Bechoros 38 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ How Large Must the Hole in the Ear Be?

We continue with the Mumim of the ear.

The Mishnah taught that a hole in the ear is a Mum when it reaches the size of a Karshinah – a type of vetch.

The Gemara asks:

👉 Does the hole need to be exactly the size of the Karshinah?

Or:

👉 Must it be slightly larger, so that a Karshinah can comfortably go in and out?

This leads the Gemara into a comparison with other Shiurim.

2️⃣ A Missing Piece of the Spine

A spine or skull from a dead person can create Tumas Ohel.

However, if enough of it is missing:

👉 It no longer has the necessary status to create Tumas Ohel.

Regarding the spine, the Tannaim discuss whether the loss of one or two vertebrae is sufficient.

Regarding the skull:

👉 Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel disagree over how large a piece must be missing.

3️⃣ The Skull – Drill Bit or Sela?

Beis Shammai gives the Shiur based on:

👉 A Magdeach – a drill or auger.

Beis Hillel describes the missing area as an amount that would cause a living person to die.

A Shiur of a Sela is also discussed.

This creates a problem:

👉 If the drill-bit measurement and the Sela are identical, where exactly is the Machlokes between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel?

4️⃣ The Hole Is Slightly Larger Than the Drill Bit

One answer is that the measurement is not merely the exact width of the drill bit.

Rather:

👉 It is the hole produced by the drilling.

When drilling, the hole can be slightly wider than the actual bit, allowing the bit to move in and out.

This helps answer our original question regarding the Karshinah.

👉 The Shiur can mean a hole large enough for the object to enter and leave, rather than the exact dimensions of the object itself.

5️⃣ Making Sense of a Difficult Teaching

The Daf develops an important approach to learning Torah.

When a reliable teaching has been received from a Rebbe but appears difficult:

👉 We do not simply dismiss it.

Instead, we try to understand the circumstances in which the statement makes sense.

This leads into a lengthy discussion of Tumah involving the inside and outside of Keilim.

Inside and Outside of a Kli

6️⃣ Kli Cheres Is Different

A Kli Cheres – earthenware vessel – has a special Din of Tumah.

Its primary Tumah comes through:

👉 Its inside.

If Tumah enters the inside of the vessel:

👉 The Kli becomes Tamei.

But touching its outside does not operate in the same way.

This is a special Halachah of Kli Cheres.

7️⃣ What About a Wooden Kli?

The Gemara initially discusses language that sounds like it refers to Kli Cheres.

But that cannot work in the straightforward way suggested.

The Gemara therefore explains that the teaching is actually discussing:

👉 A wooden Kli.

The comparison to Kli Cheres is necessary to explain a particular Rabbinic Din involving liquids.

8️⃣ Tumah of Liquids

Liquids can become Tamei Min HaTorah.

However, ordinary Tamei liquids do not have the same Torah-level ability to make a Kli Tamei.

Chazal nevertheless decreed:

👉 Tamei liquids can make Keilim Tamei.

This is therefore a Tumah MiDerabbanan.

9️⃣ Liquid Touches the Outside

If Tamei liquid touches the outside of the relevant Kli:

👉 Only the outside becomes Tamei.

The other parts remain Tahor.

These include:

- The inside.
- The rim.
- The handle.

But if the Tamei liquid reaches the inside:

👉 The entire Kli becomes Tamei.

🔟 Why Did Chazal Make This Distinction?

Why not simply say that Rabbinic Tumah works exactly like ordinary Torah Tumah?

Because Chazal wanted people to recognise:

👉 This is only Tumah MiDerabbanan.

That distinction can have major consequences.

For example:

👉 Terumah that is definitely Tamei Min HaTorah may have to be burned.

But one may not automatically burn Terumah merely because it became Tamei through this Rabbinic Tumah.

Therefore, Chazal deliberately created a recognisable difference.

1️⃣1️⃣ A Flat Wooden Kli

The Gemara then asks about a flat wooden object.

Ordinarily, a wooden Kli must resemble a sack:

👉 It must be capable of holding something in order to receive regular Tumah.

So how can a completely flat wooden object become Tamei?

The answer:

👉 We are discussing something such as a chair or bench.

It can receive Tumah through Midras because it is made for sitting.

1️⃣2️⃣ Why Not Earthenware Furniture?

Could a Kli Cheres also become Tamei through Midras if someone sits on it?

No.

אין מדרס בכלי חרס

👉 There is no Tum'as Midras for Kli Cheres.

The nature of earthenware means it does not receive this form of Tumah.

Back to the Skull

1️⃣3️⃣ Different-Sized Drill Bits

Rav Papa resolves the earlier difficulty more simply:

👉 There are different sizes of Magdeach.

Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel therefore do not necessarily mean the same Shiur.

One can be referring to a smaller drill and the other to a larger measurement.

1️⃣4️⃣ A Doctor's Drill vs. a Large Drill

The Gemara discusses different types of drills:

👉 A smaller instrument used medically on the skull.

👉 A larger drill associated with construction work in the Lishkah.

This allows the measurements of the different Tannaim to remain distinct.

The Gemara also deals with the concern that Beis Shammai should not unexpectedly emerge more lenient than Beis Hillel by explaining the different sizes involved.

Mumim of the Eye

1️⃣5️⃣ Defects of the Eyelid

The Mishnah now turns to the eye.

A Mum can occur when the eyelid is:

👉 Punctured.

👉 Notched.

👉 Split.

These defects can qualify as Mumim of the Bechor.

1️⃣6️⃣ Dak – A Film Over the Eye

Another Mum is called Dak.

This is:

👉 A film or membrane affecting the eye, similar in appearance to a cataract.

The Gemara distinguishes between:

- A white film.
- A dark film.
- One that appears embedded.
- One that appears to float on the eye.

Whether it qualifies as a Mum depends upon these details.

1️⃣7️⃣ White and Black Films

The Gemara explains the combinations.

A dark film that appears embedded:

👉 Is a Mum.

A white film that appears embedded:

👉 Is not necessarily a Mum.

When the film appears to float, the result can be reversed:

👉 A floating white film can be a Mum, while a floating dark film is not.

These distinctions relate to how the defect affects the functioning of the eye.

White Entering the Black of the Eye

1️⃣8️⃣ Which Part of the Eye Matters?

The Mishnah discusses the white and black portions of the eye extending into one another.

The basic principle is:

👉 The black part of the eye is essential for vision.

Therefore, when the white intrudes into the black:

👉 It can be a Mum.

But when the black extends into the white:

👉 It is not necessarily a Mum.

1️⃣9️⃣ Why Is the White Less Significant?

The Gemara explains that the white part is described as:

👉 The “fat” of the eye.

It is not regarded as the primary visual part of the eye.

Therefore:

👉 A defect in the white does not automatically have the same status as a defect affecting the black portion used for vision.

Chilazon and Nachash

2️⃣0️⃣ One Mum or Two?

The Mishnah mentions:

👉 Chilazon and Nachash.

The Gemara asks:

Are these:

👉 Two separate Mumim?

Or:

👉 Two descriptions of the same Mum?

A story is brought to clarify the issue.

2️⃣1️⃣ The Elderly Talmid Chacham

A Talmid Chacham had tremendous respect for an elderly Gadol and would not walk in front of him.

One day he accidentally did so.

The elder told him:

👉 “Now that you have passed in front of me, sit down and I will teach you a Halachah.”

He explained:

👉 Chilazon is a permanent Mum.

The discussion indicates that Chilazon and Nachash are connected rather than necessarily being two completely separate defects.

2️⃣2️⃣ A Chacham Ruling for His Own Case

There was a potential difficulty.

The Chacham who taught the Halachah himself had an animal with this very condition.

Can a Talmid Chacham announce a ruling and immediately use his own ruling for his personal benefit?

Normally:

👉 That would create a concern.

But here the Halachah was not something he invented on the spot.

👉 He had taught this ruling previously.

Therefore, his teaching could be relied upon.

Rebbi Meir and Rebbi Yosi

2️⃣3️⃣ Black Entering White

The Tannaim disagree regarding the black of the eye extending into the white.

Rebbi Meir is stricter:

👉 He can regard this as a Mum.

Rebbi Yosi distinguishes:

👉 White entering the black is a Mum.

👉 Black entering the white is not a Mum.

The Mishnah follows the view that the white portion itself is not considered critical to vision.

2️⃣4️⃣ Anything That Damages the Eye

Rebbi Meir's reasoning is broader:

👉 Anything that creates a significant abnormality in the eye can potentially be considered a Mum.

Rebbi Yosi focuses more specifically on:

👉 Whether the essential visual portion of the eye has been damaged.

Constant Watering of the Eye

2️⃣5️⃣ Chavarvar and Mayim Kevuim

The Mishnah lists further Mumim:

👉 Chavarvar – white spots in the eye.

👉 Mayim Kevuim – persistent watering or fluid in the eye.

Persistent watering can interfere with the animal's sight.

But before deciding that it is a permanent Mum:

👉 We must determine whether the condition can be cured.

2️⃣6️⃣ The 80-Day Test

The animal is treated and observed for:

👉 80 days.

The Daf describes checking the condition at intervals during this period.

The idea is to establish whether:

👉 The condition is temporary and treatable,

or:

👉 It is genuinely permanent.

Only the permanent condition qualifies as a Mum.

2️⃣7️⃣ The Treatment Must Be Done Correctly

The Mishnah describes a particular dietary treatment:

👉 Moist feed followed by dry feed.

If the treatment is performed correctly and the condition remains:

👉 This demonstrates that the eye problem is permanent.

But if the owner mixes the foods together or gives them in the wrong order:

👉 The failed treatment proves nothing.

You cannot declare a permanent Mum based on a treatment that was never properly administered.

📌 **Key Chazarah**

- A hole in the Bechor's ear requires the Shiur of a Karshinah.
- The Gemara discusses whether this means the exact size or slightly larger so the Karshinah can enter and leave.
- The comparison to a drilled hole supports understanding the Shiur as slightly larger than the object itself.
- A skull or spine missing a sufficient amount no longer gives the same Tumas Ohel.
- Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel discuss different Shiurim involving a Magdeach and Sela.
- Different sizes of drill bits help explain their Machlokes.
- When a reliable teaching appears difficult, we work to establish the circumstances in which it makes sense.
- A Kli Cheres has a special Din of receiving Tumah through its inside.
- Chazal decreed that Tamei liquids can make a Kli Tamei.
- If Rabbinically Tamei liquid touches the outside, the inside, rim and handle can remain Tahor.
- If it touches the inside, the entire Kli becomes Tamei.
- Chazal preserved a distinction so people would recognise that this Tumah is MiDerabbanan.
- A flat wooden object normally does not receive regular Tumah, but a chair or bench can receive Tum'as Midras.
- There is no Tum'as Midras for Kli Cheres.
- Mumim of the eyelid include a puncture, notch or split.

- Dak is a film or membrane affecting the eye, with different Halachos depending on its colour and appearance.
- White entering the black portion of the eye can be a Mum because it interferes with the important visual area.
- Black entering the white is not considered a Mum according to the view followed by the Mishnah.
- Chilazon and Nachash are discussed as potentially referring to the same permanent eye condition.
- A Talmid Chacham should not create a new ruling on the spot for his own benefit, but an established ruling he taught previously is different.
- Chavarvar and Mayim Kevuim are eye conditions that can qualify as Mumim.
- Persistent watering must be tested to establish that it is permanent.
- The test lasts 80 days and requires the prescribed feeding treatment to be followed correctly.
- If the treatment is done incorrectly, its failure cannot prove that the condition is a permanent Mum.

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