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Yevamos Daf 64

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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 Mishna states: If one was married to a woman for ten years, and she did not beget him children; he is not permitted to abstain from the *mitzvah* of procreation. (*He either should divorce her and marry another woman or take a co-wife.*)

If he divorces her, she is permitted to marry another man, and the second man is also permitted to remain with her for ten years.

If during the marriage she miscarried, the ten years should be counted from the time of the miscarriage. (64a)

The Gemora cites a braisa: If one was married to a woman for ten years, and she did not beget him children; he is required to divorce her and give her the money promised in the *kesuvah*, for perhaps he did not merit that he would build a family with her. Even though there is no absolute proof to this halacha, there is a hint of a proof from the following verse [Breishis 16:3]: *And Sarai Avram's wife took Hagar the Egyptian, her maidservant, after Avram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan, and gave her to Avram her husband to be his wife. (We see that Avram took a second wife after ten years of a childless marriage.)*

We can infer another halacha from this braisa. By the fact that the Torah specified that Avram took Hagar as a wife after living ten years in Canaan, we see the time that he spent living outside of Eretz Yisroel is not included in the count of ten years (*perhaps he remained childless because he was residing outside of Eretz Yisroel.*)

The Gemora derives from here that if during the ten years of marriage, he became sick, or she became sick, or if they were

both imprisoned, those days are not included in the count of ten years. (64a)

Rava said to Rav Nachman: Why don't we learn from Yitzchak, who remained with his wife twenty years before having children? This can be proven by the verse [Breishis 25:20]: *And Yitzchak was forty years old when he took Rivkah, the daughter of Besuel the Aramean, of Paddan-aram, the sister of Lavan the Aramean, to be his wife. And it is written [Ibid v.26]: And Yitzchak was sixty years old when she bore them.*

Rav Nachman answered him: Yitzchak was sterile (*and he knew that it was on this account that they didn't have children*).

The Gemora asks: If so, how can we learn from Avraham; he too was sterile?

(The Gemora concedes that we cannot learn this halacha from Avraham or from Yitzchak; rather, it is derived from the extra words in the verse cited above: "after Abram had dwelt ten years in the land of Canaan." We could have made the calculation ourselves, and deduce the amount of years that Avram lived in Canaan. The Gemora asks: Aren't the verses specifying Yitzchak's twenty year wait also superfluous?)

The Gemora answers: That verse (*And Yitzchak was sixty years old when she bore them*) is needed for Rabbi Chiya bar Abba, for he said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: Why did the Torah count the years of Yishmael? It was in order that we can use that information to calculate the years of Yaakov. (64a)

Rabbi Yitzchak proves that Yitzchak was sterile: It is written [Breishis 25:21]: *And Yitzchak entreated Hashem opposite his wife, because she was barren.* The verse does not say “for his wife,” rather it says, “opposite his wife.” This teaches us that they were both infertile; Yitzchak and Rivkah.

The Gemora asks: If so, why does the verse conclude, *and Hashem let Himself be entreated by him?* The Torah should have written, *and Hashem let Himself be entreated by them?*

The Gemora answers: It is because the prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a righteous person is not comparable to the prayer of a righteous person who is the son of a wicked person. (64a)

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why were our forefathers infertile? It is because Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous. (*They were barren only so that they should pray to Hashem for children.*)

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why are the prayers of the righteous likened to a pitchfork, as just like a pitchfork turns over the grain on the threshing floor from one place to another, so too the prayers of the righteous transform the manner in which HaShem conducts Himself from the Attribute of Cruel Judgment to the Attribute of Mercy. (64a)

Rabbi Ami said: Avraham and Sarah were both *tumtemim* (*people that their sex cannot be determined*). He cites a Scriptural source to support his opinion.

Rav Nachman said in the name of Rabbah bar Avuha: Sarah, our Matriarch, was an *aylonis*. He cites a Scriptural source to support his opinion that Sarah didn’t even have a uterus. (64a – 64b)

The Mishna had stated: If one was married to a woman for ten years, and she did not beget him children; he is not permitted to abstain from the *mitzvah* of procreation.

Rav Yehudah son of Rav Shmuel bar Shilas said in the name of Rav: The ten-year rule was only taught regarding the early generations, who lived extremely long lives; however, regarding the later generations, who live for relatively few years, the rule is two and a half years, corresponding to the amount of time it would take for three full pregnancies (*plus a month in between to become pregnant*).

Rav Nachman said: The rule is three years, corresponding to three “remembrances” (*when Hashem decreed that these barren women should bear children*). We have learned: Hashem decreed on Rosh Hashanah that Sarah, Rochel and Chanah would give birth to children

Rabbah disagrees and maintains that the ten year rule is still applicable. He said: Let us see; who established the Mishna? It was Rebbe. And already in the times of King David, a regular person’s lifespan had been shortened, as it is written [Tehillim 90:10]: *The days of our years are seventy years.* (64b)

The Mishna had stated: If one was married to a woman for ten years, and she did not beget him children; he is not permitted to abstain from the *mitzvah* of procreation. (*He either should divorce her and marry another woman or take a co-wife.*)

The Gemora asks: (*Will he have children from the second wife?*) But the Rabbis once told Rabbi Abba bar Zavda: “Marry a wife and have children.” He answered them: “If I would have merited, I would have had children from my first wife.”

The Gemora answers: He was merely pushing them off, for Rabbi Abba bar Zavda was merely pushing them off since he had become sterile due to Rav Huna’s discourses (*which were very lengthy, and Rav Huna forced himself not to leave in the middle to take care of his bodily functions; this resulted in sterility*).

The Gemora comments: Rav Gidel had become sterile due to Rav Huna's discourses. Rav Chelbo had become sterile due to Rav Huna's discourses. Rav Sheishes had become sterile due to Rav Huna's discourses.

Rav Acha bar Yaakov was once stricken with *suskinsa* (a disease which comes about on account of resisting the need to urinate). They hung him from a cedar column which was used to support the Beis Medrash (as a remedy), and a discharge came from him whose color was like the green branch of a palm tree.

Rav Acha bar Yaakov said: There were sixty scholars amongst us, and they all became sterile due to Rav Huna's discourses except for me because I upheld that which is written [Koheles 7:12]: *Wisdom preserves the life of its possessor.* (64b)

The Mishna had stated: If he divorces her, she is permitted to marry another man, and the second man is also permitted to remain with her for ten years.

The Gemora infers from here that she will only be permitted to marry a second time, but not a third time (since after two times, we presume that she is incapable of bearing children).

The Gemora states: our Mishna seems to be reflecting the viewpoint of Rebbe, who maintains that a *chazakah* (a presumption) is established after an act occurs two times. We have learned in a braisa: If a woman had two of her sons circumcised, and they died, she should not have the third son circumcised (for we assume that her sons cannot survive circumcision). Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel, however, maintains that an act must occur three times in order to establish a *chazakah*; therefore, he rules that she could have the third son circumcised, but not the fourth son.

The Gemora asks: But we have learned in a braisa exactly the opposite (their opinions are reversed)?

The Gemora asks (in an attempt to ascertain which braisa is authoritative): Which of these is the latter?

Come and hear what Rabbi Chiya bar Abba stated in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: It once happened with four sisters at Tzipori that when the first had circumcised her child, he died; when the second circumcised her child, he also died, and when the third circumcised her child, he also died. The fourth came before Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel who told her, "Do not circumcise the child." (It is evident that Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel holds that three times establish a *chazakah*.)

The Gemora asks: But is it not possible that if the third sister had come, he would also have told her the same?

The Gemora answers: If so, what was the purpose of the testimony of Rabbi Chiya bar Abba?

The Gemora rejects this proof: It is possible that he meant to teach us that sisters can also establish a presumption.

Rava said: Now that it has been stated that sisters also establish a presumption, a man should not marry a woman from a family of epileptics, or from a family of lepers. This applies only when the fact had been established by the occurrence of three cases.

The Gemora returns to its original question: What is the decision (regarding the opinions of Rebbe and Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel)?

The Gemora brings a proof: When Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef came (from Eretz Yisroel to Bavel) he said: Such a case was once submitted to Rabbi Yochanan in the Synagogue of Ma'on on Yom Kippur which fell out on Shabbos. A woman had her child circumcised, and he died; her second sister had her child circumcised, and he also died; and the third sister appeared before him. He said to her: "Go and circumcise him." (It would seem that Rabbi Yochanan was relying on

what he observed from Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel that two times do not establish a *chazakah*.) (64b)

Abaye said to Rav Yitzchak bar Yosef: See, you have permitted a forbidden (*to circumcise the child even on Shabbos*) and a dangerous act.

Abaye, however, relying upon this statement married Chomah the daughter of Issi, the son of Rav Yitzchak, the son of Rav Yehudah. She had been married to Rechava of Pumbedisa who died while married to her. Rav Yitzchak son of Rabbah bar Chanah also married her and he died as well. Abaye relied on the fact that two occurrences do not establish a *chazakah*, and went and married her, and subsequently died.

Rava said: Would any one else have exposed himself to such danger? Abaye himself had said that Avin was reliable, but that Yitzchak the Red was not a person to be relied upon; that Avin constantly reviewed the views of Rabbi Yochanan, but Yitzchak the Red did not!

Furthermore, it might be said that their dispute extended only to the case of circumcision (*where it would involve negating a mitzvah*); do they, however, differ also in the case of marriage?

The Gemora answers: Yes, for so it was taught: If a woman was married to one husband who died, and to a second one who also died, she must not be married to a third; these are the words of Rebbe. Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel said: She may be married to a third, but she may not be married to a fourth.

The Gemora asks: Regarding circumcision, it is understandable, for some families may have thin blood and some families may have thick blood (*it might not clot properly*). What is the reason in the case of marriage?

Rav Mordechai said to Rav Ashi: Thus did Avimi from Hagonia say in the name of Rav Huna: The spring is the

cause (*cohabiting with her*). Rav Ashi stated: The woman's *mazal* is the cause.

What practical difference is there between them? The difference between them is the case where the man only betrothed her and died, or also when he fell off a palm tree and died. (64b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

HASHEM WANTS OUR TEFILLOS

It is written in the Megillah [2:5]: There was a Jewish man in Shushan the capital, whose name was Mordechai, son of Yair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, from the tribe of Binyamin. The Gemora asks: What is the significance in mentioning all these names? The Gemora cites a braisa which states that all these names are in fact referring To Mordechai. He is called the son of Yair because he brightened the eyes of the Jewish people in prayer. He is referred to as the son of Shimei because Hashem listened to his prayers. He is called the son of Kish because he knocked on the Gates of Mercy and they were opened for him.

The Shem Meshmuel asks: According to this explanation, the phrases are seemingly in reverse order. First, one knocks on the Gates of Mercy, then Hashem would listen to his prayers and afterwards he would brighten the eyes of Klal Yisroel.

Rabbi Eliezer Ginzburg in his sefer, The King's Treasures cites an important principle that was often said by the Mirrer Mashgiach, Reb Yerucham Levovitz.

The Medrash in Parshas Beshalach (61:5) states: Why did Hashem scare the Jewish people? The Medrash answers: Because Hashem desired their prayers. The Medrash is teaching us that the primary purpose behind the Splitting of the Sea was to stir Klal Yisroel to prayer.

Our Gemora tells us that Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous. The Matriarchs were barren only so that they should pray to Hashem for children. Their desire for progeny caused the Matriarchs and the Patriarchs to pray to Hashem



at a level that under normal circumstances they would not have done.

This can be said in regard to the hardships that happened to the Jewish people in Shushan. It was to chase away the spiritual gloom that comes with exile and to brighten the eyes of Klal Yisroel through tefillah. The phrases are thus arranged in levels of importance.

DAILY MASHAL

Our Gemora tells us that Hashem desires the prayers of the righteous. The Matriarchs were barren only so that they should pray to Hashem for children. Their desire for progeny caused the Matriarchs and the Patriarchs to pray to Hashem at a level that under normal circumstances they would not have done.

Rabbi Yitzchak said: Why are the prayers of the righteous likened to a pitchfork, as just like a pitchfork turns over the grain on the threshing floor from one place to another, so too the prayers of the righteous transform the manner in which HaShem conducts Himself from the Attribute of Cruel Judgment to the Attribute of Mercy.

*** Why did Hashem have to make them infertile; is there no other reason to pray to Him? If they would have had children, would they not have prayed for their health, sustenance and spiritual growth?

*** Divrei Yoel cites a Zohar and explains: It is on account of the prayers of the righteous that all future salvations will be effected. The Divrei Yoel explains with a parable: A king was traveling in a desert and he became very thirsty. The king's servants sought to bring the king water from a distant land. The king said, "I have the capabilities to bring sufficient water from afar for ourselves, but how will anyone else who passes through this area survive?" The king then commanded his servants to dig in the sand until they would find water, and by discovering a well, all future travelers would be able to survive in the desert. Similarly, explains the Divrei Yoel, people in future generations will be

in need of a salvation, but they may not be deserving of it. It is through the tefillos of our forefathers that the gateways for these salvations will be effected.

*** The Sfas Emes writes that Yitzchak was answered through Tefillas Mincha. The Gemora states that one should be extremely careful in Mincha because this was the tefillah that Eliyahu was answered with.

*** The Imrei Emes comments that although the essence of Yitzchak was judgment, in the depths of judgment lies chesed, kindness; it was through this that he had the ability to transform the manner in which HaShem conducts Himself, from the Attribute of Cruel Judgment to the Attribute of Mercy.

*** Imrei Shefer writes that part of the tefillah that Yitzchak prayed at that time was the tefillah of "*b'fi yeshorim tisromam* etc." which contains Yitzchak and Rivkah's name in it.