



# THE DAF **שבוע** MATTERS

שבת קודש פרשת חיי שרה | מסכת יבמות דף ע"ו

## INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS

### The Tragic Flaw of the Men of Amon and Moav

על אשר לא קדמו אתכם בלחם ובמים דרכו של איש לקדם

**O**ur Gemara condemns the men of Amon and Moav. Their cruel nature is identified as an inherent flaw in their national character. It is for this reason that the men from the nations of Amon and Moav are not permitted to join the ranks of the Jewish people as converts. "Because of the fact that they did not greet you with bread and water on the road when you were leaving Egypt..." (Devarim 23:5) The nations of Amon and Moav refused to volunteer provisions for the Jewish nation as it traversed the desert. This lack of even a basic level of compassion to offer humanitarian aid is symptomatic of a society which is totally devoid of decency and morals. This may seem quite surprising, for these nations descended from Lot, who was outstanding and legendary in his hospitality extended to the angels who visited him in Sodom. At the risk of great personal harm, both he and his daughter offered bread and shelter to the poor travelers, and they both suffered due to their benevolence. These people had the trait of kindness ingrained into their very beings. How, then, could the nations which came from them lost this sensitivity to such an extreme degree that they acted in a cruel and ruthless manner in regards to the sojourning Bnei Yisrael? We see that the benefit of a good deed is not the act in and of itself, but what is critical is the character quality which underlies the exemplary behavior. A meritorious act must flow from a sincere and deep realization of the goodness and value of the deed, and from an inner desire to help others. It is possible for a person to involve himself in many beneficial endeavors, but if they simply are a result of habit or of following the lead of others who are good-hearted, the person himself may fail to internalize the significance of these actions. This was the flaw of Lot. He lived in the household of Avraham Avinu long enough to acquire excellent habits regarding hospitality and kindness. He trained himself to act accordingly, but it was without recognition of the inherent nature of these actions. Consequently, these attributes of kindness and compassion were not ingrained into his soul, and they were not present in the spiritual heritage which was transmitted to his progeny. Over the years, the superficial habits of sharing and caring were lost, and the nations which issued from him did not retain these qualities. On the other hand, the children of Avraham Avinu are endowed with the innate tendencies of possessing shame, mercy, and of providing kindness (see Yevamos 79a). Avraham toiled to perfect these traits, and because of this, his descendents have these spiritual genetic codes as part of their heritage forever.

## PARSHA CONNECTION

**This week's daf** discusses both שלמה המלך as well as דוד המלך, both of whom are discussed in this week's הפטרה which concerns דוד's appointment of שלמה to the מלוכה. While the main part of the הפטרה deals with the story of אדוניהו declaring himself as the next king, it begins with the fact that דוד המלך was very old and needed a young lady to help him. Why are the details regarding דוד המלך's need for someone to help him related here? It should suffice to just tell us that he was very old and אדוניהו tried to take advantage of the situation by declaring himself king? The Alshich Hakadosh explains that אדוניהו was really motivated by his desire to marry אבישג as we see later when he asked שלמה if he can have her. This explains why it says that they looked for a יפה נערה, but when describing her it says יפה עד מאד, which seems unnecessary for the story. אדוניהו understood that as a king he would not have a problem taking her for himself, but that otherwise he may never succeed in getting her. The fact that she was יפה עד מאד consumed him and drove him to rebel against דוד המלך.

## STORIES OFF THE DAF

### The Consequence of Ingratitude

על אשר לא קדמו אתכם בלחם ובמים דרכו של איש לקדם ולא דרכה של אשה לקדם

**T**he Cohen family of Yerushalayim have been standby hosts for guests from the Kotel for well over ten years. Living not far from the Old City and being more than happy to have an open home, they never know who might show up at their door on a Friday night. Usually, they would receive Jewish students or tourists from abroad, many of whom had never had a Shabbos meal. Occasionally, they might even receive a group of bochurim who want a change from their yeshiva's dining room. One Friday night, Parshas Ki Seitzei, a group of bochurim joined the Cohen family for the meal. During the seudah, out of habit, Rabbi Cohen asked if anyone had any questions, instead of asking if anyone had a vort to share. To his surprise, one of the yeshiva boys piped up. "In the parsha we find that Amonim and Moavim cannot marry into the Jewish people because they refused to supply us with bread and water when we left Egypt and were in need. Chazal explain that this is their just desserts for having failed to show gratitude to the descendants of Avraham Avinu, in whose merit their ancestor Lot survived the destruction of Sodom. Thanks to Megillas Rus, most people are familiar with the words of Chazal, that it is only the men of these two nations who are forbidden entry into the Jewish people, not the women. They said that since it is not the way for women to go out, the women are not held accountable for not offering bread and water." The boy continued, "My question is about the rest of the verse in Devarim 23:5. They didn't only fail to show gratitude, but they actually hired Bilaam to curse the Jewish people! Why, then, don't we find that the Moavite women are not held accountable for enticing the Jews to sin at the behest of Bilaam and Balak?" Rabbi Cohen explained, "Meshech Chochma cites the the words of the Zohar, which tells us that the Moavite women did not want to go and the men had to use brute force to mobilize them. Any woman who refused was actually killed! It is because of this initial unwillingness to participate in this tragedy that the women are permitted to marry into the Jewish people!"

## HALACHA HIGHLIGHT

Signs of פצוע דכא

פצוע דכא וכו' מותרין בגירות ומשוחררת ואינן אסורין אלא מלבא בקהל

A פצוע דכא is permitted to marry a convert or freed slave-woman and is only prohibited from marrying into the congregation

**R**av Yechezkel Landau<sup>1</sup>, the Noda B'Yehudah, was asked the following question. A young scholar related that as a child he was grabbed in the genital area and experienced excruciating pain but did not bother to have the damage examined. He married, and after two years without children, his wife passed away. Since he occasionally felt pain while urinating, he decided to examine his genitals for damage and discovered that there was permanent damage in the genital area. He inquired whether this damage renders him a פצוע דכא. The Rov of Brod<sup>2</sup> asserted that since the person in question had a beard and pubic hair he cannot be a פצוע דכא because Rambam<sup>3</sup> ruled that a person who became פצוע דכא sterile by the hands of man will not develop pubic hair. This ruling of Rambam is cited without mention of dissenting opinions by Shulchan Aruch<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, it is authoritative and one could declare that this person is not a פצוע דכא.

Noda B'Yehudah responded that he searched all the relevant sources (Bavli, Yerushalmi, Tosefta, etc.!!) and did not find the source for Rambam's ruling on this matter. Although our inability to pinpoint the source of this ruling would not prevent us from ruling in accordance with this explicit ruling of Rambam and Shulchan Aruch, nonetheless, there is another reason to be hesitant to rule leniently in this case. Who says that the pubic hair of this person is necessarily the pubic hair that indicates physical maturity? Perhaps the hair is from a mole. The reason under normal conditions we do not suspect that the hair comes from a mole is that we apply the "chazakah of Rava" that a male who reaches thirteen has already gone through physical maturation. In our case, however, the chazakah does not apply since this person was physically damaged in a way that should prevent him from physically maturing. Furthermore, the ruling of Rambam creates a chazakah that he did not undergo physical maturation. As a result, it could not be said definitively that this person is not a פצוע דכא simply by the appearance of pubic hair.

1. שו"ת נודע ביהודה מהד"ק אה"ע סי' ו'
2. מובא דבריו בשו"ת נוב"י הנ"ל
3. רמב"ם פ"ב מהל' אישות הי"ד
4. שו"ע אה"ע סי' קע"ב סי' ז'

## REVIEW AND REMEMBER

1. Whom is a פצוע דכא permitted to marry?
2. Did Shlomo HaMelech marry a non-Jewish woman?
3. Is it permitted to marry a female Mitzri convert?
4. What is the reason for the prohibition against marrying an Amoni or Moavi?

## MUSSAR FROM THE DAF

Just Some Bread and Water

עמוני ומואבי אסורים ואיסורן איסור עולם

**T**he Mishna tells us that descendants from the nations of Amon and Moav can never marry into the Jewish people. What did Amon and Moav do that is so horrific to be labeled as the only nations who can never marry into Klal Yisroel?

The Gemara explains that this is because they didn't greet Klal Yisroel with food and water. אשר לא קדמו אתכם בלחם ובמים

Why is that considered such a horrible sin? Rav Eliyahu Lopian Z"TL (Maareches Hateshuva) explains that the father of the nations of Amon and Moav was Lot. And since the father of our nation, Avraham saved Lot's life there should have been a recognition of the magnitude of what Avraham had done to Lot. This recognition should have created a basic level of gratitude toward Klal Yisroel which should have compelled them to greet Klal Yisroel with bread and water. If a nation lacks this basic trait of gratitude, they are not fit to enter into the nation of Klal Yisroel.

We see from here how important it is to work on the מדה of טוב הדרך. If Amon and Moav were punished for not showing gratitude for an incident that occurred some ten generations earlier, how much more so do we have to show appreciation to our spouses, parents and grandparents for things that they do for us personally.

## POINT TO PONDER

**The Gemara brings** a discussion regarding תוד המלך and whether he can marry a Jewish girl given his roots from מואב. מואב didn't greet us with bread and water which is a male's job and therefore the females are מותרת, גמרא asks why couldn't the women bring food to the women and the men to the men. Since תוד comes from רות המואביה and מואב is guilty of hiring בלעם to curse the Jews, maybe מואב is only אסור because of hiring בלעם which was done by men and would not include the women? (See על התורה רמב"ן על התורה who treats it as 2 separate reasons).

### Response to last week's Point to Ponder:

What would be the Halacha if someone became a פצוע דכא through sickness? Is Rashi's list the only cases where the exception of פצוע דכא בידי שמים applies, or are these simply examples?

Some ראשונים including the רא"ש, assume that רש"י meant to exclude cases which are caused by sickness. On the other hand the ים של שלמה suggests that we can understand רש"י as giving us examples but he doesn't mean to exclude sickness. (See in depth discussion in ים של שלמה יבמות)

ז"ל Shelly Mermelstien לע"נ Yevamos has been dedicated in ר' יוסף שמואל שמעלקא ב"ר יצחק מערמעלשטיין

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