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Megillah Daf 27

Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

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

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*). (26b4 – 27a1)

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. (27a1)

The Mishnah 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 Mishnah: 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 Mishnah 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 Baraisa: 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. (27a1 – 27a3)

It was taught in a Baraisa: 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. (27a3)

The Mishnah had stated: If a sacred object was sold, the proceedings must be used to buy an object with a greater degree of sanctity. The Mishnah 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 Baraisa 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 Baraisa 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 Baraisos 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. (27a3 – 27a4)

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 Baraisa 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: Rav Huna once proclaimed a fast day. Rav Chanah bar Chanilai and all the [leading] men of his place happened to visit him [on that day], and they were called upon for a charity contribution, and they gave it. When they were about to leave, they said to him [Rav Huna]: Kindly return it to us so that we may go and assist with it the poor of our own town. He replied to them: We have learned: When does this rule apply? When there is no town scholar in charge there; but if there is a scholar in control there, it should be given to the town scholar, and all the more so in this case, seeing that both my poor and your poor depend upon me. (27a4 – 27b1)

The Mishnah 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. (27b1)

The Rabbis answered Rabbi Meir well. And what about Rabbi Meir? - 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 Rabbis 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. (27b1)

The Mishnah 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. (27b1 – 27b2)

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 Baraisa: 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.

Said Rabbi Yehudah further: It happened once that Baysus ben Zunin made a sale of his field with the permission of Rabbi Elazar ben Azaryah, and the purchaser took the produce. They said to him: Do you cite that as a proof? It was in fact the vendor who took the produce and not the purchaser.

On what point of principle did they differ? — On the question of contingent interest; one master [Rabbi Yehudah] held that contingent interest is permitted, and the other held that it is forbidden. Rava said: All authorities agree that contingent interest is forbidden, and the point at issue is the taking of interest on condition of returning it. One master [Rabbi Yehudah] held that to take interest on condition of returning it [when the principal is returned] is permitted, while the other held that it is forbidden. (27b2 – 27b3)

The Mishnah had stated: 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].

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 Mishnah: 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 Baraisa 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 Mishnah 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 Baraisa: [One, who prays,] shall wait [for the amount of time it takes to walk four amos and then he may urinate]. [Is that so?] I grant you that one who has urinated should wait till he can go four amos, on account of drippings [on his clothes]. But why should one who has just prayed wait long enough to go four amos? — Rav Ashi replied: Because for the time it takes to go four amos his mouth is still full of his prayer and his lips are still muttering it. (27b3)

(Mnemonic Z'L'P'N'). The disciples of Rabbi 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 Baraisa: 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. (27b3 – 27b4)

"What happened to your belt?" asked Rav of his disciple Rabbi Huna when he noticed that he was wearing some makeshift belt of grass rather than his regular one. "I gave

away my belt as collateral in order to secure money to buy wine for 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 silk." Some time afterwards Rabbi Huna was hosting a wedding for his son Rabbah. Rav 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 Rav Huna: "When I blessed you why did you not respond with a blessing of "the same to my master" (27b4)

Rabbi Elazar ben Shamua was asked by his disciples: In virtue of what have you reached such a good old age? He replied: Never in my life have I made a shortcut through a synagogue, nor have I stepped upon the heads of the holy people, nor have I lifted my hands [to say the priestly blessing] without reciting a blessing. (27b4)

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 Rabba. 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.