Bechoros 44 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ Giben – Too Many or Too Few Eyebrows

The Daf continues the Mumim that can disqualify a Kohen from performing the Avodah.

The Mishnah mentioned:

👉 No eyebrows.

👉 Only one eyebrow.

But the Gemara explains that the word Giben itself can mean the opposite:

👉 Someone who has excessive eyebrow growth.

This can include eyebrows growing together unusually.

The word "Oy" expands the Pasuk to include the other abnormal eyebrow formations as well.

2️⃣ Two Backs and Two Spines

The previous Mishnah mentioned someone who appears to have:

👉 Two backs or two spinal columns.

The Gemara challenges this because elsewhere we find that a creature actually born with two backs or two spines cannot survive normally.

Therefore, the Mishnah cannot literally mean a healthy adult with two complete spinal columns.

👉 It refers to an abnormal body formation that gives the appearance of this condition, such as a significant deformity of the back.

Mumim of the Face and Eyes

3️⃣ Charum – An Abnormal Nose

The Mishnah discusses a Charum.

This includes abnormalities in the structure of the nose, such as:

👉 A sunken or flattened bridge.

👉 An unusually small or contracted nose.

👉 Closed or sealed nostrils.

👉 A nose that droops abnormally.

The Torah's expression "Oy Charum" includes these different abnormal formations.

4️⃣ Eyes Positioned Too High or Too Low

The Mishnah lists:

👉 Both eyes positioned unusually high.

👉 Both eyes positioned unusually low.

👉 One eye higher and the other lower.

These are physical abnormalities in the actual position of the eyes.

They can disqualify the Kohen because his appearance is not the normal form of Zera Aharon.

5️⃣ Eyes Looking in Different Directions

There is another case where the eyes themselves may be positioned normally, but:

👉 One eye looks upward while the other looks downward.

The person is effectively looking in two different directions.

This too is included among the abnormalities of the eyes.

6️⃣ "B'Einav" – Anything Abnormal in the Eyes

The Gemara derives these cases from the Torah's wording regarding the eyes.

A Beraisa discusses different levels:

👉 Completely missing an eye.

👉 Blindness in both eyes.

👉 Blindness in one eye.

👉 Partial loss of vision.

👉 Abnormal colouring or markings in the eye.

👉 An abnormal mixture between areas of the eye.

👉 Eyes positioned or focused abnormally.

Different words in the Pasuk teach the different categories.

7️⃣ Four Categories of Eye Mumim

Rava summarizes the Derashos.

There can be a problem when:

👉 The eye itself is missing.

👉 The eye exists but vision is lost or significantly impaired.

👉 Only part of the field of vision is functioning.

👉 The eye looks abnormal even where vision may remain.

There are therefore Mumim involving both:

👉 Function.

and:

👉 Physical appearance.

8️⃣ Different Eye or Eyebrow Appearance

The Daf discusses a person whose paired features are noticeably different from one another.

One example is:

👉 One side black and the other white.

The Gemara develops a broader idea:

👉 Features that naturally come as a pair should normally correspond to one another.

If one is significantly different in size or appearance from its partner, that itself can constitute an abnormality.

This can apply to paired features such as the eyes or eyebrows.

9️⃣ Watery Eyes and Eyelashes

The Gemara discusses several further eye conditions.

These include:

👉 Different degrees of constant tearing.

👉 Unusually long eyelashes.

👉 Missing eyelashes.

The Daf distinguishes between a genuine Mum and a lesser issue of Maris Ayin.

If the eyelashes themselves are completely uprooted:

👉 The problem can be more serious.

If some roots remain:

👉 It may only be a Rabbinic Maris Ayin concern.

Disproportionate Features

🔟 Eyes Like a Calf or Goose

The next Mishnah discusses body parts that are abnormally proportioned.

A Kohen can be disqualified if his eyes are:

👉 Exceptionally large, compared to those of a calf.

or:

👉 Exceptionally small, compared to those of a goose.

The issue is not simply whether a feature is large or small.

👉 It is whether it is abnormally disproportionate.

1️⃣ 1️⃣ Body and Limbs Out of Proportion

The same principle applies to the body.

The Mishnah discusses:

👉 A very large body with unusually small limbs.

👉 A small body with disproportionately large limbs.

The common denominator is:

👉 The physical proportions are significantly outside the normal human form.

1️⃣2️⃣ Abnormal Ears and Lips

The Daf adds several further examples.

These include:

👉 Very small ears.

👉 Ears with an unusual sponge-like appearance.

👉 One lip significantly larger than the other.

Again, these are human Mumim because of the requirement that a Kohen have the normal physical form of Zera Aharon.

1️⃣3️⃣ Missing Teeth

The Mishnah discusses a Kohen whose teeth have fallen out.

This can disqualify him because of:

👉 Maris Ayin.

This is important because it again demonstrates the different levels of disqualification:

👉 A genuine Torah Mum.

👉 Not being Shaveh B'Zaro Shel Aharon.

👉 Maris Ayin, which is a Rabbinic concern.

Measuring Abnormal Proportions

1️⃣4️⃣ Arms That Are Too Long or Too Short

The Gemara discusses a person whose arms are significantly disproportionate to his body.

The normal measurement is considered according to the person's own proportions.

This leads into a discussion involving:

👉 Moshe Rabbeinu's height.

👉 The measurement of an Amah.

👉 The height of the Mishkan.

The Gemara distinguishes between an ordinary standardized Amah and the personal arm measurement of an unusually tall person.

1️⃣5️⃣ An Abnormally Large Nose

The Gemara also gives a way of judging whether a nose is exceptionally large.

👉 The comparison is made against another person of similar size.

If the nose projects beyond the normal proportion by the measure described by the Gemara:

👉 It is considered an abnormality.

The principle is again proportion rather than simply absolute size.

Mumim Unique to Kohanim

1️⃣6️⃣ Tzime'ach – Unusually Long Ears

The Gemara explains the meaning of Tzime'ach from the way the word was used to describe:

👉 An animal with unusually long ears.

But an important distinction follows.

Certain features can disqualify a Kohen because he is not Shaveh B'Zaro Shel Aharon:

👉 Yet the same feature is not necessarily considered a Mum in an animal.

Human and animal Mumim therefore overlap, but are not identical.

Horns and Hooves

1️⃣7️⃣ Damage to a Horn or Hoof

The Gemara discusses abnormalities involving:

👉 A horn.

👉 A hoof.

A horn contains a bony core.

If only the outer horn is removed:

👉 The animal may be unfit to bring as a Korban, yet the defect may not be sufficient to permit redemption.

But if the horn is removed deeply enough to affect the root and leave a significant opening:

👉 That can become a full Mum.

A damaged hoof involving the underlying bone can likewise have a more serious status.

1️⃣8️⃣ The Black Horn of the Parah Adumah

The Daf discusses a Parah Adumah with black colouring on its horn.

The Gemara says:

👉 The problematic part can be cut away.

But care must be taken not to cut so deeply that a Mum is created.

Therefore:

👉 Only the portion above the bony core should be removed.

This allows the unwanted portion to be removed without creating a disqualifying physical defect.

Further Mumim of a Kohen

1️⃣9️⃣ Chest, Stomach and Other Physical Conditions

The Mishnah continues with additional abnormalities, including:

👉 A man whose chest has an unusual feminine appearance.

👉 An abnormal protrusion of the stomach.

👉 A protruding navel.

👉 Epileptic-type episodes, even if they occur only periodically.

The Mishnah then continues into abnormalities involving the reproductive organs.

These can also constitute Mumim affecting a Kohen's eligibility for the Avodah.

Health and Human Dignity

2️⃣0️⃣ Do Not Endanger Yourself by Holding Back

The Daf concludes with an important discussion about bodily needs.

The Gemara warns against excessively holding oneself back when needing to urinate.

👉 Doing so can cause serious physical damage and may affect fertility.

Even a refined person who would normally avoid relieving himself publicly must not endanger his health.

The Gemara tells stories illustrating how seriously this was taken.

The lesson is:

👉 Personal embarrassment or dignity does not justify causing physical harm to oneself.

The Gemara describes the internal passageways involved and the danger caused by excessive restraint.

It then connects this with a broader lesson:

👉 When a person humbles himself rather than being overly concerned with appearances, his Tefillah should not be wasted.

The Daf concludes with the special quality of someone who is insulted and does not respond.

📌 Key Chazarah

- Giben can describe excessive eyebrow growth, while the Pasuk includes missing or deficient eyebrows as well.
- The case of “two backs and two spines” refers to an abnormal formation, not literally two functioning spinal columns.
- Charum includes several abnormal formations of the nose.
- Eyes can be Mumim because of their position, direction, appearance or function.
- Blindness, partial loss of vision and abnormal eye appearance are separately derived.
- Paired body features that are significantly different from one another can constitute an abnormality.

- Watery eyes and abnormalities of the eyelashes are discussed.
- Completely uprooted eyelashes can be more serious than a case where roots remain.
- Exceptionally large or small eyes and disproportionate limbs can disqualify a Kohen.
- Abnormal ears, lips and missing teeth are also discussed.
- Some conditions are genuine Mumim, some are because the Kohen is not Shaveh B'Zaro Shel Aharon, and others are only Maris Ayin.
- The Daf discusses how abnormal body proportions are measured.
- Certain abnormalities can be a problem specifically for a Kohen even though they are not considered Mumim in animals.
- Removing a horn only superficially differs from removing it together with its root.
- The black portion of a Parah Adumah's horn can be cut without cutting into the bony core and creating a Mum.
- The Mishnah lists further abnormalities involving the chest, stomach, navel and other parts of the body.
- The Daf warns strongly against holding back bodily needs to the point of causing physical damage.
- A person should not risk his health merely because of embarrassment or appearances.
- The Daf concludes with the value of humility and remaining silent when insulted.

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