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Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

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Mav the studing of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and mav their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

ELUCIDATION

Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan that whoever maintains that Shmuel's sons sinned is merely erring. For it is said: And it came to pass when Shmuel was old... that his sons did not walk in his ways: thus, they [merely] did not walk in his ways, yet they did not sin either. Then how do I fulfill, ‘they turned aside for monetary gain’? That means that they did not act like their father. For Shmuel the righteous used to travel to all the places of Israel and judge them in their towns, as it is said: And he went from year to year in circuit to Beis-el, and Gilgal, and Mitzpah; and he judged Israel. But they did not act like that, but sat in their own towns, in order to increase the fees of their attendants and scribes.

This is a dispute of Tannaim: ‘They turned aside for monetary gain’: Rabbi Meir said, [That means,] they openly demanded their portions.¹ Rabbi Yehudah said: They forced² goods on private people. Rabbi Akiva said: They took an extra basket of tithes by force. Rabbi Yosi said: They took the gifts by force.³ (55b – 56a)

Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan: Whoever says that David sinned is merely erring,

¹ They were Levites, and personally demanded the tithes. Owing to their exalted position their demands were acceded to, while the humbler Levites might starve. But they did not actually pervert judgment.

² They compelled people to be their business agents.

for it is said: And David behaved himself wisely in all his ways: and Hashem was with him. Is it possible that sin came to his hand, yet the Divine Presence was with him? Then how do I interpret: Why have you despised the word of Hashem, to do that which is evil in his sight? He wished to do [evil], but did not.

Rav observed: Rebbe, who is descended from David, seeks to defend him, and expounds [the verse] in David's favor. [Thus:] The ‘evil’ [mentioned] here is unlike every other ‘evil’ [mentioned] elsewhere in the Torah. For of every other evil [mentioned] in the Torah it is written, ‘and he did,’ whereas here it is written, ‘to do’: [this means] that he desired to do, but did not. You have smitten Uriah the Hittite with the sword: you should have had him tried by the Sanhedrin, but did not. And have taken his wife to be your wife: you may legally marry her. For Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan: Everyone who went out in the wars of the house of David wrote a bill of divorcement for his wife, for it is said, and bring these ten cheeses to the captain of the thousand, and look how your brethren fare, and ascertain their safety [arubasam]. What is meant by arubasam? Rav Yosef learned: The things which pledge man and woman [to one another].⁴

³ Either the priestly dues, viz., the shoulder, cheeks, and maw of animals, though they were not Kohanim; or the Levitical dues, sc. the first tithes, their sin being that they used force.

⁴ Lit., ‘him and her’, sc. the marriage. I.e., take away their marriage — cancel it by means of a divorce. — The divorce was conditional, in the sense that it became retrospectively valid if the husband died.



And you have slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon: just as you are not [to be] punished for the sword of the Ammonites, so are you not [to be] punished for [the death of] Uriah the Hittite. What is the reason? He was rebellious against royal authority, saying to him, and my master Yoav, and the servants of my master [King David], are encamped in the open field [etc].

Rav said: When you examine [the life of] David, you find no sin 'save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.' Abaye the Elder pointed out a contradiction in Rav ['s dicta]: Did Rav say thus? Surely Rav said, David paid heed to slander? The difficulty remains. (56a)

[To revert to] the main text: 'Rav said, David paid heed to slander,' for it is written: And the king said to him, where is he? And Tziva said to the king, Behold, he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, belo da var [in Lo-devar]. And it is written, Then David sent, and fetched him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, millo davar [from Lo-devar]. Now consider: he [David] saw that he [Tziva] was a liar; then when he slandered him a second time, why did he pay heed to him? For it is written, And the king said, And where is your master's son? And Tziva said to the king, Behold, he abides in Jerusalem [for he said, today shall the house of Israel restore me the kingdom of my father]. And how do we know that he accepted it [the slander] from, him? Because it is written, Then said the king to Tziva, Behold, everything that belongs to Mefiboshes is yours. And Tziva said, I prostrate myself; let me find favor in your sight, my lord, the king.

But Shmuel maintained: David did not pay heed to slander, [for] he saw self-evident things in him, for it is written: And Mefiboshes the son of Shaul came down to meet the king;

Thus, since Uriah died, she was a free woman from the time he went out, and was not married when David took her.

⁵ Thus he confirmed Tziva's accusation. For David regarded Mefiboshes' unkempt appearance too as a sign that he grieved over his return.

and he had neither dressed his feet, nor trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, etc. While it is written: And it came to pass, when he came to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said to him, Why did you not go with me, Mefhiboshes? And he answered, My lord, the king, my slave deceived me: for your servant said, I will saddle the donkey, that I may ride on it, and go with the king, because your servant is lame, and he has slandered your servant to my lord the king; but my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in your eyes. And the king said to him, Why do you continue speaking of your matters? I say, You and Tziva divide the land. And Mefiboshes said to the king, Let him take all, forasmuch as my lord the king is returning in peace to his own house.

The Gemora explains his words: He said [thus] to him: I said, When will you return in peace? Yet you treat me so. Not against you have I resentment, but against Him who restored you in peace!⁵ Hence it is written, And the son of Yonasan was Meriv baal: was then his name Meriv baal? Surely it was Mefiboshes? But because he raised a quarrel [merivah] with his Master, a Heavenly Voice went forth and rebuked him, You man of strife, [and] the son of a man of strife! Man of strife, as we have stated. Son of a man of strife, for it is written: And Shaul came to the city of Amalek, and contended in the riverbed. Rabbi Mani said: [That means,] concerning the matter of the riverbed.⁶

Rav Yehudah said in Rav's name: When David said to Mefiboshes, 'You and Tziva divide the land,' a Heavenly Voice came forth and declared to him, Rechovam and Yeravam shall divide the kingdom.⁷

Rav Yehudah said in Rav's name: Had not David paid heed to slander, the kingdom of the House of David would not

⁶ Shaul argued: If the Torah decreed that a heifer should have its neck broken in the valley on account of a single murdered man, how much greater is the sin of slaying all these Amalekites! Thus he contended against God's command.

⁷ This agrees with Rav's view that David paid heed to slander and acted unjustly. Hence this punishment.



have been divided, Israel had not engaged in idolatry,⁸ and we would not have been exiled from our country. (56b)

Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan: Whoever maintains that Shlomo sinned is merely making an error, for it is said: and his heart was not perfect with Hashem his God, as was the heart of David his father: it was [merely] not as the heart of David his father, but neither did he sin. Then how do I interpret: For it came to pass, when Shlomo was old, that his wives turned away his heart? That is [to be explained] as Rabbi Nassan. For Rabbi Nassan opposed [two verses]: It is written: For it came to pass, when Shlomo was old, that his wives turned away his heart, whereas it is [also] written: and his heart was not perfect with Hashem his God, as was the heart of David his father, [implying that] it was [merely] not as the heart of David his father, but neither did he sin? This is its meaning: his wives turned away his heart to go after other gods, but he did not go. But it is written: Then Shlomo built [yivneh] an altar for Kemosh the abomination of Moav? — That means, he desired to build, but did not. If so, Then Yehoshua built [yivneh] an altar for Hashem, [does this too mean,] he desired to build but did not! Hence it [surely means] that he [actually] built; so here too it means that he built? — Rather it⁹ is as was taught: Rabbi Yosi said, and the altars that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right side of the Mount of Oil, which Shlomo the king of Israel had built for Ashtores the abomination of the Zidonites. Now, is it possible that Assa came and did not destroy them, then Yehoshafat, and he did not destroy them, until Yoshiyah came and destroyed them! But surely Assa and Yehoshafat destroyed all the idolatry in the Land of Israel? Hence [the explanation is that] the earlier are compared to the later: just as the later did not do, yet it was ascribed to them, to their glory, so the earlier ones too

⁸ The first step to idolatry was Yerovam's setting up of the golden calves in order to maintain the independence of his Kingdom.

⁹ The statement that Shlomo did not sin.

¹⁰ Yoshiyah merely removed the idols that were reintroduced after the deaths of the former two kings, but not all idols, since they had

did not do, yet it was ascribed to them, to their shame.¹⁰ But it is written: And Shlomo did that which was evil in the eyes of Hashem? — But because he should have restrained his wives, but did not, Scripture regards him as though he sinned.

Rav Yehudah said in Shmuel's name: Better had it been for that righteous man to be an attendant to "something else" [i.e., an idol] only that it should not be written of him, 'and he did that which was evil in the eyes of Hashem'. (56b)

Rav Yehudah said in Shmuel's name: When Shlomo married Pharaoh's daughter, she brought him a thousand musical instruments and said to him: Thus we perform in honor of that idol, thus in honor of that idol, yet he did not protest against her.

Rav Yehudah said in Shmuel's name: When Shlomo married Pharaoh's daughter, Gavriel descended and planted a reed in the sea, and it gathered a bank around it, on which the great city of Rome was built.

In a Baraisa it was taught: On the day that Yerovam brought the two golden calves, one into Bethel and the other into Dan, a hut was built, and this developed into Italia of Yavan. (56b)

Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan: Whoever maintains that Yoshiyah sinned is merely making an error, for it is said: And he did that which was right in the eyes of Hashem, and walked in all the ways of David his father. Then how do I interpret: and like to him there was no king before him, that returned [shav] to Hashem with all his heart etc.? [This teaches] that he revised every judgment which he had pronounced between the ages of eight and eighteen. You might say

already been destroyed, yet it is all attributed to him. So Shlomo too was not responsible for the building of the idolatrous altars; nevertheless, since he did not veto them, they are ascribed to him.



that he took from one and gave to another; therefore it is taught, 'with all me'odo [his might]', [teaching] that he gave of his own.

Now, he disagrees with Rav, for Rav said: There was no greater penitent than Yoshiyah in his generation and a certain person in ours; and who is that? Abba the father of Rabbi Yirmiyah bar Abba, and some say Acha the brother of Abba the father of Yirmiyah bar Abba, for a Master said: Abba and Acha were brothers. Rav Yosef said: And there is yet another in our generation. And who is he? Ukvan bar Nechemiah the Reish Galusa. And he is Nassan of Tzutzisa. Rav Yosef said: I was sitting at the session and dozing, and saw in a dream how one [an angel] stretched out his hand and accepted [Nassan's repentance]. (56b)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, BAMEH BEHEIMAH

HIGHLIGHTS

1. Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rav Yonasan 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 Yonasan 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 Yonasan 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 Yonasan 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 Yonasan, 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 Yonasan 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 accepting 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 Yonasan, proved that Shlomo was considered righteous by Hashem, yough 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 Yonasan, 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 *Detutzisa* (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



battlefront, 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 *detzutzisa*.

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 *detzutzisa*, 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 *detzutzisa* in [*meseches*] Shabbos... because of the light that shone on him."

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