



לעי"נ ברוך בענדיט ובזרה גרוס ע"ה
by Mr. & Mrs. Duvy Gross

The Hakuk Edition English Topics on the Daf

Dedicated l'refuah sheleima for Yaakov ben Victoria

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THE EIGHTH PEREK OF YEAMOS IS DEDICATED:

לזכר גשמת שלמה בן יהושע והחבר דוד בן החבר מרדכי

Yevamos Daf 76

Amoni and Moavi converts

A convert from Amon and Moav is forbidden to marry into Klal Yisroel, no matter how many generations have elapsed since his conversion. The women, however, are permitted right away. This contrasts with other groups, such as Mitzriim, who are permitted after three generations, whether male or female.

There's a parallel mitzvah from the Torah, to refrain from making overtures of peace with Amon and Moav: "Do not seek their peace or good, all your days, forever" (Devarim 23:7). The Sefer Hachinuch (562) explains that usually when the Jewish nation seeks to conquer other lands, it first offers to peacefully settle with the inhabitants. This possuk instructs us that Amon and Moav are excluded from this rule. The Chinuch writes that this prohibition applies only to Jewish males, since they are the ones who engage in warfare.

What about the women of Amon and Moav? Is this mitzvah the same as the issur to marry them, so they are excluded from the issur, and we may act peacefully toward them? The Minchas Chinuch is not sure. The possuk about making peace is

after those of issur kiddushin; maybe it has different rules. He stresses that we cannot jump to our own conclusions when it comes to mitzvos, since we cannot fathom the myriad intents and reasoning behind them. We would have to be machmir in this and extend the issur to females, as well.

On the other hand, he maintains that the lav does apply even after Amonim and Moavim convert. Just like the first lav – marrying them – is even after conversion, so too this mitzvah. Thus, he is stringent on both counts – even Amoni women are included, and even after conversion.

A later Gemara teaches that if a Mitzri man and Amonis woman – converts – bear a child together, he is considered a mitzri like his father. And he certainly would be considered a full Jew if his father is a Jew to begin with. What if the father is a non-Jew? On one hand, since we don't account for paternal lineage when it comes to non-Jews, the child would be an Amoni. On the other hand, his mother was not included in the prohibition of Amonim, being a female, so why should her offspring be more stringent than her? Rav Elchonon Wasserman (Kovetz Hearos 44:4) determines that indeed, her son

would be an Amoni, and forbidden, even though his mother is not!

However, Rav Dovid Povarsky has a different take on things. The Gemara says that a convert is “as if he is born anew,” and discards any previous conditions. Since an Amonis convert is permitted to marry a Jew, it means that she doesn’t have any connection to Amonim anymore! Only Amoni males retain their status even after conversion, as the Torah decrees. Therefore, a boy born to an Amonis convert and a goy would be kosher (Shiurei Rav Dovid notes 181-3).

According to the Minchas Chinuch, even Amoni and Moavi women are included in the lav of seeking their good, and even after they convert. This would seem to align with Rav Elchonon’s way of understanding their status – even after conversion they retain their former title of Amoni.

Concerning the Minchas Chinuch’s opinion, Rav Shach records a compelling question, from the story of Megillas Rus: Boaz went out of his way to help Rus, who was a Moavi convert! According to the Minchas Chinuch, this is forbidden? It must be, says Rav Shach, that either it does not apply to the women, or it does not apply after they convert – he inclines to the second option. He cannot resolve the Minchas Chinuch, though (Avi Ezri, Melachim 6:6).

The late Rav Elya Boruch Finkel zt”l undertook to solve this difficulty. He writes that he approached Rav Shach and quoted the Hagaos Maimonios on that Rambam. He qualifies the prohibition of seeking their peace as “drishas shalom,” taking the initiative to help them. But to return a favor to them is permitted! This casts new light on the subject – Boaz was returning to Rus the kindnesses that she

had done for her husband and mother-in-law, his relatives.

Maybe you’ll persist and argue that it’s allowed only someone benefitted personally from the Moavi? The source for this halacha is that Dovid Hamelech sent a convey bearing condolences to Chanun, king of Amon, upon his father’s passing. Why? Because his father had helped Dovid’s brother. Clearly, returning favors done to relatives is enough to permit it.

Indeed, continued R’ Elya Boruch, this may be the deeper intention of the conversation between Rus and Boaz, after he accorded her special privileges during the harvest. She asked him, “Why have I found favor in your eyes; I am a nachriya?” This term usually refers to a non-Jew. But, she had already converted by this point? Maybe she knew that the issur of helping Moavim extends even after conversion, like the Minchas Chinuch holds. So she was puzzled why Boaz would extend kindnesses to her. Boaz responded, “It was told to me, all that you did for your mother-in-law...” He replied with the very guideline of the Hagaos Maimonios – it is permitted to return favors to them!

He told over that Rav Shach was ecstatic over his explanation and fairly danced home with him (MiShulchan Rabbi Eliyahu Boruch, Rus).