

Bechoros – Simanim

פרק א – הלוקח עובר חמור

Daf 4 – דף ד

1. Kohanim and Leviim are exempt from פדיון חמור and פדיון הבן

The next Mishnah states that Kohanim and Leviim are exempt from the law of *bechor*, based on a *kal vachomer*: אם – it is logical they should exempt their own. Abaye explains that since Leviim's animals (i.e., sheep) removed the *kedushah* of Yisroelim's animals (i.e., firstborn donkeys) in the מדבר, their animals should certainly remove *kedushah* from their own firstborn animals. Rava explains that the Mishnah's *kal vachomer* refers to exempting a human *bechor* (from פדיון הבן): if the *kedushah* of Leviim removed the *kedushah* of firstborn Yisroelim in the מדבר, then it should certainly remove the *kedushah* of their own firstborns. According to Rava, the source exempting a Levi's firstborn donkey is a *hekesheh*, teaching: anyone subject to the *halachah* of a human *bechor* is subject to the *halachah* of a nonkosher animal's *bechor*, and anyone not subject to the *halachah* of a human *bechor* is not subject to the *halachah* of a nonkosher animal's *bechor*.

2. One Levi's פטרי חמורים שה

Rebbe Chanina said: פטרי חמורים מישראל – one belonging to a Levi exempted many firstborn donkeys of Yisroel, and was not limited to redeeming only a single פטרי חמור. Abaye supports this from the fact that the Torah calculated only the surplus human firstborns, but not their surplus animals. However, the Gemara objects that perhaps there simply was no surplus of Yisroel's firstborn donkeys over the Leviim's sheep. Instead, a proof is brought from the *passuk*: ואת בהמת הלויים תחת בהמתם – the "animal" of the Leviim in place of their "animals," implying one animal (i.e. sheep) in place of many animals (i.e. firstborn donkeys). Rava supports this statement from a Mishnah teaching that a Yisroel uses a single שה for redeeming repeatedly (provided the Kohen gives it back after each redemption). Accordingly, Rebbe Chanina was explaining that the reason for this Mishnah's ruling is that one שה of a Levi exempted many firstborn donkeys of Yisroel in the מדבר.

3. Were *bechoros* sanctified in the מדבר?

Rebbe Yochanan said: קדשו בכורות במדבר – *bechoros* were sanctified in the מדבר, but Reish Lakish says they were not. Rebbe Yochanan holds that since they were commanded in Mitzrayim, "קדש לי כל בכור" – Sanctify for Me every firstborn, we assume that this continued from then on. Reish Lakish holds that since the Torah says, after mentioning Klal Yisroel entering Eretz Yisroel, "והעברת" – and you shall set apart [every firstborn for Hashem], לא – it implies that prior to entering Eretz Yisroel, they were not sanctified. Reish Lakish agrees that the *bechoros* in מצרים were sanctified, and says it was they who performed the עבודה on עבודת before the משכן was built. Rebbe Yochanan argues that if new *bechoros* stopped becoming sanctified in the מדבר, then the *bechoros* of מצרים should have lost their *kedushah* as well. Reish Lakish disagrees and distinguishes between those who were already sanctified and those who had never been sanctified. Ultimately, however, Rav Pappa proves from a *passuk* that all new *bechoros* were counted (and sanctified) in the second year in the מדבר. Therefore, the *machlokes* is revised: Rebbe Yochanan holds קדשו ולא פסקו – they were sanctified and never ceased to be sanctified throughout the מדבר. Reish Lakish holds they were sanctified once in the second year and were no longer sanctified until they entered Eretz Yisroel.

Siman – Door

The Kohen and Levi who walked through the פדיון בכור Exemption Door came across a Levi using his one sheep to exempt many firstborn donkeys of Yisroel, while two men argued beside the קדושת בכורות Door whether it had remained open throughout the years in the מדבר, or had opened only during the second year and then remained closed until they entered Eretz Yisroel.

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Door



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3 things to remember

1. **Kohanim** and **Leviim** are exempt from פדיון הבן and פדיון פטר חמור
2. One Levi's **שה** exempted many פטרי חמורים
3. Were **bechoros** sanctified in the מדבר?

