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Bava Basra Daf 16

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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

Iyov

It is written: Hashem said to the Satan, “Have you paid attention to My servant Iyov? There is none like him in the world etc. and you turned Me against him to destroy him without cause!” Rabbi Yochanan said: Were it not expressly stated in the Scripture, we would not dare to say it on our own. Hashem is made to appear like a mortal who allows Himself to be persuaded by others.

A Tanna taught in a braisa: The Satan comes down to earth and seduces people into sinning. He then ascends to Heaven and awakens wrath against the sinner. Permission is granted to him and he takes away the sinner’s soul (by killing him).

It is written: And Satan answered Hashem and said, “Limb for limb, yes, all that a man has he will he give up for his life (a person would give away all of his monetary possessions in order to save his life). But, stretch out your hand now and hit his bones and his flesh, and he will bless (renounce) You to Your face.” And Hashem said to the Satan, “Behold, he is in your hands; only spare his life.” The Satan went forth from the presence of Hashem and smote Iyov etc.

Rabbi Yitzchak said: The Satan’s suffering (that he must inflict pain on Iyov, but he could not kill him) was worse than that of Iyov. A fitting parable is that of a servant who is told by his master, “Break the cask of wine, but protect the wine inside of it.”

Rish Lakish said: Satan, the Evil Inclination, and the Angel of Death are all one. He then cites Scriptural verses to prove this.

Rabbi Levi said: Both Satan and Peninah’s intentions were for the sake of Heaven. The Satan, when he saw that the Holy One, Blessed be He, inclined to favor Iyov, he said, “Heaven forbid that He should forget the mercy of Avraham” (towards the Jewish people; that is why he showed Iyov’s shortcomings). Of Peninah it is written: And Chana’s co-wife Peninah provoked her repeatedly to make her fret (and this way, Chana will pray to Hashem for children).

When Rav Acha bar Yaakov gave this exposition in Papunia, the Satan came and kissed his feet (as a sign of gratitude).

Rava, based on a scriptural verse, said that Iyov did not sin with his lips, but he did sin in his heart. Iyov, because of his suffering, wished to “turn the plate upside down” (to blaspheme God by saying that He does not control the world).

Abaye said that Iyov, in his thoughts, was only referring to the Satan.

The Gemora shows that this is actually a Tannaic dispute between Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua.

Iyov said: Were it Your intention, I would not be wicked, and there is none that can deliver out of Your hand. Rava



said: Iyov sought to exonerate the whole world from judgment. He said, "Master of the Universe, You have created the ox with cloven hoofs and You have created the donkey with whole hoofs; You have created Gan Eden and You have created Gehinnom; You have created righteous men and You have created wicked men, and who can prevent You (therefore people should not be punished for sinning, for they are compelled to do so)!"

His companions answered him: the Holy One, Blessed be he, created the Evil Inclination; He also created the Torah as its antidote.

Rava expounded other verses to mean as follows: Iyov used to rob a field from an orphan, improve it and then restore it to him. If ever there was a widow who could not find a husband, he used to associate his name with her (as if he was a relative), and then someone would soon come and marry her.

The Gemora cites several verses which demonstrate Iyov's blasphemous ways: Would that my vexation be weighed, and my experience placed in the scale; let them be borne together. Rav said: Dirt should be put in Iyov's mouth, because he makes himself as a colleague of God (as if to tell Him, "Let's make a calculation and decide who owes whom").

Another example: Would there be an arbiter between us, that he might lay his hand upon us both. Rav said: Dirt should be put in Iyov's mouth; is there a servant who argues with his master?

It is written: I made a covenant with my eyes; why then would look upon a virgin? Rav said: Dirt should be put in Iyov's mouth; he said that he refrained from looking at other men's wives. Avraham did not even look at his own, as it is written: Behold now I know that you are a beautiful woman, which shows that up until then, he did not know.

Rava cites a verse which indicates that Iyov denied that there will be a Resurrection of the Dead.

Rabbah said: Iyov angered God by saying the following: "Master of the Universe! Perhaps a whirlwind has passed before You, and caused You to confuse Iyov with 'oyev' (enemy; and my punishment was nothing but a mistake)." Hashem answered him, "I have created many hairs on a man, and for every hair I have created a separate groove, so that two hairs should not grow from the same groove, for if two were to grow from the same groove they would darken the sight of a man. I do not confuse one groove with another; would I then confuse Iyov with 'oyev'?"

Hashem continued, "I have created many drops of rain in the clouds, and for every drop a separate channel, so that two drops should not issue from the same channel, since if two drops issued from the same channel they would wash away the soil, and it would not yield produce. I do not confuse one drop with another, and shall I confuse Iyov and 'oyev'?"

Hashem continued, "I have created many thunderclaps in the clouds, and for each clap a separate path, so that two claps should not travel by the same path, since if two claps travelled by the same path they would demolish the world. I do not confuse one thunderclap with another, and shall I confuse Iyov and 'oyev'?"

Hashem continued, "This wild goat is heartless towards her young. When she crouches for delivery, she goes up to the top of a mountain so that the young shall fall down and be killed, and I prepare an eagle to catch it in its wings and sets it before her, and if he were one second too soon or too late it would be killed. I do not confuse one moment with another, and shall I confuse Iyov and 'oyev'?"

Hashem continued, "This gazelle has a narrow birth canal. When she crouches for delivery, I prepare a snake which

bites her at the opening of the womb, and she delivers her offspring. Were it to bite her one second too soon or too late, she would die. I do not confuse one moment with another, and shall I confuse *Iyov* and ‘*oyev*?’”

Rava concludes: It is derived from a Scriptural verse regarding *Iyov* that a person cannot be held responsible for words that he utters while in distress. (16a – 16b)

Iyov’s Friends

It is written: Now when *Iyov*’s three friends heard of all this harm which was come upon him, each man came from his own place, Eliphaz the Teimanite, Bildad the Shuchite, and Tzophar the Naamasite. They met together to commiserate with him and to comfort him.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav This teaches us that they all entered the city at the same time through one gate. And a Tanna taught in a braisa: Each one lived three hundred parsahs away from the other (and still they arrived simultaneously).

The Gemora asks: How did they find out (simultaneously) of *Iyov*’s travails?

Some say that they each had crowns (on which a picture of each was engraved, and if harm came upon any one of them, the picture changed), and some say that they had had certain trees. When the tree that was named for that person withered, it was a sign to them.

Rava said: This bears out the popular saying: Either (one should have) friends like the friends of *Iyov* or death.

It is written: And it came to pass, when men began to propagate (*Iarov*) on the face of the earth, daughters were born to them. Rabbi Yochanan says: The word *Iarov* indicates that when the daughters were born, *reviah* (propagation) came into the world (for they mature at an

earlier age). Rish Lakish says: It indicates that strife (*merivah*) came into the world.

Rish Lakish asked Rabbi Yochanan: According to your view that it means that propagation came into the world, why wasn’t the number of *Iyov*’s daughters doubled (just like his sons)?

He replied: Though they were not doubled in number, they were doubled in beauty. (16b)

Daughters

A daughter was born to Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe, and he felt disappointed. His father said to him, “Propagation has come to the world.” Bar Kappara said to him: Your father has given you a worthless consolation, for it was taught in a braisa: The world cannot function without either males or females. Yet happy is he whose children are males, and woe for him whose children are females (for he must always worry about their welfare). The world cannot survive without either a perfume seller or a tanner. Yet happy is he whose occupation is that of a perfume seller, and woe for him whose occupation is that of a tanner.

This issue is disputed amongst the Tannaim. It is written: Hashem had blessed Avraham with everything (*bakol*). What is meant by ‘everything’? Rabbi Meir said: It was the fact that he had no daughter (for she would not have who to marry). Rabbi Yehudah said: It was the fact that he had a daughter. Others say that Avraham had a daughter whose name was *Bakol*. Rabbi Eliezer the Modiite said that Avraham possessed a power of astrology for which he was much sought after by the kings of the East and West. Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai said: Avraham had a precious stone hung round his neck which brought immediate healing to any sick person who looked on it, and when Avraham our father departed from this world, the Holy One, Blessed be He, suspended it in the



sphere of the sun. Abaye said: This bears out the popular saying: As the sun is lifted, the illness lightens. (16b)

Esav and Yishmael

Another explanation (in 'everything') is that Esav did not rebel so long as he was alive. Another explanation is that Yishmael repented while he was still alive.

How do we know that Esav did not rebel while he was alive? Because it says: And Esav came in from the field and he was weary. It has been taught in a braisa that it was on that day that Avraham our father died, and Yaakov our father made a broth of lentils to comfort his father Yitzchak.

Why was it of lentils? In Eretz Yisroel they said in the name of Rabbah bar Mari: Just as the lentil has no mouth (like other beans), so too the mourner has no mouth (for speech). Others say: Just as the lentil is round, so too mourning comes around to all the occupants of this world.

The Gemora asks: What practical difference is there between the two explanations?

The Gemora answers: The difference arises on the question whether we should comfort with eggs (for they have no mouth, but they are not round).

Rabbi Yochanan said: That wicked Esav committed five sins on that day. He had relations with a betrothed maiden; he committed a murder; he denied the existence of God; he denied the Resurrection of the Dead, and he rejected the birthright. The Gemora cites the Scriptural verses as sources for the above.

The Gemora asks: And from where do we know that Yishmael repented while Avraham was still alive?

The Gemora quotes a discussion which took place between Ravina and Rav Chama bar Buzi when they were once sitting before Rava while he was dozing. Ravina to Rav Chama bar Buzi: Are you certain that wherever the term *gevi'ah* is used in Scripture connection with the death of any person, it implies that that person died righteous? He replied: Yes. Ravina asked: But what then of the Generation of the Flood? Rav Chama answered: We only make this inference if both *gevi'ah* and *asifah* (gathering in) are mentioned. But, he asked, what of Yishmael, where both *gevi'ah* and *asifah* (gathering in) are mentioned? At this point Rava awoke and heard them. Children, he said, this is what Rabbi Yochanan has said: Yishmael repented in the lifetime of his father. We know this because it says: And Yitzchak and Yishmael his sons buried him. [This indicates that Yishmael allowed Yitzchak to precede him; this proves that he in fact repented.] (16b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Se'udas Havra'ah

Our Gemora recounts that Yaakov Avinu prepared the stew, with which he bought his brother's firstborn rights, for Yitzchak to comfort him after Avraham's demise.

The commentaries (see Rashi, Bereshis 25:30) explain that he brought the lentils as a *se'udas havra'ah* (recuperation meal) given to a mourner coming from burying his relative and the *poskim* learnt important halachos about this meal from our Gemora.

The Gemora in Moed Katan (27b) decides that a mourner must eat the "bread" of others at this first meal, not his own, and Shulchan 'Aruch rules accordingly (Y.D. 378:1).

Does "bread" mean any food or is the term restricted to actual bread alone? Chochmas Shlomo and 'Aroch HaShulchan (Y.D. 378) hold that a mourner may eat his

own food aside from bread but Shevet Yehudah (378) and the Chida (Yafeh LaLev, VIII, 378) assert that he must eat nothing of his own and Kitzur Shulchan Aruch maintains that he must not even drink his own coffee.

Why is a mourner forbidden to eat his own food at the se'udas havra'ah?

According to Divrei Soferim (25:23), the above difference of opinions depends on the reason for the Talmudic regulation that a mourner must not eat his own food for his first meal. The Rosh, cited in Beis Yosef (Y.D., *ibid*), holds that a mourner is so despondent that he neglects to care for himself. Chazal therefore decreed that he must not prepare his first meal, causing others to bring him food and comfort him (Responsa Igros Moshe, Y.D. II, 168).

Shevet Yehudah, though, maintains that Chazal wanted to prevent a mourner from eating a full meal and neglect his mourning and therefore limited him to eating what others bring, assuming their contributions would not be excessive. Hence, Shevet Yehudah forbade a mourner to eat anything of his own, avoiding any possibility of his eating a full meal.

The Acharonim (Divrei Soferim, *ibid*, 27) emphasize the Tur, who quotes our sugya that the meal is intended to "comfort the mourner" – i.e., to hearten him but not to prevent his overeating.

The Rosh (Moed Katan, Ch. 3, §84) adds that a husband must not serve his wife a se'udas havra'ah for two reasons. Being that he must support her as her husband, she acquires the food he serves her and it is not regarded as another's. Moreover, they always eat together and the food would not appear as if brought by others.

May a son supported by his father bring him a se'udas havra'ah from his own (the son's) food? According to the

first reason he may do so as the food does not belong to his father. Worrying about appearances (*maris 'ayin*), though, the son must not, as anyone who knows that his father supports him and sees him serving is sure the food is his fathers.

The Acharonim prove, once again from our sugya, that the first reason of the Rosh forbidding a husband to serve se'udas havra'ah is halachically valid: Yaakov was supported by Yitzchak yet he brought him the stew which, as mentioned, was a se'udas havra'ah (Ruach Chayim by HaGaon Rav Chayim Falaji, 378).