending on the severity of the sin. The worst sins can only be forgiven with teshuva in conjunction with death, so how does the recitation of the Shema alone equate with a complete teshuva?

The same question can be asked on the Gemara in Kiddushin 49b, which says that if a man betroths a woman on the understanding that he is a tzaddik, even if he is a rasha she is still betrothed because perhaps he felt some stirrings of teshuva in his heart. How can such a basic level of teshuva cleanse him from all his sins to the point that he deserves the title of tzaddik?

The answer is based on the Zohar in Bamidbar that there is a verse in the Shema wherein we are commanded to love Hashem with all our hearts, with all our souls and with all our money. The Zohar says that when he recites this verse, he should imagine himself sacrificing his life for Hashem, and by doing so he is actually considered to have fulfilled the mitzvah of dying al Kiddush Hashem – the ultimate mesiras nefesh, and thereby acquires a full forgiveness for all his sins.