Bechoros 45 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ Holding Back Bodily Needs

The Daf continues the discussion about a person who needs to relieve himself.

The Gemara warns:

👉 Holding back Gedolim can lead to physical illness.

👉 Holding back Ketanim can also cause serious harm.

The Gemara lists several conditions that can result when the body retains too much blood, waste or urine.

The lesson is that a person should not damage his health through unnecessary restraint.

2️⃣ Further Mumim of a Kohen

The Gemara returns to the physical Mumim that can disqualify a Kohen from performing the Avodah.

It discusses abnormalities involving the reproductive organs, including excessive size.

Rebbi Eliezer ben Yaakov gives a measurement:

👉 Up to the knee can still be Kosher.

👉 Extending beyond the knee is Pasul.

Meruach Ashech

3️⃣ What Is “Meruach Ashech”?

The Mishnah discusses a Kohen who:

👉 Has no Beitzim.

or:

👉 Has only one.

The Torah uses the expression:

Meruach Ashech.

The Tannaim disagree about its meaning.

One explanation understands it as:

👉 Something missing or crushed.

Another understands it as:

👉 Swollen or filled with air.

There is also an interpretation relating the words to an abnormal skin colour.

4️⃣ Gore'in U'Mosifin V'Dorshin

One interpretation requires rearranging letters between the words.

This introduces the method:

👉 Gore'in U'Mosifin V'Dorshin.

Letters can be taken from one word and attached to another in order to derive the Torah's meaning.

The Gemara then notes that a later Mishnah separately discusses unusually dark skin, according to the opinion that includes this interpretation.

Mumim of the Legs and Feet

5️⃣ Knees and Ankles

The next Mishnah lists unusual formations of the legs.

These include:

👉 Ankles that knock against each other.

👉 Knees that knock against each other.

👉 Bow-leggedness.

👉 Abnormal formations of the ankles.

The common denominator is that the legs are formed significantly differently from the normal human structure.

6️⃣ Ikkel – Feet Together, Knees Apart

The Gemara defines an Ikkel:

👉 When the feet are together, the knees remain far apart.

This is another abnormal leg formation that can disqualify a Kohen.

7️⃣ Abnormal Heels and Flat Feet

The Mishnah and Gemara continue with several unusual foot structures.

These include:

👉 A heel positioned abnormally.

👉 A foot where the heel appears to extend unusually far behind.

👉 Very broad or flat feet.

The Gemara explains that even if the toes are separate rather than webbed, an abnormally flat foot can still be considered a Mum.

Fingers and Toes

8️⃣ Overlapping or Fused Digits

The Daf discusses:

👉 Fingers or toes lying on top of one another.

👉 Fingers or toes fused together.

The exact location of the fusion matters.

The Gemara discusses whether the abnormality is:

👉 Above the joint.

or:

👉 Below the joint.

It also considers whether cutting apart the fused digits removes the Mum.

9️⃣ An Extra Finger

If a person has an extra finger and it is removed, the Halachah depends on its structure.

👉 If the extra finger contains a bone, its removal can itself leave a disqualifying Mum.

👉 If it does not contain a bone, the Din can be different.

The Torah's expression regarding a broken hand is expanded to include other significant abnormalities of the hand.

Six Fingers

🔟 Twenty-Four Fingers and Toes

The Mishnah discusses an extraordinary case:

👉 Six fingers on each hand.

👉 Six toes on each foot.

For a total of twenty-four digits.

Rebbi Yehudah says:

👉 Such a person can be Kosher.

The question is whether an extra digit is necessarily a deficiency.

Perhaps:

👉 An extra functional finger could actually be an advantage rather than a Mum.

1️⃣ 1️⃣ Symmetry Matters

The Gemara discusses a person in Tanach who had twenty-four digits.

The Pasuk emphasizes the total to teach that they were arranged:

👉 Six on each hand.

👉 Six on each foot.

The person was therefore symmetrical.

The discussion becomes whether these extra digits represent:

👉 An abnormality.

or:

👉 Additional physical strength and ability.

An Extra Finger and Tumah

1️⃣2️⃣ Is an Extra Finger an Eiver?

The Daf moves from Mumim to Hilchos Tumah.

Suppose an extra finger becomes detached.

If it has the status of an Eiver:

👉 Touching it can create Tumah.

👉 Carrying it can create Tumah.

👉 It may also create Tumah through Ohel.

But this depends on whether it is considered a genuine limb of the body.

1️⃣3️⃣ Bone and Fingernail

The Gemara examines the structure of the extra finger.

Important factors include:

👉 Does it contain a bone?

👉 Does it have a fingernail?

👉 Is it positioned in the normal row together with the other fingers?

A finger that has the normal features of a limb has a stronger status as an Eiver.

1️⃣4️⃣ In the Normal Row

If the extra finger is:

👉 In line with the other fingers,

it can be treated as part of the person's normal count of limbs.

But if it grows separately in an abnormal location:

👉 It may not count as one of the regular limbs.

This distinction becomes important for Tumah.

1️⃣5️⃣ Tumah Through Maga, Masa and Ohel

The Gemara distinguishes three forms of Tumah:

👉 Maga – touching.

👉 Masa – carrying.

👉 Ohel – being under the same covering.

An extra digit can sometimes create Tumah through Maga and Masa without having the full status necessary to create Tumah through Ohel.

The Gemara seeks a logical source for such an intermediate status rather than accepting an unexplained Halachah.

1️⃣6️⃣ Etzem K'Se'orah

The explanation is based on the Din of:

👉 Etzem K'Se'orah – a bone the size of a barley grain.

Such a bone can transmit Tumah through:

👉 Maga.

👉 Masa.

But not through:

👉 Ohel.

This provides a model for understanding how an extra digit can transmit some forms of Tumah without transmitting Tumas Ohel.

The Bones of the Human Body

1️⃣7️⃣ 248 Limbs

The Gemara discusses the traditional count of:

👉 248 limbs/bones in the human body.

This becomes relevant to Tumah when dealing with:

👉 Rov Minyan – the majority by number.

and:

👉 Rov Binyan – the majority of the body's skeletal structure.

1️⃣8️⃣ Rov Minyan – 125

The majority of 248 is:

👉 125.

Therefore, 125 qualifying bones constitute Rov Minyan.

But the Gemara makes an important point:

👉 We follow the normal human count of 248 even if a particular individual happens to have more or fewer bones.

The standard is based on the majority of people.

1️⃣9️⃣ Rov Binyan – Majority of the Body's Structure

Rov Binyan is different from Rov Minyan.

It does not depend on having the greatest number of bones.

Rather:

👉 It means having the major bones that form most of the body's height and structure.

The Gemara identifies the major leg bones involved in this calculation.

A small number of very large bones can therefore constitute Rov Binyan.

How Many Bones Does a Woman Have?

2️⃣0️⃣ The Students of Rebbi Yishmael

The Gemara relates a remarkable incident.

The students of Rebbi Yishmael examined the remains of a woman in order to determine the number of bones in the human body.

They found:

👉 252.

But the standard count is 248.

Where did the extra four come from?

2️⃣ 1️⃣ Four Additional Bones

The Gemara explains that a woman has additional structures associated with childbirth.

These are described as:

👉 Two hinges.

👉 Two doors.

The Gemara associates these with the female reproductive structure.

This accounts for the additional four found by Rebbi Yishmael's students.

2️⃣ 2️⃣ The "Key"

The Gemara also refers to another structure described as a:

👉 Mafteach – a key.

The discussion explains why this was not included among the bones found in the examination.

The Daf nevertheless maintains the standard Halachic count of 248 for determining Rov Minyan.

Is an Extra Finger an Advantage?

2️⃣ 3️⃣ Twenty-Four Digits in Tanach

The Gemara returns to the dispute about someone with six digits on each limb.

A Pasuk describes a person with:

👉 Six fingers on each hand.

👉 Six toes on each foot.

👉 Twenty-four in total.

Why does the Pasuk need to spell out the total?

To teach:

👉 They were distributed evenly and symmetrically – six on every hand and foot.

2️⃣ 4️⃣ Mum or Advantage?

This brings us back to the central Machlokes.

Does an extra finger make someone physically deficient because he differs from the normal human form?

Or perhaps:

👉 An additional functioning finger is actually a physical advantage.

The Pasuk's description of the man with twenty-four digits becomes part of the discussion.

The Daf therefore ends with a fascinating question:

👉 Is being different from the normal human structure automatically a Mum, or can an unusual physical feature sometimes be considered a Maalah?

📌 **Key Chazarah**

- The Daf warns against holding back bodily needs in a way that can damage the body.
- Meruach Ashech is interpreted in several ways regarding abnormalities of a Kohen.
- Gore'in U'Mosifin V'Dorshin allows letters to be rearranged for a Derashah.
- The Mishnah lists abnormal formations of the knees, ankles, heels and feet.
- Ikkel describes a condition where the feet can meet but the knees remain apart.
- Flat or abnormally formed feet can constitute a Mum.
- Overlapping and fused fingers or toes are discussed.
- An extra finger containing a bone can have significant Halachic consequences.
- A person with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot has twenty-four digits.
- Rebbi Yehudah holds that such a person may nevertheless be Kosher.
- An extra digit may potentially be viewed as an advantage rather than a deficiency.
- Whether an extra finger counts as an Eiver depends on its structure and position.
- An extra finger in line with the normal fingers has a stronger status as part of the body.

- Maga means Tumah through touching; Masa through carrying; Ohel through sharing a covering.
- Etzem K'Se'orah transmits Tumah through Maga and Masa but not Ohel.
- The standard human count is 248 limbs/bones.
- Rov Minyan is 125.
- Rov Binyan refers to the major bones comprising most of the body's structure.
- We follow the normal human count even when a particular person has additional bones.
- Rebbi Yishmael's students found 252 bones when examining a woman.
- The Gemara attributes four additional structures to the female reproductive system.
- The Daf returns to the person in Tanach who had twenty-four symmetrical digits and discusses whether this was a Mum or a physical advantage.

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