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Yevamos Daf 77

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The Mishna had stated: An Ammonite convert and a Moabite convert are prohibited, and their prohibition is an eternal prohibition. However, their females are permitted immediately.

The Gemora states that the source for this ruling is actually a dispute among the Tannaim, as was taught in the following braisa: An Ammonite is prohibited, but not a female Ammonite; A Moabite is prohibited, but not a female Moabite; these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Shimon said: It is written regarding the prohibition against Ammonites and Moabites [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*). (77a1)

Rava expounded: What is the meaning of that which is written [Tehillim 116:16]: *You have released my yoke straps?* Dovid said before the Holy One, Blessed is He: “Master of the Universe, the two yoke straps that were fastened upon me – you released them.” This is referring to Rus the Moabite and Naamah the Ammonite (*the wife of Shlomo and mother of Rechavam, Dovid's grandson*). (77a1)

Rava expounded: It is written: *You have done many things, O You Hashem, my God, Your wonders you're your thoughts are towards us.* “For me” he did not say, rather, “for us.” David refers to “us” as he had Rechavam on his lap, and he told him that the verse (which excludes females of Amon and Moav) referred to both of them. (77a2)

Rava expounded: It is written: I then said, “Here I have come with the Scroll of the Book, written for me.” David first said, “Now I came (to greatness), but I didn't realize that it was

already written about me in the Scroll of the Book.” The verse about Lot's daughters uses the word *nimtza'os* – *found*, and the verse about David's anointing as king uses the word *matzasi* – *I have found*, when it says: “I have found David, My servant, I anointed him with the oil of My Holiness.” (77a2)

Ulla said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The daughter of a male Ammonite convert is qualified to marry a *Kohen*.

Rava bar Ulla said to Ulla: According to which opinion is this ruling going according to? If it is following Rabbi Yehudah's opinion, he maintains that the daughter of a male convert is like the daughter of a male *chalal* (*thus disqualifying her from the Kehunah*). If it is following Rabbi Yosi's opinion, he maintains that the daughter of two converts is qualified for the *Kehunah* (*so why did Rabbi Yochanan need to issue this exact ruling?*).

The Gemora suggests that we may have thought that Rabbi Yosi's position was limited to a convert who could enter into the congregation (that his daughter may be fit for the *Kehunah*), but not to an Amoni (and the daughter will not be permitted to marry a *Kohen*). He explains why we would make such a distinction: This would be similar to a *Kohen Gadol's* daughter from a widow, who is prohibited (from marrying a *Kohen*; so too the daughter of a male and a female Ammonite convert will be forbidden to the *Kehunah*).

The Gemora challenges that source, as such a relationship (a *Kohen Gadol* cohabiting with a widow) is itself a sin (in contrast to the daughter of a male and a female Ammonite convert, where their cohabitation was permitted).



This can be refuted, from the daughter of a chalal (who may cohabit with a Jewess, yet his children may not marry a Kohen).

The Gemora challenges this, as a chalal was created through a sin (while an Amoni was not).

The Gemora counters from the case of the Kohen Gadol, who (cohabits with a widow, and he) is not created through a sin (so evidently, it isn't dependent on being the product of a prohibition).

The argument repeats itself, and the nature of this one (the chalal) is not like the nature of this one (the Kohen Gadol and the widow), and the nature of this one is not like the nature of this one. The common denominator of the two cases is that they are unlike most of the community (the rest of the Jewish people), and their daughters may not marry a Kohen, so we would therefore think that the daughter of an Amoni convert, who is also unlike most of the community, should be forbidden to a Kohen.

The Gemora challenges this, as there is a common characteristic in both of them, as they both have an aspect of sin, in contrast to the Amoni convert.

Rava bar Ulla answers: Perhaps Rabbi Yochanan is referring to a case where a male Ammonite convert married the daughter of a Yisroel illegally. Rabbi Yochanan rules that although he committed a transgression with this cohabitation, his daughter is qualified to marry a Kohen.

Ulla said to Rava his son: Yes (*that is correct*)! For when Ravin came to Bavel he said: If an Ammonite convert or a second-generation Egyptian convert married a Jewish woman illegally and they had a daughter, Rabbi Yochanan said: She is qualified to marry a Kohen. Rish Lakish said: She is disqualified from marrying a Kohen.

The Gemora explains their respective opinions: Rish Lakish said that she is disqualified from marrying a Kohen because he derives this halachah from the daughter of a Kohen Gadol who marries a widow (*just as the daughter conceived through that sinful union is disqualified for the Kehunah, so too, the daughter of this sinful union is disqualified for the Kehunah*).

Rabbi Yochanan said that she is qualified for the Kehunah based on the following discussion: Rabbi Zakkai taught the following braisa in front of Rabbi Yochanan: It is written regarding a Kohen Gadol [Vayikra 21:14]: *Only a virgin of his nation shall he take as a wife*. This includes a convert by her heritage (*a woman who was born from parents who were both converts from the same nation, even from Ammon*); she is permitted to marry a Kohen.

Rabbi Yochanan said to Rabbi Zakkai: I learned the following braisa: By the fact that the Torah does not state "*his nation*," but rather, it states "*from his nation*," this teaches us that a virgin that comes from two nations, is permitted to marry a Kohen, and you say that only a convert who was born from parents who were both converts from the same nation is permitted, and no other?

The Gemora analyzes their discussion: What is the meaning of "a virgin that comes from two nations"? If you will say that it is referring to the daughter of a male Ammonite who married a female Ammonite, and the reason this case is called "two nations," is because they have two different halachos; the male Ammonite is prohibited, and the female Ammonite is permitted; this is the same case as the convert by her heritage (*which is precisely the ruling of the braisa that Rabbi Zakkai cited, what would Rabbi Yochanan be asking?*). Rather, the case must be referring to an Ammonite convert who married a Jewish woman illegally and they had a daughter; she is permitted to marry a Kohen. (77a – 77b)

The Gemora cites another version of Rabbi Yochanan's response: Rabbi Yochanan said to Rabbi Zakkai: I learned the following braisa: By the fact that the Torah does not state

“his nation,” but rather, it states *“from his nation,”* this teaches us that a virgin that comes from two nations, including a nation that has in it two nations, is permitted to marry a *Kohen*, and you say that only a convert who was born from parents who were both converts from the same nation is permitted, and no other? (*According to this version, he explicitly was referring to a case where an Ammonite man married a Jewish woman illegally; the daughter from such a union is permitted to the Kehunah.*)

The Gemora analyzes this version: According to this version (*that the verse is specifically referring to Ammon, who has in two nations, but no other nation*), how does Rabbi Yochanan know that the daughter of a second-generation Egyptian convert who married a Jewish woman illegally is permitted to the *Kehunah*?

The Gemora asks: It cannot be derived from the similar halachah regarding the daughter of an Ammonite man who married a Jewish woman illegally, because we are more lenient with Ammon; the female Ammonites are permitted to marry into the congregation.

The Gemora answers: The daughter of a second-generation Egyptian male convert who married a second-generation female convert will prove your question incorrect. (*She is permitted to marry a Kohen because she is a third-generation Egyptian convert; although there is an element of stringency regarding Egyptian converts, namely, that their females are prohibited. It should follow that the daughter of a second-generation Egyptian convert who married a Jewish woman illegally should be permitted to marry a Kohen, because she is a third-generation Egyptian.*)

The Gemora asks: How can you use that case as a proof? The cohabitation was not in sin when a second-generation Egyptian male convert married a second-generation female convert; perhaps that is why the daughter is permitted to marry a *Kohen*?

The Gemora answers: The case regarding the daughter of an Ammonite man who married a Jewish woman illegally will prove your question incorrect. (*She is permitted to marry a Kohen even though the cohabitation was in sin.*) The argument repeats itself, and in conclusion, we can learn from the common characteristic of the two cases. (*The daughter of an Ammonite man who married a Jewish woman illegally, and the daughter of a second-generation Egyptian male convert who married a second-generation female convert are unlike the rest of the community, and permitted to marry a Kohen; so too, the daughter of a second-generation Egyptian convert who married a Jewish woman illegally is unlike the rest of the community, and therefore permitted to marry a Kohen.*) (77a2 – 77b2)

Rav Yosef said: This then is (the meaning of) that which I heard (my teacher) Rav Yehudah expounding on *‘his nation,’ ‘from his nation,’* and I did not (at the time) understand what he meant. [Now I realize that he was teaching us the above exposition which teaches us that the daughter of an Ammonite convert and an Israelite woman is fit for the *Kehunah*.] (77b2)

The Gemora records an alternative version: When Rav Shmuel bar Yehudah came (to Bavel), he stated: This (is the braisa), he (R’ Zakkai) recited in his (R’ Yochanan) presence: An Ammonite woman is eligible; her son that is born from an Ammonite is ineligible; and her daughter that is born from an Ammonite is eligible. This, however, applies only to a male and female Ammonite who converted; but her daughter that was born from an Ammonite is ineligible. Upon hearing this, Rabbi Yochanan said to him: Go recite this outside. [R’ Yochanan explained his objection;] Regarding your statement that an Ammonite woman is eligible – that is quite acceptable, since ‘Ammonite’ excludes a female Ammonite (and she is permitted to enter the congregation). Regarding your statement that her son that is born from an Ammonite is ineligible is also correct, since he is in fact a male Ammonite. In what respect, however, is her daughter that

was born from an Ammonite eligible? If in respect of entering the congregation - if her mother is eligible (even though she was born an Ammonite), is there any need to mention her? The eligibility must consequently be in respect of marrying a Kohen. But then what of the concluding statement: This, however, applies only to a male and female Ammonite who converted; but her daughter that was born from an Ammonite is ineligible. What is meant by her daughter that was

born from an Ammonite? If it be suggested that it refers to (the daughter of) a male Ammonite who married a female Ammonite, then this is the same case as that of a fundamental convert (regarding whom the braisa just ruled that she is fit for the Kehunah)? Consequently, it must refer to (the daughter of) a male Ammonite who married an Israelite woman (and it was regarding this case that he ruled that she is unfit for the Kehunah). Concerning this he told him. 'Go

recite this outside (for R' Yochanan maintains that she is eligible for Kehunah). (77b2 – 77b3)

The Mishna had stated: 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!

The Gemora asks: What was the objection that the Rabbis could have advanced to refute Rabbi Shimon's *kal vachomer*?

Rabbah bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: They could have said that the Torah's prohibition of *arayos* (*illicit relations under the penalty of kares*) indicates that the *kal vachomer* is incorrect. The Torah prohibits relatives until three generations, and yet the prohibition of *arayos* is applicable to males and females.

Rabbi Shimon would answer: The prohibitions cannot be compared. *Arayos* carries the penalty of *kares* (*and perhaps that is why the females are prohibited; marriage with an Egyptian is merely a negative precept*).

The Rabbis would answer: The prohibition regarding a *mamzer* indicates that even when there is no penalty of *kares*, both males and females are prohibited.

Rabbi Shimon would answer: You cannot compare to the prohibition of *mamzer*; a *mamzer* may never enter into the congregation, whereas an Egyptian may enter after three generations.

The Rabbis would answer: The *arayos* prohibition proves that females will be prohibited even in prohibitions that are permitted after three generations.

The argument repeats itself, and the nature of this one (*arayos*) is not like the nature of this one (a *mamzer*), and the nature of this one is not like the nature of this one. In conclusion, we can learn from the common characteristic of the two cases. The common characteristic in the two cases (*mamzer and arayos*) is that they are prohibited, and the prohibition applies to males and females; so too, the prohibition regarding the Egyptian converts will apply to males and females.

Rabbi Shimon would answer: You cannot compare the prohibition regarding an Egyptian convert to these cases. Both of these prohibitions have an element of *kares*, whereas, regarding an Egyptian convert, there is no *kares*.

The Rabbis would answer: We can derive the prohibition of the females from the *chalal* (instead of the *mamzer*) who is the offspring of a union between those who through it, are guilty of transgressing only a positive commandment (in a case where a *Kohen Gadol* cohabited with a non-virgin) and in accordance with the view of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov (who maintains that the child from such a union is a *chalal*). (Thus, it has been proven that even where there is no element of *kares*, both males and females are included in the prohibition. Similarly, in the case of the Egyptians converts, the females will be included.)

This is what Rabbi Shimon meant when he stated: "It is not so." I don't subscribe to the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov. And as for you, who do hold like Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov, I am stating a halachah (a tradition which I receives from my teachers). (77b3 – 77b4)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

YIBUM WITH RUS

The Gemora relates the episode with Shaul, Doeg and Avner. Doeg the Edomite 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."

The Maharsha asks: How could Doeg have thought that Boaz, the Head of the Sanhedrin, the Judge of all of Israel for many years would conduct himself improperly and publicly marry a woman who was forbidden to him? Furthermore, why did Ploni Almoni say to Boaz: "I cannot marry Rus because I am concerned that my children will be tainted"? He should have said that he can't marry her because he is forbidden to marry a Moabite woman (according to him)?

The Maharsha answers: The Gemora above (20b) explained the reason why a brother may not perform a *yibum* with his brother's wife in a case when she is forbidden to him by a negative prohibition. The Gemora asks: Shouldn't the positive commandment of *yibum* override the prohibition? The Gemora answers: He may not perform a *yibum* in this case because only the first act of cohabitation is permitted (that is the *mitzvah* of *yibum*), but not the second act. We are concerned that he might cohabit with her a second time, which would be forbidden.

The Maharsha says that perhaps this Rabbinic ordinance was not yet in effect in the times of Boaz, and it was permitted to perform a *yibum* on a women who was forbidden to the brother by a negative prohibition.

The Ramban in Breishis (38:8) states: In the times of our Patriarchs, they would perform the *mitzvah* of *yibum* even with other relatives; not only a brother's wife.

Ploni Almoni (Rus' closest relative) could have performed a *mitzvah* of *yibum* with Rus even though she was a Moabite woman, because the positive commandment of *yibum* would override the prohibition against marrying a Moabite woman. He refused to marry her because the children that would descend from this union would be tainted; they would not be allowed to marry into the congregation because the children would be Moabite's, just like their mother. He was concerned even about his own children that he fathered beforehand. People might not understand the distinction, and they would claim that all his children are forbidden to marry into the congregation.

Boaz, on the other hand, did not have these concerns. The Gemora in Bava Basra (91a) records that all of his children died already.

This is what Doeg thought. He knew that Boaz would not publicly violate the Torah by marrying Rus illegally. This is why Doeg claimed that Dovid is prohibited from marrying into the congregation. Dovid descends from Rus, and she is



a Moabite that has the prohibition of not marrying into the congregation. Boaz was justified to perform *yibum* with her, but the children will still remain disqualified from entering the congregation.

There are many questions on this explanation. The Kli Chemdah and Yashreish Yaakov ask: The entire premise of the Maharsha is flawed. The Ramban's explanation of *yibum* is only prior to the Giving of the Torah. After the Torah was given, *yibum* can only be performed on a brother's wife; not with any other relatives.

The Maharshal asks: How could there have been a *mitzvah* of *yibum* with Rus altogether? Her marriage with Machlon had no validity; she was an idolater.

Furthermore, Tosfos rules that only the initial part of cohabitation would be Biblically permitted with a woman who is forbidden by a negative precept. One is prohibited from completing cohabitation. How was Boaz able to complete cohabitation with Rus, and father a child with her?

The Yashreish Yaakov concludes by saying that the words of the Maharsha were only to be taken as a drush.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*** How could Boaz be trusted to rule that a Moabite is prohibited, but not a female Moabite? Didn't we learn that a Torah scholar that teaches a new halachah at the time of the incident is not believed?

*** The Torah prohibits seeking peace with Ammon and Moav. Does this prohibition apply only to the males, or also to the females?

*** How was Yisra allowed to bring a sword into the Beis Medrash? The halachah is that one may not bring a sword into a Synagogue because one who prays will merit long life, and a sword shortens one's life.

DAILY MASHAL

MODESTY OF THE WOMEN FROM MOAB

Avner replied to Doeg: "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*)."

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."*

The Maharshal asks: Were the women from Ammon and Moab modest? It is written regarding them that they were promiscuous women? What is the justification for them not going out and greeting the Jews?

He explains that it was the modesty of the Jewish women that prevented the women from Ammon and Moab to greet them. The Jewish women remained in their tents, something they had learned from their Matriarch, Sarah.

It is interesting to note that the Chasam Sofer answers that the women from Moab were modest indeed. It was in fact customary even for them to remain inside. It was only after Bilaam's failure to curse the Jewish people that Balak convinced them to go out and seduce the Jewish men.

DIVINE RETRIBUTION

The Gemara in Sanhedrin (106b) describes Doeg's downfall: Rabbi Ami said: Doeg did not die until he forgot his learning, as it is stated:¹ *He shall die bereft of wisdom, led into error by his great folly.* Rav Ashi said: Doeg was afflicted by tzaraas before he died, as it is stated:² *You cut down (hitzmatah) all who stray from You.* The verb *hitzmatah* alludes to *tzaraas*, as follows: It is written there, in connection with the Yovel year: *litzmisus*, which Targum Onkelos renders as *lachelutin*; and we learned in a Mishnah: There is no difference between a confined *metzora* and a confirmed (*muchlat*) *metzora* except the regulations concerning letting the hair grow and rending the garments. The term *muchlat*, which is used in this Mishnah in connection with *tzaraas*, has the same root as *lachelutin*, which is the Targum for *litzmisus*. It follows that *hitzmatah*, which has the same root as *litzmisus*, also alludes to *tzaraas*. Thus, scripture implies that Doeg was afflicted with *tzaraas*.

One may wonder why it was necessary for Doeg to be afflicted with *tzaraas* before he died. Was it not sufficient for him to die young?

My brother, Reb Binyomin, in his sefer on Sanhedrin explains: Let us understand the punishment of *tzaraas*. One who slanders someone is liable the punishment of *tzaraas*, as we see from numerous incidents in the Torah with Moshe disparaging the Jewish People, Miriam talking ill about her brother Moshe, and other instances. The affliction of *tzaraas* is meant to demonstrate to the sinner that he is an outcast, and the sinner must mend his or hers ways before being allowed normal social interaction. Doeg had slandered Dovid³ and thus earned the punishment of *tzaraas*. Although Doeg's punishment is only inferred from the exposition of the Gemara, the Gemara is teaching us that no one can escape Divine Retribution. Reb Moshe Feinstein, in the Sefer Derash Moshe, explains that this is the reason why the plague of *Barad*, fire and hail, only affected the flax and the barley in Egypt, while the wheat and the spelt were not struck, as Hashem only punished the Egyptians

commensurate with their evil deeds. If we would recognize that Hashem rewards our good deeds five hundred fold⁴, then we would make every attempt to study Torah whenever possible, and perform as many mitzvos as possible.

¹ Mishlei 5:23

² Tehillim 73:27

³ See Yevamos 76b-77a

⁴ Rashi to Shemos 34:7, and to Yoma 76a et al