

שבת קודש פרשת ויגש | מסכת נדרים דף י'

This week's newsletter has been sponsored לע"נ יהושע בן אהרן זצ"ל

INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS

כינויים The purpose of

וטעא מאי תקינו רבנן כינויין? דלא לימא קרבן

Shita Mikubetzes explains that the underlying reason given in our Gemara for כינויים follows only according to Reish Lakish, who holds that these alternative expressions are distorted forms of words which the sages authorized as being valid. Accordingly, the Gemara has reason to wonder why the rabbis decided to do such a thing. However, according to Rabbi Yochanan, these expressions are legitimate words from other languages. There is nothing unusual about their being valid terms of an oath.

The Gemara explains that כינויים were adopted in order to prevent people from saying the actual word קרבן, which the sages were afraid would ultimately lead to people's saying God's name in vain. Usage of these artificial words, however, helped to avoid this problem. ר"ן adds that in the district of Yehuda the expression חרם alone is inadequate, unless the person clarifies that the consecration is ל'ה/ for Hashem (see later, 18b). What, then, he asks, did the sages accomplish by establishing כינויים for חרמים where the person must say ל'ה in order for his statement to be valid? Ran answers that using the very expression used by the verse could lead a person to following it with the word ל'ה. This, in turn, might lead one to say the name of Hashem by itself, which would be in vain. However, when one expresses the concept using the כינוי he will not follow it by saying ל'ה, but rather by saying לבדק הבית, and he will not be led to say God's name as part of the phrase, and certainly not by itself.

This analysis of the ר"ן extends the discussion of the Gemara from נדר to חרם. This shows that he holds that although the Gemara only explained the basis for כינויים for נדר, the Gemara was also coming to explain the reason for כינויים for nazir, cherem and שבועה, as well. Tosafos ד"ה states this explicitly, and he adds that the focus of the discussion in our Gemara revolves around נדר not to the exclusion of these other themes, but simply because our Massechta deals primarily with נדרים.

Tosafos Ri"ד explains that in as much as the whole purpose of establishing כינויים was to avoid saying the name of Hashem in vain, we see that when pronouncing שבועה one need not say ל'ה. If one would have to say Hashem's name regardless, even when using a כינוי, the sages would not have accomplished anything with their rule in reference to שבועה. This statement of Tosafos Ri"ד indicates that he holds that whenever a כינוי is used, it results in not saying the name of God at all. This is similar to the words of the Ran, where the usage of a כינוי results in not saying Hashem's name at all as part of the formula, which guards against the name's being said in vain.

POINT TO PONDER

The Gemara says that חסידים הראשונים wanted to bring a קרבן חטאת and looked for a way to obligate themselves to bring a חטאת. Why didn't they have the same concern regarding bringing a אשם, which is also brought for a sin?

Response to last week's Point to Ponder:

The Gemara says that קרבן נזיר טמא never ate from a נזיר, except for one case when a נזיר came from the "דרום" and רבי שמעון asked him why he became a נזיר. Why is the גמרא mentioning that he came from the דרום? What difference does it make that he came from a specific area.

The מהרש"א explains that the reference הדרום is telling us that he was a חכם, like it says ידריש להחכים. Perhaps the message here is that his חכמה contributed to his decision to become a נזיר.

STORIES OF THE DAF

The vow

עומדים ומתנדבים נזירות

There was a certain man who was learning הלכות נדרים. In Shulchan Aruch he found that the law is that one should never make a neder. If one wishes to give charity, one should say bli neder (see Yorah De'ah, 257:4). It suddenly hit him that he had often been embroiled in a halachic problem without even realizing it. That very Shabbos, he had been called to the Torah and had made a pledge during the Torah and had made a pledge during the Torah as per the custom. Perhaps this constituted making a vow? When he asked a friend about this, the man suggested that he say bli neder immediately after the pledge. The man exclaimed, "But what will that help?"

Since the Shliach Tzibur says the נזיר without saying bli neder, right in front of me in public. I am surely bound by this vow whatever I mumble. So what should I do? I can't refuse an aliyah. Firstly, it is not permitted; secondly, I want to get an aliyah during Shabbos and Yom Tov. Besides, whoever else gets the aliyah will have the same problem! Furthermore, there are many halachic sources that say that it is proper that one vow to give charity on Yom Kippur in memory of one's departed parents since they also need atonement and the charity given in their name atones for them."

The man presented the question before the Ben Ish Chai, zt"l. The great Rav answered, "Since you haven't an option to pay the money on Shabbos or Yom Tov and this is a mitzvah, you may definitely make the vow and are not violating the injunction not to make a vow without saying bli neder. This is because you essentially have no other option to fulfill the mitzvah. The proof for this is in Nedarim 10a. There the Gemara recounts that the earlier Chasidim wished to bring a חטאת. Since they never sinned, they would accept a nedavah of nezirus so as to become obligated to bring a קרבן חטאת.

The Ben Ish Chai concluded, "We see since their intentions were pure and they had no other option this was permitted. So too, since your intention is for a mitzvah, it is permitted!"

HALACHA HIGHLIGHT

Beginning vidui on a day that it is not recited

לבטלה על אחת כמה וכמה

Reciting Hashem's name in vain all the more so [must one be careful.]

Poskim discuss what should be done if a person begins the paragraph "אלוקינו" recited before vidui (for those who recite vidui on a daily basis) on a day that vidui is not recited. The difficulty is that if one were to stop as soon as he realizes his error it will turn out that he said Hashem's name in vain, which makes him deserving of cherem. The Shevet HaLevi¹ writes that if it is a day that it is prohibited to recite vidui one should continue with the words, "תבא לפניך תפלתנו" — Our tefilos should come before You," so that it will constitute a full prayer. One should not continue with the words, "אבל" — But we and our ancestors sinned," since it is not a day to mention sin.

The Mishna Halachos² suggests that since the person began vidui thinking that it was mandated he is considered a שוגג or אונס regarding the prohibition of saying Hashem's name in vain and he could just stop as soon as he realizes his mistake. Proof to this could be found in the commentary of Ritva who discusses a case of one who washed and recited the beracha on washing with the intention to eat and something happened that prevented him from eating. Ritva rules that this is not considered a violation of the prohibition against saying Hashem's name in vain since when he originally made the beracha for washing his intention was to eat. Similarly, since this person began vidui thinking it was appropriate it is not a violation of the prohibition. Mishnah Halachos then notes that the two cases are not parallel because in Ritva's case he was interrupted between the washing and the eating, two separate activities but in our case he must stop in the middle of a single prayer and perhaps that constitutes a violation of the prohibition. He concludes that if one has recited the words "אלוקינו ואלוקי" he should finish the phrase with some kind of praise of Hashem, e.g. "זכרנו בזכרון טוב לפניך" and if he already recited the words "תבא לפניך תפלתנו" he should say "ותשלח לנו משיח צדקנו" or something similar. A person who begins tachanun and then realizes that it is not recited on that day should merely conclude the pasuk that he is reading and stop at that point.

1. שו"ת שבט הליי ח"ח סי' כ"ד.
2. שו"ת משנה הלכות ח"ג סי' י"ט.

MUSSAR FROM THE DAF

Elevating our desires

ורבי אלעזר הקפר ברבי, דתניא, רבי אלעזר הקפר ברבי אומר: "וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על הנפש". וכי באיזו נפש חטא זה? אלא: שציער עצמו מן היין. והלא דברים קל וחומר: ומה זה שלא ציער עצמו אלא מן היין נקרא חוטא, המצער עצמו מכל דבר על אחת כמה וכמה. מכאן כל היושב בתענית נקרא חוטא.

While making a nazir vow may seem like a noble pursuit, Rabbi Elazar Hakappar labels the Nazir as a חוטא—a sinner. Why would someone who seeks kedushah through self-denial be considered a sinner?

Rav Wolbe (Vaadim on תאווה, Chelek 2 Alei Shur) explains that generally, when a person struggles with a bad midah (character trait), that trait must be uprooted and destroyed. For example, the midah of anger or jealousy must be overcome and eradicated from one's character. However, the midah of תאווה or physical desire, is different. תאווה is not inherently evil—it is part of human nature, and its expression can be channeled in ways that support one's service of Hashem.

In fact, other religions often take a view that physical pleasures are inherently negative. They believe that spirituality involves negating these worldly pleasures entirely. In contrast, Yiddishkeit teaches that physicality and spirituality are not mutually exclusive. We are not called to reject physical pleasures, but to elevate them. The Torah perspective is that the gifts of this world, including food, drink, and pleasure, can all be used in ways that enhance our service to Hashem.

The Nazir, in his quest for kedusha, seeks to reject physical pleasure altogether. But in doing so, he misinterprets the true path to ruchnius. Instead of using his desires in a way that can serve Hashem, he separates himself from them completely. Thus, the Nazir is called a "choteh" because his vow reflects a mistaken approach to kedusha. Rather than rejecting physical pleasure, the goal should be to sanctify it, finding ways that our desires can be integrated into our avodah. The true challenge is not to deny our desires, but to elevate them and use them in moderation in a way that brings us closer to Hashem. Some examples may be through a Siyum, a shabbos or Yom Tov meal etc.

PARSHA CONNECTION

In this week's daf the Gemara discusses קרבנות and the fact that צדיקים desired to bring קרבנות. We find in פרשת ויגש that יעקב אבינו brought זבחים like it says (Bereishis 46:1) "ויסע ישראל וכל־אשר־לו ויבא בארה שבע ויזבח זבחים לאלקי אביו יצחק". Why does Yaakov mention his father יצחק but not mention his grandfather אברהם, similar to what we find in other instances. For example when Yaakov gives a brocha to Ephraim and Menashe he says: "ויקרא בהם שמי ושם אבותי אברהם ויצחק". Second, why doesn't it just say זבח לאלקים. Finally why did Yaakov bring two זבחים instead of one זבח. The אלשיך הקדוש explains that Yaakov had two concerns, 1) why he had to go into גלות in לארץ חוץ and 2) over his descendents. The פסוק where "ויאמר לאברהם ידע תדע כי־גר יהיה זרעך בארץ" says: גלות. The פסוק starts in the singular "זרעך" but continues with "וענו אותם" in plural. The אלשיך explains that there were two parts to the גלות, the first which started with יצחק and didn't involve leaving ישראל, was expressed in the singular because it was only directed at Yitzchak. The second part relates to the future generations that became enslaved in מצרים, and is expressed in the plural. Yaakov wanted to be like his father Yitzchak and fulfill the גזירה of "כי־גר יהיה זרעך" in "גר יהיה זרעך". Additionally he was concerned about the future of his family in מצרים. This is why he only mentioned Yitzchak because his concern was to be like Yitzchak. He brought זבחים instead of a single זבח one for each of these two concerns. This is also why the הקב"ה told him "I will go down with you" to help protect your children in מצרים.