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Sanhedrin Daf 82

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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

Zealots and Pinchas

Rav Kahana inquired of Rav: If the zealots did not kill one who cohabited with a Cuthean woman, what is the *halachah*?

Rav forgot what he had learned from his teacher and could not answer the question.

The *Gemora* relates that Rav Kahana was made to read a verse in his dream and when Rav heard that, he was reminded that such a person is liable to *kares*. From the end of the verse he expounded that if he (*who cohabits with an idolatress*) is a Talmudic scholar, he will not have a son who will begin learned discussions among the sages and none that will respond to a question of his disciples; if he is a *Kohen*, he will not have a son to offer an offering to the Lord of Hosts.

Rabbi Chiya bar Avuyah said: One who cohabits with an idolatress is regarded as if he contracted a marriage with an idol.

Rabbi Chiya bar Avuyah also said: “This and still another” is written upon the skull of Yehoyakim. [*He was an evil king – from the last of the Kingdom of Yehudah; he was told that he received this retribution, and he has yet to receive the other.*] Rabbi Pereida’s grandfather found a skull thrown down at the gates of Yerushalayim, upon which “this and still another” was written. So he buried it, but it reemerged on the surface; again he buried it, and again it reemerged. Thereupon he said, “This must be Yehoyakim’s skull.” Yet, he reflected, since he was a king, and it is not proper conduct to disgrace him, he took it, wrapped it up in silk, and placed it in a chest. When his wife came home and saw it, she went and told her neighbors about it. They told her, “It must be the skull of his first wife, whom

he cannot forget.” So she burned it in the oven. When he came home, he said to her, “This is what was meant by its inscription, ‘This (*that the skull was discarded by the gates of Yerushalayim*) and still another (*that it was burnt in the oven*).”

When Rav Dimi came to Bavel, he said that the *Beis Din* of the Chashmonaim decreed that one who cohabits with an idolatress is liable for the sins of NSHGA. [*This is a mnemonic: N = niddah, a menstruous woman; Sh = shifchah, a non-Jewish slavewoman; G = goyyah, a heathen woman; and A = eishes ish, a married woman.*] When Ravin came, he said that one is liable for NaShGZ. This is a mnemonic: N = *niddah*, a menstruous woman; Sh = *shifchah*, a non-Jewish slavewoman; G = *goyyah*, a heathen woman; and Z = *zonah*, a harlot. Ravin holds that he is not liable for cohabiting with a married woman, for idolaters do not have marital relationships. Rav Dimi maintains that the idolaters do not allow their wives to cohabit with other men.

Rav Chisda said: If the zealot comes to take counsel (*whether to kill the sinners enumerated in the Mishna*), we do not instruct him to do so (*for it must be an act of zealotness*). It has been stated likewise: Rabbah bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If he comes to take counsel, we do not instruct him to do so. furthermore, had Zimri separated from Cozbi and Pinchas still would have killed him, Pinchas would have been executed on his account, and had Zimri turned upon Pinchas and killed him, he would not have been executed, since Pinchas was regarded as a pursuer.

It is written: *And Moshe said to the judges of Israel: Kill every one of his men that were attached to Baal Peor.* Thereupon the tribe of Shimon went to Zimri ben Salu (*their Nasi*) and



said to him, "Behold, capital punishment is being meted out against members of our tribe, yet you sit silent." What did he do? He arose and assembled twenty-four thousand Israelites and went to Cozbi (*a Midianite woman*), and said to her, "Submit yourself (*have relations*) to me." She replied, "I am a king's daughter, and like so my father instructed me, "You shall yield only to their greatest man." Zimri replied, "I too am the prince of a tribe; and moreover, my tribe is greater than his (*Moshe*), for mine is second in birth (*to Yaakov*), while his is third. He then seized her by her braided hair and brought her before *Moshe*. He exclaimed, "Son of Amram, is this woman forbidden or permitted? And should you say, 'She is forbidden,' who permitted Yisro's daughter to you?" At that moment *Moshe* forgot the *halachah* (*regarding intimacy with an idolater woman*), and all the people burst into tears; therefore it is written: *and they were weeping before the entrance of the Tent of Meeting*.

And it is also written: *And Pinchas, the son of Elozar, the son of Aaron the Kohen, saw it*. Now, what did he see?

Rav said: He saw what was happening and remembered the *halachah*, and said to him, "Brother of my father's father, did you not teach us this on your descent from Mount Sinai: He who cohabits with a Cuthean woman is punished by zealots?" *Moshe* replied, "He who read the letter should be the agent to carry out its instructions."

Shmuel said: He saw that "*There is no wisdom nor understanding nor counsel against the honor of God*" - whenever the Divine Name is being desecrated, there is no concern about honoring one's teacher.

Rabbi Yitzchak said in Rabbi Elozar's name: He saw the angel wreaking destruction amongst the people (*and realized that he must act immediately*).

It is written: *And he rose up from the midst of the assembly, and took a spear in his hand*. We derive from here that one may not enter a house of study with weapons.

He removed its metal point and placed it in his garment, and went along leaning upon it as if it was a cane, and as soon as he reached the tribe of Shimon, he exclaimed, "Where do we find that the tribe of Levi is greater than that of Shimon?" ["*I too wish to cohabit with the daughters of Moav.*"] Thereupon they said, "Let him enter too, for he wishes to satisfy his lust." They exclaimed, "Even those abstainers have now declared the matter permissible."

Rabbi Yochanan said: Six miracles were wrought for Pinchas when he killed Zimri:

1. Zimri should have withdrawn from the woman (*and then Pinchas would not have been allowed to kill him*), but did not.
2. He should have cried out for help, but did not.
3. Pinchas succeeded in plunging his spear exactly through the genital organs of the man and woman.
4. The corpses did not slip off the spear.
5. An angel came and lifted up the lintel (*so he could leave with the spear held up*).
6. An angel came and wrought destruction amongst the tribe of Shimon (*so they were distracted and did not attempt to kill Pinchas*).

Then Pinchas came and laid them down before the Almighty, saying, "Master of the Universe! Shall twenty-four thousand people perish because of these?" Rabbi Elozar said: It is not written "*vayispallel*" - "and he prayed," but rather "*vayefallel*" - "and he quarreled," as though he was arguing with his Maker regarding the justice of punishing so many. Thereupon the ministering angels wished to push him away, but He said to them, "Let him be, for he is a zealot, the son of a zealot; a deflector of wrath, the son of a deflector of wrath."

The tribes now began abusing him: Have you seen this Puti-son? Have you seen this youth whose mother's father fattened calves for idol worship; should he be the one to kill the Nasi of a tribe in Israel!? Therefore Scripture detailed his ancestry: *Pinchas, the son of Elozar, the son of Aaron the Kohen*. The Holy One, blessed be He said to *Moshe*, "Be the first to extend a greeting of peace to him," as it is written:



Therefore say, Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace. And this atonement is worthy of being an everlasting one.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: The wicked Zimri cohabited four hundred and twenty-four times on that day. Pinchas waited until his strength weakened, but he didn't have to, because the King was with him. A *braisa* was taught that Zimri cohabited with Cozbi sixty times until his testicles became like an addled egg, while she became like a garden bed filled with water. Rav Kahana said: And her seat was the size of a *beis se'ah*. Rav Yosef taught: Her womb opening was a cubit. (81b – 82b)

Serving while Tamei

The *Mishna* had stated: A *Kohen* who served while he was *tamei* etc.

Rav Acha bar Huna inquired of Rav Sheishes: Does a *Kohen* who performed the Temple service while *tamei* merit death at the hands of Heaven or not? He replied: We learned in a *Mishna*: A *Kohen* who served while he was *tamei*, his brother *Kohanim* do not bring him to court, but the young *Kohanim* take him outside the Temple Court and smash his skull with clubs. But should you think that he merits death at the hands of Heaven, should he not be left to be slain by Him?

Rav Acha responded: Will you say then that he is not so liable? Is there anything for which the Merciful One exempted him from a penalty, for which we may kill?

The *Gemora* asks: And is there not? But we learned in a *Mishna*: If one was lashed twice (and he then transgresses again), the court puts him into a cell, and they feed him barley until his stomach bursts. We see that although the Merciful One exempted him, yet we kill him!

The *Gemora* answers: That is not a difficulty, for Rabbi Yirmiyah said in the name of Rish Lakish: The *Mishna* is referring to a case where he was lashed for an offence

punishable by *kares*, so that he is already liable to death (at the hand of God).

The *Gemora* asks: But what of the *Mishna's* ruling regarding one who steals a *kasvah* (where the zealots are permitted to kill him even though there is no death penalty)?

The *Gemora* answers: Rav Yehudah said that this refers to service vessels, and death for the theft of these is alluded to in the verse: But they shall not come to see how the holy things are inserted, lest they die.

The *Gemora* asks: But what of the *Mishna's* ruling regarding one who blasphemes by a supernatural force (where the zealots are permitted to kill him even though there is no death penalty)?

The *Gemora* answers: According to Rav Yosef, the *Mishna* is referring to a case which resembles one who "blessed" the Name of God (and therefore it is permitted to kill him).

The *Gemora* asks: But what of the *Mishna's* ruling regarding one who cohabits with a Cuthean woman (where the zealots are permitted to kill him even though there is no death penalty)?

The *Gemora* answers: There too, Rav Kahana read a verse in his dream, which reminded Rav that such a person is liable to *kares*. (82b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Knives and Guns in a Synagogue

By: Meoros HaDaf HaYomi

Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 151:6) rules that "one may enter a synagogue with one's cane...and some forbid entering with a long knife or a bare head." What is the source of the *halachah* that one mustn't enter a synagogue with a knife and why especially a long knife? Is the topic connected to entering with



a bare head, mentioned immediately afterward? And may we enter a synagogue with a gun?

As a source for this *halachah*, the *Beis Yosef* (ibid) mentions the *Orchos Chayim*, who writes that prayer lengthens life whereas a knife might shorten a life and it has no place in a synagogue. Still, the *Yafeh Lalev* (ibid, 9) refers us to our *Gemora* which explains that “one must not enter a *beis midrash* with a weapon.” Indeed, in his commentary on our *sugya* Maharatz Chayos wonders why the *Beis Yosef* didn’t cite our *Gemora* as a source for this *halachah*. HaGaon Rav Chayim Falaji (*Ruach Chayim*, ibid) rejects this question as the sanctity of a *beis midrash*, where people learn, is greater than that of a synagogue, where people only pray and we therefore cannot learn the *halachah* for a synagogue from that for a *beis midrash*.

The difference between a long and a short knife: Now, if we want to find out why *Shulchan Aruch* forbids entering a synagogue with a **long** knife, the answer depends on the source of the prohibition. Our *sugya* forbids entering a *beis midrash* with a **weapon** and those who learn the prohibition from our *Gemora* therefore forbid a long knife, which resembles a spear, but not a short knife, which does not resemble a weapon (*Yafeh Lalev*, ibid). On the other hand, if the source of the prohibition is because a knife might shorten a life, what is the difference between a long and a short knife? The *Taz* (ibid, S.K. 2) explains that a long knife was forbidden as it is not so useful but a short knife is very useful and it would be too troublesome for people to go without it.

A knife that must have a “head-cover”: The *poskim* devote an interesting discussion to the concluding statement of *Shulchan Aruch*: “...and some forbid entering with a long knife **or a bare head.**” What does a long knife have to do with a bare head? Examining the *poskim* (see *Eliyah Rabah*, O.C., ibid, S.K. 6, and *Birchei Yosef*, ibid, S.K. 9), the *Aroch HaShulchan* (*se’if 10*) explains that *Shulchan Aruch* means that one mustn’t enter a synagogue with a “bare-headed” knife. We should then read in *Shulchan Aruch* “a long knife with a bare head”, eliminating “or”. *Shulchan Aruch* therefore

indicated a long knife since a short knife can be hidden in one’s pocket. The permission to enter with a covered knife appears in other *poskim* (see *Yad Aharon*, *Mor Uketzi’ah* and *Mishnah Berurah*, S.K. 22).

May one enter a synagogue with a gun? HaGaon Rav E.Y. Waldenberg discusses this topic and asserts that an unloaded gun is not regarded as a weapon that shortens life. We may therefore use this permission in certain conditions though it should ordinarily be avoided (*Responsa Tzitz Eli’ezer*, 18). In conclusion, we should mention that although *Shulchan Aruch* only refers to entering a synagogue with a long knife, apparently one must not pray anywhere while bearing a weapon even when alone as prayer lengthens life while a weapon shortens it (see *Mateh Yehudah*, O.C., ibid). *Kaf HaChayim* (91:29, in the name of *Chesed Laalafim*) mentions that such an act should also be avoided according to the Kabbalah.

Disgrace with a Profit

Our *Gemora* relates that the people began to insult Pinchas after he killed Zimri. The Chasam Sofer explained that this did not occur for no purpose.

Avos deRabbi Nasan (Ch. 38) recounts that when Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, the leader of all Israel, and Rabbi Yishmael ben Elisha, the *kohen gadol*, were being brought to their deaths, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel wondered why they were being killed as if they had desecrated Shabbos or worshipped idols. Rabbi Yishmael told him, “Maybe when you taught on the Temple Mount and all the people were before you, you became proud.”

We thus see that pride resulting from a good deed, even if done for a holy purpose, causes a person to lose his merit. Hashem therefore caused the people to insult Pinchas after he killed Zimri so that he would not lose any portion of his reward. *Midrash Rabbah* thus interprets the verse “I give him my covenant in peace” (Bemidbar 25:12) as meaning that he **rightfully** took his reward.