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Yevamos Daf 76

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**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

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Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: If his member had a small perforation which was closed up, he is disqualified if the wound would rip opened when semen is emitted, but if it would not rip open, he would be fit to marry into the congregation.

Rava analyzed this ruling: Where was this perforation? If the perforation is below the corona, he should remain fit even if it were completely severed? Rather, he is referring to a case where the perforation occurred in the corona itself.

The Gemora supports Rava’s conclusion: Rav Mari bar Mar said in the name of Mar Ukva, who said in the name of Shmuel: If his member had a small perforation in the corona itself which was closed up, he is disqualified if the wound would rip opened when semen is emitted, but if it would not rip open, he would be fit to marry into the congregation.

Rava the son of Rabbah sent to Rav Yosef: Will the master instruct us how to ascertain whether the wound will rip opened when semen is emitted? Rav Yosef said to him: We bring warm barley bread and place it upon the man's anus. This will cause him to discharge semen, and the effect can be observed. Abaye asked: Is everybody like our Patriarch Yaakov, concerning whom it is written [Breishis 49:3]: *Reuven, you are my firstborn, my might, and my initial vigor.* From here we derive that Yaakov never before experienced the emission of semen. (*Why then should the elaborate test described be necessary in ordinary cases?*)

Rather, Abaye said: We dangle colored clothing of a woman before him (*exciting his passions and thus causing a seminal discharge*).

Rava asked him: Is everyone like Barzilai the Gileadite (known for his indulgence in carnal gratification – Dovid had invited Barzilai to move to Yerushalayim with him. Barzilai refused, saying that he was old and therefore was not able to taste food and drink. The Gemara states that he lied, because the maidservant of Rebbe, who was ninety-two years old, would taste the food that was cooking to see if it required more seasoning. Barzilai was eighty years old and claimed that he could not taste, and this woman was ninety-two years old and was still able to taste food. Furthermore, Barzilai said that he was old, and this led to his weakened condition, when in reality, Barzilai was steeped in immorality, and excess immorality leads one to become old suddenly.)?

The Gemora concludes that it is obvious that the original answer is to be maintained. (76a)

The Gemora cites a braisa: One whose member is punctured is disqualified from marrying into the congregation because his semen drips (*and is not ejaculated, therefore it will not fertilize*). If the puncture closed up, he is fit to marry into the congregation because he can father a child. This is a disqualification that returns to its original state of qualification.

The Gemora asks: What is the expression of “this is a disqualification” coming to exclude?

The Gemora answers: It excludes the case where a seal of scar tissue was formed on the lungs in consequence of a wound; since such cannot be regarded as a proper effective tissue seal. (*It may easily burst. The lungs are, therefore, regarded as wounded, and the animal from which they were*

*taken is unfit for consumption; it is deemed to be a tereifah.)*  
(76a)

The braisa had stated: If the puncture closed up, he is fit to marry into the congregation because he can father a child.

Rav Idi bar Avin sent to Abaye: What can we do to seal the puncture? He replied: We bring a grain of barley and scratch the spot (*near the perforation*) so that it bleeds (*thus producing connective tissue*). Fats are rubbed in, and a big ant, procured for the purpose, is allowed to bite in, causing its head to remain in the cavity, thus assisting in the closing up and healing of the wound. It must be a grain of barley, for an iron instrument would cause inflammation. This procedure, furthermore, applies only to a small perforation; the scar tissue will peel off a large one. (76a)

Rabbah bar Rav Huna said: One who urinates from two places is disqualified from marrying into the congregation.

Rava said that the halachah does not follow the opinion of the son or the father. The Gemora explains: The halachah is not in accordance with the son; this is referring to Rabbah's ruling regarding one who urinates from two places. The halachah is not in accordance with the father; this is referring to the following ruling issued by Rav Huna: Women who practice lewdness with one another are disqualified from the *Kehunah*. And even according to Rabbi Elozar who rules that an unmarried man who cohabits with an unmarried woman without intending for marriage has rendered her a *zonah*, this applies only when she has relations with a man. However, when women have relations with each other, this is regarded merely as lewdness. (76a)

The Mishna states: A *petzua daka* and a *kerus shofchah* are permitted to marry a convert and a freed slavewoman. They are only prohibited from marrying into the congregation, as it is written [Devarim 30:2]: *One who has wounded or crushed testicles or whose member is severed may not enter the Congregation of Hashem.* (76a)

They inquired of Rav Sheishes: Is a *Kohen*, who is a *petzua daka* permitted to marry a convert or a freed slavewoman? Do we say that he remains with his sanctity and would therefore be prohibited from marrying them, or do we say that he does not remain with his sanctity and would therefore be permitted to marry them?

Rav Sheishes said to them: It was taught in a braisa: A *petzua daka* is permitted to marry a *Nesinah* (*a descendant of the Gibeonites who deceived Joshua and when their identity was discovered, they were made into hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and the altar; a Jew is prohibited from intermarrying with them*). If you will say that a *petzua daka* retains his sanctity, why don't we apply here the verse [Devarim 7:3]: *You shall not intermarry with them (anyone from the seven Canaanite nations who inhabited Eretz Yisroel before Yehoshua captured it)*? This proves that a *petzua daka* does not retain his sanctity.

Rava objects to the proof: The prohibition against marrying them is not dependent upon one's sanctity; the prohibition is because of the concern that they will have a son that will worship idols. This prohibition applies only while they are idolaters, but after they convert, they are permitted to marry a Jew. There was a Rabbinic ordinance against marrying the *Nesinim* even after they converted. The decree was issued only in regards to Jews who could have children; however, concerning a *petzua daka*, he would be permitted to marry a *Nesinah*.

The Gemora asks: If so, a *mamzer*, who can father children, should be prohibited from marrying a *Nesinah*; yet, we have learned in a Mishna that *mamzeirim* and *nesinim* are permitted to marry one another.

Rather, Rava said: The decree was issued only in regards to Jews that are eligible to marry into the congregation, but not to Jews who are disqualified to marry into the congregation (*such as a mamzer or petzua daka*).

Rava subsequently retracted from his position. He said: That which I previously said (*that the prohibition of "You shall not intermarry with them" is only applicable to a non-converted Canaanite, but not to those that converted*) is incorrect, for while they are still idolaters, a marriage with them has no validity. The prohibition against intermarriage must be after they converted. (*It emerges that if a petzua daka is permitted to marry a Nesinah, it is indicative that he does not retain his sanctity.*) (76a)

Rav Yosef asks on Rava from a following verse [Melachim I, 3:1]: *And Shlomo made a marriage alliance with Pharaoh, king of Egypt. (It would seem that a Jew can marry an idolater; this is contrary to Rava's viewpoint.)*

The Gemora answers: Shlomo converted her prior to marrying her.

The Gemora asks: Didn't we learn in a braisa that no converts were accepted in the days of Dovid, nor in the days of Shlomo?

The Gemora answers: The reason that converts weren't accepted in those days was because they sought conversion to partake in Israel's prosperity; Pharaoh's daughter did not need this, and therefore she could be accepted as a convert.

The Gemora persists: How could Shlomo have married her, she was a first-generation Egyptian?

The Gemora anticipates a response but promptly rejects it: Perhaps you will say (that she was not prohibited) that those (the original Egyptians) went to the world (hereafter; during the Exodus from Egypt), and these (the current residents of Egypt) are different people (and these people are permitted to the Jews). This cannot be, for it was taught in a braisa: Rabbi Yehudah said: Minyamin, an Egyptian convert was one of my colleagues among the disciples of Rabbi Akiva, and he once told me: "I am a first-generation Egyptian convert and I married a first-generation Egyptian convert. I shall arrange for my son to marry a second-generation Egyptian convert in

order that my grandson shall be eligible to enter the congregation." [*Evidently, the people living in Egypt are still Egyptians.*]

Rav Pappa answers: Shlomo did not actually marry her. He cites verses which indicate that Shlomo clung to them with love, but not with marriage.

The Gemora asks: But the verse explicitly says that he did indeed marry her?

The Gemora answers: On account of his excessive love for her, Scripture regards him as if he had married her. (76a – 76b)

[The braisa ruled that a *petzua daka* is permitted to marry a *Nesinah*.] Ravina said to Rav Ashi: Surely we learned in our Mishna: A *petzua daka* and a *kerus shofchah* are permitted to marry a convert and a freed slave woman. This implies that they are forbidden to marry a *Nesinah*!?

Rav Ashi replied: According to your reasoning, read the latter clause: They are only prohibited from marrying into the congregation. It follows from here that they are permitted to marry a *Nesinah* (for she is not part of the congregation)!? Rather, you must conclude that no inference may be drawn from this Mishna. (76b)

The Mishna states: An Ammonite convert and a Moabite convert are prohibited, and their prohibition is an eternal prohibition. However, their females are permitted immediately. An Egyptian convert and an Edomite convert are prohibited only for three generations, both males and females. Rabbi Shimon permits the females immediately. Rabbi Shimon said: This can be derived by means of a *kal vachomer*: If in the case where the males are prohibited eternally (*an Ammonite convert and a Moabite convert*), the females are permitted immediately, in the case where the males are prohibited only for three generations, shouldn't it stand to reason that the females should be permitted immediately! They said to him: If it is a halachah (*a tradition*

from your teachers), we shall accept, but if you derived it through the *kal vachomer*, there is a refutation. He said to them: It is not so (*there is no refutation*), but regardless, I am stating a halachah! (76b)

The Gemora asks: How do we know that a female Ammonite convert and a female Moabite convert are permitted to enter into the congregation?

Rabbi Yochanan said: Scripture states [Shmuel I, 17:55]: *And when Shaul saw Dovid go forth against the Philistine, he said to Avner, the captain of the army: "Whose son is this youth, Avner?" And Avner said: "By your life, O King, I do not know."*

The Gemora asks: But did Shaul really not know Dovid? Surely it is written [ibid. 16:21]: *And he (Shaul) loved him (Dovid) greatly; and he became his armorbearer!*

Perhaps, he was inquiring concerning Dovid's father. But did he not know his father? Surely it is written [ibid. 17:12]: *And the man was an old man in the days of Shaul, and he came with men;* and Rav or, other say that Rabbi Abba stated that this referred to the father of David, Yishai, who came in with an army and went out with an army (*he was obviously well known since he was chief over six hundred thousand men*)!

Rather, this is this that Shaul meant: Go investigate whether Dovid descends from Peretz or from Zerach (*the sons of Yehudah*). If he descends from Peretz, he will be a king, for a king breaks for himself a way and no one can hinder him. If, however, he descends from Zerach, he would only be an important man.

What did Shaul see in Dovid which compelled him to give instructions that an enquiry be made concerning him?

The Gemora answers: It is because it is written [Shmuel I, 17:38]: *And Saul clad David with his apparel.* This alludes that Shaul's clothes fit Dovid perfectly, and about Shaul it is written [ibid. 9:2]: *From his shoulders and upward he was taller than any of the people.*

Doeg the Edomite then said to Shaul: "Instead of enquiring whether he is fit to be king or not, enquire rather whether he is permitted to enter the congregation or not." What is the reason that he shouldn't be permitted to enter into the congregation? It is because he descends from Rus, the Moabite. Avner said to him: "We learned in a braisa: An Ammonite is prohibited, but not a female Ammonite; A Moabite is prohibited, but not a female Moabite."

Doeg asked him: "If so, should we say concerning a mamzer that only a *mamzer* is prohibited, but not a *mamzeres*?"

Avner responded: "It is written *mamzer*, which implies any blemish of strangeness."

Doeg persisted: "If so, should we say concerning an Egyptian that only an Egyptian male is prohibited, but not a female Egyptian?"

Avner replied: "It is different regarding the prohibition against Ammonites and Moabites because the Scriptural text is explicitly stated regarding them [Devarim 23:5]: *Because they did not greet you with bread and with water.* It is customary for a man to greet travelers with bread and water, but it is not customary for a woman to greet them (*the women were, therefore, excluded from the prohibition*)."

Doeg asked him: "The men should have greeted the men and the women should have greeted the women?"

Avner remained silent. Thereupon, the King said [Shmuel I, 17:56]: *"You inquire whose son this youth is."*

The Gemora analyzes this verse: Elsewhere he calls him a lad, and here he calls him a youth. Why did he change?

It is this that Shaul implied to Avner: "This halachah has become hidden from you; go and ask in the Beis Medrash."



On enquiry, they told him: “An Ammonite is prohibited, but not a female Ammonite; A Moabite is prohibited, but not a female Moabite.”

Doeg asked them all the questions that he had asked Avner, and they too were silent. Doeg wished to announce that Dovid was prohibited from marrying into the congregation. Immediately, he was interrupted.

It is written: *And Amasa was the son of a man named Yisra the Israelite, who married Avigal the daughter of Nachash.* But it is also written: *[And Avigal bore Amasa; the father of Amasa was] Yeser the Ishmaelite?* Rava relates: Yeser, who was married to Avigayil the daughter of Nachash, girded his sword like an Ishmaelite and said, “Whoever does not accept this halachah, shall be stabbed with this sword. I received a tradition from Shmuel of Ramah: An Ammonite is prohibited, but not a female Ammonite; A Moabite is prohibited, but not a female Moabite.”

The Gemora asks: Why were his words accepted? Didn't Rabbi Abba say in the name of Rav that if a Torah scholar teaches a new halachah that was unknown to all, if it was reported before an actual incident, he is listened to; but if it was not reported until after the incident, he is not listened to.

The Gemora answers: Here it is different because Shmuel and his Beis Din were still alive.

The Gemora asks: Why are the female Ammonites and Moabites permitted if they should have brought out bread and water to the women?

The Gemora answers: In Bavel, they cited the following verse [Tehillim 45:14]: *The very honor of a princess is within.* In Eretz Yisroel, they cited the following verse [Breishis 18:9]: *And they said to him, “Where is Sarah your wife?” He said: “Behold, she is in the tent.”* (76b – 77a)

## DAILY MASHAL

### Why did Dovid Hamelech Thank Hashem?

By: Rabbi Ozer Alpert

The Torah forbids a person who is born to proper Jewish parents to marry an Ammonite or Moabite. Commenting on this prohibition, the Midrash Pliah cryptically remarks that this verse is what Dovid Hamelech was referring to when he wrote (Tehillim 118:21): “Odecha ki inisani — I thank You (Hashem) because You afflicted me.” The connection between these two concepts is difficult to grasp. What does the prohibition against marrying somebody descended from the nations of Ammon and Moav have to do with Hashem causing us to suffer, and why did that specifically inspire and motivate Dovid to thank Hashem?

Harav Mordechai Benet writes that in order to understand this perplexing Midrash, we first need to understand what pain and suffering Dovid was referring to. The Gemara in Shabbos (88a) teaches that when the Jewish people were encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai, Hashem lifted the mountain above them like a barrel and threatened them that if they would not accept the Torah, “sham tehei kevuraschem — there will be your collective burial place.”

Commenting on this Gemara, Tosafos question why it was necessary for Hashem to do so after the Jewish people had already enthusiastically declared that whatever Hashem says, “na’aseh v’nishma — we will do and we will listen” (Shemos 24:7). The Midrash Tanchuma (Noach 3) answers that, although they had readily accepted the Written Torah, which is relatively limited in scope and can be learned with little difficulty, they were initially unwilling to accept the Oral Torah, which is substantially more complex and can only be understood after great toil and exertion, until Hashem forced them to do so by threatening them with mass extinction.

In light of the teaching of the Midrash, Rav Benet explains that Dovid was thanking Hashem for afflicting the entire

nation and compelling them to accept the Oral Law in addition to the Written Law. What is the connection between the Oral Torah and the prohibition against marrying a descendant of Ammon and Moav? The Gemara in Yevamos (76b) records that after Dovid slew Goliath, Shaul grew concerned that perhaps Dovid was destined to become king and take his position away from him, so he inquired about Dovid's lineage. Although Shaul posed this question to Avner, who was the general of his army, his advisor Doeg overheard the question and responded, "Before you examine Dovid's pedigree to determine if he is fit to be king, you should first inspect his ancestry to see if he is even fit to marry a regular Jewish woman, as he is descended from Rus the Moabite, and the Torah teaches that a Moabite may not marry into the Jewish congregation."

After a lengthy discussion of the ensuing arguments and refutations presented by Avner and Doeg, the Gemara concludes that the halachah is that the prohibition against marrying Ammonites and Moabites applies only to the males of these nations but not to the females, whom one is indeed permitted to marry after they convert. The Gemara explains this distinction in light of the reason given by the Torah for this prohibition: they did not greet the Jews with bread and water as they were leaving Egypt. Because it is the practice of men to go out to greet guests while women modestly remain in their homes, this lack of hospitality does not reflect negatively on the females of these nations, and they are therefore permitted to marry Jews. As a result, the ancestry of Dovid, who was descended from the female Rus, was deemed acceptable.

With this background information, Rav Benet suggests that the meaning of the Midrash Pliah becomes clear. The verse in the Torah which forbids the offspring of Ammon and Moav to marry into the Jewish nation does not appear to differentiate between male and female progeny, seemingly including both of them equally in the prohibition. When Dovid encountered this verse, he became frightened that perhaps it applied to his great-grandmother Rus as well, as

Doeg maintained. However, when he realized that the Oral Law distinguishes between the genders and rules authoritatively that female descendants are permitted to marry Jews, he rejoiced and exclaimed, "Odecha ki inisani — thank you, Hashem, for afflicting me [at Mount Sinai, by threatening to kill us if we did not accept the Oral Torah, which clarifies my legal status and clears the way for me to get married and become king]."