

24 Elul 5774
Sept. 19, 2014



Chagigah Daf 11

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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

The Gemora cites a braisa: The laws of negaim (*tzaraas*) and oholos (*corpse tumah transmitted by means of a roof*) have few Scriptural allusions, but many halachos.

The Gemora asks: Aren't there many Scriptural passages regarding negaim?

Rav Pappa answers: The braisa meant to say the opposite; the laws of negaim have many Scriptural allusions, but relatively few halachos.

The Gemora asks: What difference does this make?

The Gemora answers: If one is uncertain regarding a law pertaining to negaim, he should look in Scripture; if one is uncertain regarding a law pertaining to oholos, he should look in the Mishna. (11a)

The Mishna had stated: Monetary laws have Scriptural support and are regarded as fundamentals of the Torah.

The Gemora asks: Monetary laws are explicitly mentioned in the Torah; why does the Mishna state that there is merely Scriptural support?

The Gemora answers: The Mishna is referring to cases similar to the following halachah from Rebbe:

Even though it is written (*regarding a man who intended to hit another man and mistakenly killed a woman*): *And you shall award a life for a life*; nevertheless, the punishment is not life, but rather monetary compensation. (11a)

The Mishna had stated: The laws of sacrificial services have Scriptural support and are regarded as fundamentals of the Torah.

The Gemora asks: Aren't there many Scriptural passages regarding these laws?

The Gemora answers: The Mishna is referring to the halachos of bringing the blood to the Altar, as it was taught in the following braisa: *And they shall bring*. This refers to the receiving of the blood. The Torah referred to the receiving of the blood in an expression of 'bringing,' as it is written: *He shall bring it all...and cause it go up in smoke on the Altar*; and the master explained this verse to be referring to the bringing of the limbs to the ramp. This teaches us that the service of bringing the blood should not be excluded from the laws that govern the receiving of the blood. (11a)

The Mishna had stated: The laws of purity and contamination have Scriptural support and are regarded as fundamentals of the Torah.



The Gemora asks: Aren't there many Scriptural passages regarding these laws?

The Gemora answers: The Mishna is referring to the amount of water needed for a mikvah (*forty se'ah*), which is not explicitly stated in the Torah. The Torah states that a person must immerse himself in an amount of water that is sufficient for his entire body to enter the water at one time. The Gemora states that the ritual bath must contain at least three cubic *amos* of water since a person's average height is three *amos* and his width is one *amah*. The Chachamim concluded that this measurement is equivalent to forty *se'ah*. (11a)

The Mishna had stated: Monetary law, the laws regarding sacrificial offerings, the laws of purity and contamination and the laws concerning illicit relations all have Scriptural support and are regarded as fundamentals of the Torah.

The Gemora asks: Are only these halachos fundamentals of the Torah and not the other halachos mentioned before?

The Gemora answers: Rather, let us say that both these and those halachos are fundamentals of the Torah. (11b)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, HAKOL CHAYAVIN

The Mishna states: We do not expound the laws of illicit relationships among three people, nor do we discuss the Account of Creation among two people and we do not expound *Maaseh Merkavah* (Account

of the Chariot) even by one person, unless he is a wise man and can understand these matters by himself.

The Mishna continues: Whoever analyzes the following four things, it would have been better if he never entered this world: What is above and below (*the Heavenly angels*), what is before and after (*beyond the universe*). Whoever is not concerned for the honor of his Creator, it would have been better if he never entered this world. (11b)

The Mishna had stated: We do not expound *Maaseh Merkavah* (Account of the Chariot) even by one person, unless he is a wise man and can understand these matters by himself.

The Gemora asks an apparent contradiction in the ruling of the Mishna: If a person has the ability to expound on *Maaseh Merkavah* himself, he obviously is a scholar, and yet the Mishna states that he is prohibited from studying this himself; however, the Mishna concludes that if he is a wise man and can understand these matters by himself, he may expound by himself.

The Gemora answers and explains the Mishna in the following manner: We do not expound the laws of illicit relationships to three **other** people, nor do we discuss the Account of Creation to two **other** people and we do not expound *Maaseh Merkavah* to one **other** person, unless he is a wise man and can understand these matters by himself. (11b)



The Gemora discusses the Scriptural source for the Mishna's halacha that we do not expound the laws of illicit relationships to three other people.

Rav Ashi explained the Mishna's ruling as follows: We do not expound upon the secret details regarding the laws of illicit relationships (*forbidden unions that are not stated explicitly in Scripture*) to three other people. The reason for this is because we are concerned that when one student is conversing back and forth with his teacher, the other two students will talk among themselves and will not learn the halacha that their teacher is saying; subsequently they might eventually permit an illicit relationship.

The Gemora asks: Why don't we apply this ruling (*prohibition against teaching three students*) to all areas of Torah study?

The Gemora answers: Stealing and illicit relationships are two transgressions that one especially desires.

The Gemora asks: If so, the halachah should apply by the laws of stealing, as well?

The Gemora answers: A person has a powerful desire for an illicit relationship whether the object of his desire is in front of him or not; a person only has a desire to steal when the opportunity is in front of him. (11b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

AVERAGE AMAH

The Gemora had stated: A person must immerse himself in an amount of water that is sufficient for his entire body to enter the water at one time. The Gemora states that the ritual bath must contain at least three cubic *amos* of water since a person's average height is three *amos* and his width is one *amah*. The Chachamim concluded that this measurement is equivalent to forty *se'ah*.

The Chasam Sofer comments: Every person has his individual measurement of an *amah* (from his shoulder to the tip of his middle finger). The height of each and every person (*excluding his head*) is equivalent to three of his personal *amos* and not the size of the average *amah*. The Chasam Sofer said that he can attest to this for he personally investigated this and confirmed it many times.

The measurement of a mikvah follows the average *amah* (*three cubic amos*) and not the *amah* of each unique individual.

The Bach (Y"D 120) states that Biblically, one can immerse himself in a mikvah that contains water sufficient for his entire body to enter at one time even if there isn't forty *se'ah*; the Chachamim decreed that the mikvah must contain forty *se'ah*.

The Chasam Sofer asks: Even if the Bach is correct regarding the measurement of water required for a person to immerse himself in; he is also referring to

the immersion of new utensils, where the Torah requires its immersion in a mikvah fit for a niddah to immerse in. It is evident that the Biblical amount of water needed for a valid mikvah is measured according to the average person (*niddah*) and not according to each individual, for otherwise, to whom is the Torah referring to when it states that the water needed for the immersion of utensils should be water sufficient for a *niddah*. He concludes that the words of the Bach are extremely perplexing.

DAILY MASHAL

OVERWHELMING DESIRE

The Gemora had stated: A person has a powerful desire for an illicit relationship whether the object of his desire is in front of him or not. It is because of this that it is forbidden to teach three students the secret details regarding the laws of illicit relationships; we are concerned that when one student is conversing back and forth with his teacher, the other two students will talk among themselves and will not learn the halacha that their teacher is saying; subsequently they might eventually permit an illicit relationship.

The Rambam in Hilchos Issurei Biyah (22:20) writes: Therefore, it is incumbent on each and every person to acclimatize himself to increased levels of sanctity and pure thoughts at all times in order to refrain from sinning in these matters, where there is an overwhelming physical urge to sin.

Reb Moshe Feinstein (Y"D III: 80) cited this Gemora and Rambam as proof to his ruling regarding a Beis Yaakov in Baltimore, that they cannot build their new school adjacent to a Yeshiva for boys. He states that we must be vigilant in these areas for otherwise, it can result in the spiritual destruction of this world.