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Megillah Daf 27

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**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Rav Pappi said in the name of Rava: One is permitted to convert a synagogue into a Torah study hall (*because the latter is considered to have more sanctity*); however, it would be forbidden to convert a Torah study hall into a synagogue.

Rav Pappa in the name of Rava learned exactly the opposite.

The Gemora quotes from Rav Acha in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi (*an early generation Amora*) saying: One is permitted to convert a synagogue into a Torah study hall (*in accordance with Rav Pappi*). (26b – 27a)

Bar Kappara gave the following exposition: What is the meaning of the verse: And he burned the house of Hashem and the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem, and even every great house did he burn with fire? ‘The house of Hashem’: this is the Temple. ‘The king's house’: this is the royal palace. ‘All the houses of Jerusalem’: literally. ‘Even every great house did he burn with fire’: Rabbi Yochanan and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi gave different interpretations of this. One said that it means the place where the Torah is increased; the other explains that it refers to the place where a prayer is increased. The one who says the Torah bases himself on the verse: Hashem desires, for his righteousness

sake to increase the Torah and strengthen it. The one who says prayer bases himself on the verse: Tell me now the great things that Elisha has done; and what Elisha did, he did by means of prayer.

The Gemora notes: It may be presumed that it was Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi who said that it refers to the place where Torah is increased, since Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said that a synagogue may be turned into a study hall (so it is reasonable that a ‘great house’ refers to Torah which is studied in a study hall, for it (a study hall) is more sacred than a synagogue, which is used for prayer); this is a clear indication.

The Mishna had stated: If they sold a Torah, they may not purchase the books of Prophets and Writings. The Gemora inquires: Are they allowed to sell an old Torah scroll with the intention of using the proceeding to purchase a new Torah scroll? Perhaps, they are required to elevate the degree of sanctity and therefore it would be prohibited; or, perhaps, since there are no objects with a greater degree of sanctity, it would be permissible.

The Gemora attempts to prove the halachah from the Mishna: but if they sell a Torah scroll, they may not buy books of Scripture; it is books of Scripture that they may not buy, but to buy a Torah scroll with the money of a Torah scroll is unobjectionable!

The Gemora deflects the proof: But the Mishna speaks of something already done; we are inquiring whether it may be done in the first instance.

Come and hear: A Torah scroll may be rolled up in the wrappings of a single book of the Torah, or a single book of the Torah in the wrappings of a book of Prophets or Writings, but Prophets and Writings may not be rolled up in the wrappings of a single book of the Torah, nor a single book of the Torah in the wrappings of a Torah scroll. Now, it states here at any rate that a Torah scroll may be rolled up in the wrappings of a single book of the Torah; this indicates that in the wrappings of a single book of the Torah it may be, but in those of another Torah scroll, it may not be?

The Gemora disagrees: Look at the concluding clause: But a single book of the Torah may not be rolled up in the wrappings of a Torah scroll, which would imply that there is no objection against wrapping a Torah scroll in those of another Torah scroll? The Gemora notes that from this statement no conclusion can be drawn.

The Gemora attempts to prove the halachah from the following braisa: One may place a Torah scroll upon another Torah, and a Torah scroll upon a single book of the Torah, and a single book of the Torah upon the Prophets and Writings, but one may not place the Prophets and Writings upon a single book of the Torah, nor a single book of the Torah upon a Torah scroll. The Gemora wishes to compare the two halachos. One is forbidden to place an object with a lesser degree of sanctity upon an object with a

greater degree of sanctity and yet one is permitted to place a Torah scroll upon another Torah. Accordingly, it can be inferred that one may sell an old Torah scroll with the intention of using the proceeding to purchase a new Torah scroll.

The Gemora rejects this proof and states that the laws of placement are different because it is impossible to avoid (*due to space constraints*) placing one Torah scroll upon another. Proof to this is from the fact that every Torah scroll is rolled up and one page is resting upon another page. The Gemora concludes that we cannot compare the laws regarding placement to the laws of selling.

The Gemora attempts another proof: Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, who said it from Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel: A man should not sell an old Torah scroll in order to buy a new one with the proceeds!

The Gemora rejects the proof: There, the reason is lest he should afterwards neglect to do so; here, we speak of a case where the new one is written and waiting to be paid for. What is the rule in such an instance?

The Gemora attempts another proof: Rabbi Yochanan says in the name of Rabbi Meir that one is permitted to sell a Torah scroll if he intends to use the proceedings to study Torah (*as a means of support while he is learning*) or to get married. It would seem from this statement that one can sell a Torah scroll for another one. (*The Gemora is comparing studying Torah to purchasing a Torah scroll.*)



The Gemora rejects this proof as well and states that perhaps it is only permitted to use the proceedings for Torah study for the learning of Torah leads to the observance of mitzvos; taking a wife (can also be understood, for it is written:) He did not create the world to be a void; He formed it to be inhabited; however, exchanging one Torah scroll for another might still be prohibited. (27a)

It was taught in a braisa: One should not sell a Torah scroll even if he does not need the scroll (*he has other Torah scrolls*). Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: Even one who does not have what to eat and he sells his Torah scroll or his daughter (*as a maidservant*), he will never see a sign of blessing from this money. (27a)

The Mishna had stated: If a sacred object was sold, the proceedings must be used to buy an object with a greater degree of sanctity. The Mishna concluded that this halachah applies to any leftover money as well.

Rava said: If money was collected to purchase a sacred object and afterwards they had leftover money, they can use that money for any use.

Abaye cited the following braisa in objection to this: When does this rule apply? If they made no stipulation; but if they made a stipulation, they may even give it to the duchsusya (which the Gemora will explain its meaning shortly). Now, how are we to understand this? Shall we say that they sold a sacred article and had money left over after purchasing a new one? Then, even if they made a stipulation that they could do what they liked with it, what does it

help (for all the funds acquire the sanctity of the first object)? We must say therefore that they collected money and had some left over, and the reason is given that 'they made a stipulation,' but if they made no stipulation, they cannot?

The Gemora deflects the proof: I still maintain that what is meant is that they sold a sacred object and had money left over, and the braisa means as follows: When does this rule apply? When the seven trustees of the town did not make any stipulation in the assembly of the townspeople (that the money can be used for whatever they liked); but if the seven trustees of the town made a stipulation in the assembly of the townspeople, it may be used even for paying a duchsusya.

Abaye said to a Rabbinical student who used to recite braisos in the presence of Rav Sheishes: Have you ever heard from Rav Sheishes what is meant by duchsusya? He replied: This is what Rav Sheishes said: The town courier. Abaye thereupon observed: This shows that a Rabbinical student who has heard something of which he does not know the meaning should ask one who is frequently in the company of the Rabbis, since he is almost certain to have heard the answer from some great man. (27a)

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Meir: If the residents of one city went to another city, and the city officials imposed upon them to give charity, they should give it. When they leave the city, their charity is refunded and they bring the money with them and use it to provide for the poor of their own city.

The Gemora cites a braisa in support of this ruling: If



the residents of one city went to another city, and the city officials imposed upon them to give charity, they should give it. When they leave the city, their charity is refunded and they bring the money with them. However, an individual who went to another city and they imposed upon him to give charity, it is given to the poor of that city.

The Gemora qualifies this ruling and states that the money is not refunded if there is a scholar in the town. In that case, the scholar should distribute the money according to the way that he sees fit. (27a – 27b)

The Mishna states: They may not sell a public synagogue to an individual because this lowers the degree of sanctity (*even if he plans on using it as a private synagogue*). This is Rabbi Meir's opinion. The Chachamim said to him: If so, it should be prohibited to sell a synagogue from a large city to a small city. (27b)

The Gemora explains Rabbi Meir's opinion: There is no difference in the degree of sanctity between a synagogue in a large city and one in a small one and therefore such a transfer is permitted; however, a synagogue used by an individual lacks sanctity (*because there is no quorum of ten and certain prayers cannot be recited*) and therefore it would be forbidden to sell a public synagogue to be used as a private one.

The Chachamim answer back: There is a difference in the level of sanctity between a synagogue in a large city and one in a small one because it is written [Mishlei 14:28]: With the multitude of people is the

glory of the King. If Rabbi Meir agrees that a synagogue can be transferred from a large city to a smaller one, he should agree that a public synagogue can be sold to an individual. (27b)

The Mishna states: The townspeople may not sell a synagogue, except on condition that if the townspeople desire; the buyers would be required to return it. This is Rabbi Meir's opinion. The Chachamim said: They may sell it permanently (*unconditionally*), except for the following four purposes; for a bathhouse, for a tannery, for a ritual bath, or for the laundry. Rabbi Yehudah said: They may sell it for a courtyard, and the purchaser may do with it whatever he pleases. (27b)

The Gemora asks: But, according to Rabbi Meir's ruling, how do people live in it? The rent they pay would be interest!?

Rabbi Yochanan replied: Rabbi Meir gave this ruling on the basis of the view of Rabbi Yehudah, who said that interest which is only in one aspect (for if the sale is not nullified, the money is not a loan at all) is permitted, as it has been taught in a braisa: one who borrows money, and provides his field to his creditor, which the stipulation that if he does not pay by a certain time, the field will be sold to the creditor. The Sages say that this is permitted only when the seller (*i.e., the debtor*) eats the produce, but if the buyer (*i.e., the creditor*) eats the produce, it is forbidden. If the debtor does pay his debt in time, he gets his field back, but the creditor will have received the produce as extra payment for his loan. Rabbi Yehudah says this is permitted.



Abaye says that the dispute is whether a case in which only one possible outcome will result in interest is permitted. In this case, only if the debtor pays back his loan will this result in interest, and Rabbi Yehudah therefore permits it – even if the debtor does pay back his loan.

Rava says that Rabbi Yehudah only allows this when the buyer will pay back the produce if the debtor pays back the loan, and the dispute is whether interest which will be paid back is permitted. (27b)

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: One may urinate within four amos of a place where tefillah has been recited.

Rav Yosef asked: What is Shmuel coming to teach us? We have learned in a Mishna: Rabbi Yehudah said: They may sell it for a courtyard, and the purchaser may do with it whatever he pleases. Even according to the Chachamim, who rule that a synagogue which has been sold cannot be used as a urinal, this applies only to a synagogue whose sacredness is permanent; but in regard to four amos, which have no sacredness, even the Chachamim would admit.

A scholar taught a braisa in the presence of Rabbi Nachman: One, who prays, shall distance himself four amos and then he may urinate. One, who has urinated, shall distance himself four amos and then he may pray.

Rav Nachman said to him: I understand the latter ruling because we have learned in a Mishna that one must distance himself from urine and excrement four amos before he can pray. However, the former ruling

I don't understand. Why is it necessary for one who prays to distance himself four amos and then urinate? According to this teaching, you make all streets of Nehardea sacred, for there is no place there where men have not prayed?

Rav Nachman emends the braisa: One, who prays, shall wait for the amount of time it takes to walk four amos and then he may urinate because for that length of time, the prayer is still in his mind and his lips keep moving as if he is praying. One, who has urinated, shall wait for the amount of time it takes to walk four amos and then he may pray. This is to ensure that the drops do not dirty his clothing. (27b)

The disciples of R. Zakkai asked him: In reward of what have you been living so many years? He replied: I never urinated within four amos from the place of my prayer, and I never called my neighbor by a nickname, and I never recited the kiddush Shabbos morning without wine. It once happened that I had no money to buy wine with, and my elderly mother sold the veil from her head and brought me wine for kiddush. It was taught in a braisa: When his mother died, she left him three hundred barrels of wine, and when he died, he left his children three thousand barrels of wine. (27b)

(Ohr Somayach International) "What happened to your belt?" asked the Sage Rav of his disciple Rabbi Huna when he noticed that he was wearing some makeshift belt of vegetation rather than his regular one.

"I gave away my belt as collateral in order to secure money to buy wine for Shabbat kiddush."

Rav was so impressed by his disciple's sacrifice of a personal garment for a mitzvah that he blessed him that he should, as a reward, "be covered with clothes."

Some time afterwards Rabbi Huna was hosting a wedding for his son Rabbah. Rabbi Huna, who was a very short man, lay down upon a bed to rest while his family gathered for the celebration. His daughters and daughters-in-law did not notice his presence and they placed their coats on the bed, completely covering him with clothes in fulfillment of Rav's blessing.

When Rav heard that his blessing had thus been fulfilled he complained to Rabbi Huna: "When I blessed you why did you not respond with a blessing of "the same to my master" (Rashi - it may have been a moment of Divine favor and the blessing would have been fulfilled for me as well). (27b)

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### NOTEBOOK WITH TORAH AND CALCULATIONS

What is the halachah regarding a notebook that has in the beginning mundane matters and at the end has sacred matters? Would there be a prohibition against putting the notebook down in a manner that the sacred matters are on the bottom?

Shulchan Aruch (Y"D 282:19) rules that it is forbidden to place the Prophets on top of a Torah if they are

two separate scrolls, but if they are in one scroll, there would be no prohibition to have the Prophets on top.

This scenario could be allowed only because they are both sacred matters, however, when one is sacred and the other mundane, perhaps it would be prohibited. (Chashukei Chemed)

## DAILY MASHAL

### BLESSINGS AND RETURNS

From Ohr Sameyach The Weekly Daf

"What happened to your belt?" asked the Sage Rav of his disciple Rabbi Huna when he noticed that he was wearing some makeshift belt of vegetation rather than his regular one. "I gave away my belt as collateral in order to secure money to buy wine for Shabbat kiddush." Rav was so impressed by his disciple's sacrifice of a personal garment for a mitzvah that he blessed him that he should, as a reward, "be covered with clothes." Some time afterwards Rabbi Huna was hosting a wedding for his son Rabbah. Rabbi Huna, who was a very short man, lay down upon a bed to rest while his family gathered for the celebration. His daughters and daughters-in-law did not notice his presence and they placed their coats on the bed, completely covering him with clothes in fulfillment of Rav's blessing. When Rav heard that his blessing had thus been fulfilled he complained to Rabbi Huna: "When I blessed you why did you not respond with a blessing of "the same to my master" (Rashi - it may have been a moment of



Divine favor and the blessing would have been fulfilled for me as well).

Two problems arise in regard to understanding this story. Why was it necessary to mention the uncomplimentary fact of Rabbi Huna's diminutive size? Even more puzzling is Rav's disappointment in not receiving a counter-blessing after seeing the fulfillment of his blessing. What benefit would Rav have derived from being temporarily covered by clothes as was his disciple?

The simple approach to the first question is that it was necessary to mention Rabbi Huna's size in order to explain why his family members did not notice his presence on the bed where they placed their coats. In regard to the second issue, an interesting explanation is offered in the footnotes of Bach (Rabbi Yoel Sirkis):

Rav was upset because the fulfillment of his blessing indicated that it was moment of Divine favor and had he received a counter-blessing it may well have, in his case because of his greater merit, been fulfilled in the way it was intended by Rav - by being blessed with the wealth which enables one to cover himself with clothes.

A most innovative approach to answering these questions is suggested by Rabbi Yaakov Emden. Rav was the tallest sage of his generation while Rabbi Huna was among the shortest. Rabbi Huna therefore hesitated to return the blessing which Rav gave, as the clothes which fit his short figure would look absurd on the tall figure of his master.

An important lesson is to be learned from this story. When you receive a blessing from anyone, be sure to return it.