Bechoros 46 – Good Morning Raboisai

1️⃣ Left-Handed and Ambidextrous Kohanim

The Daf continues the Mumim of a Kohen.

A left-handed Kohen is Pasul for the Avodah.

What about someone who is ambidextrous and can use both hands equally well?

👉 Rebbi says he is Pasul.

👉 The Chachamim say he is Kosher.

According to Rebbi, being equally strong with the left hand indicates a deficiency in the normal dominance of the right hand.

2️⃣ Unusual Skin Colour and Physical Appearance

The Mishnah lists further conditions that disqualify a Kohen but are not necessarily Mumim in an animal.

These include:

👉 Kushi – exceptionally dark complexion.

👉 Gichor – exceptionally red.

👉 Lavkan – exceptionally pale or white.

👉 Nanas – an unusually short person.

👉 Kipe'ach – an unusually tall person.

The Gemara clarifies the meanings of these different descriptions.

3️⃣ Kipe'ach – Extremely Tall

The Gemara initially explains Kipe'ach as someone exceptionally tall.

But being tall itself cannot be a Mum – we find great people described as exceptionally tall.

Rather:

👉 The problem is when the person is so unusually tall that his body is bent over and his physical structure becomes abnormal.

Once again, the issue is not merely being different, but being physically outside the normal form expected of Zera Aharon.

4️⃣ Too Much of the Same

Reish Lakish gives practical advice regarding marriage:

👉 An exceptionally tall person should not marry another exceptionally tall person.

👉 An exceptionally short person should not marry another exceptionally short person.

👉 Someone exceptionally pale should not marry someone similarly pale.

👉 Someone exceptionally dark should not marry someone similarly dark.

The concern is that combining the same extreme characteristics could produce an even more extreme result in the children.

5️⃣ Cheresh, Shoteh and Shikor

The Mishnah also lists:

👉 A Cheresh.

👉 A Shoteh.

👉 A Shikor – someone intoxicated.

The Gemara asks why a Shikor is being listed among these Mumim.

After all, the Torah explicitly prohibits a Kohen who drank wine from performing the Avodah.

👉 That prohibition is much more severe and can invalidate the Avodah itself.

6️⃣ Intoxication From Something Other Than Wine

The Gemara explains that the Mishnah can be referring to someone intoxicated from something other than wine.

This leads to a Machlokes concerning intoxicating substances such as fermented foods or drinks.

According to Rebbi Yehudah:

👉 Other intoxicating substances can also fall within the Torah prohibition.

According to the other opinion:

👉 They do not have the same status as wine for invalidating the Avodah.

What Is Different Between a Kohen and an Animal?

7️⃣ Kosher in a Kohen, Pasul in an Animal

The next Mishnah teaches that certain conditions are acceptable in a Kohen but disqualify an animal from being offered as a Korban.

Examples include:

👉 A Treifah.

👉 Being born through a Caesarean section.

These conditions can invalidate an animal as a Korban even though they do not necessarily prevent a Kohen from performing the Avodah.

8️⃣ Father and Son

The Mishnah also discusses a father and son.

Two related Kohanim can perform Avodah.

But regarding animals, there is the prohibition of:

👉 Oso V'Es Beno – slaughtering a parent and its offspring on the same day.

The Gemara discusses how this comparison works.

Since the Mishnah is speaking about a father and son, it fits the opinion that Oso V'Es Beno can apply to:

👉 A male animal and its offspring as well.

A Kohen Living With a Forbidden Woman

9️⃣ A Kohen Married to a Woman Forbidden to Him

A Kohen who is living with a woman prohibited to him cannot simply walk into the Beis Hamikdash and perform the Avodah.

He must first make a serious commitment to separate from the Aveirah.

👉 He makes a Neder prohibiting himself from benefiting from her.

He can then perform the Avodah, with the commitment that he will subsequently separate from her.

🔟 Why Is a Neder Enough?

The Gemara asks:

What stops him from immediately going to a Chacham and having the Neder annulled?

One answer depends on whether:

👉 A person must explain the details of his Neder before receiving Hataras Nedarim.

If he has to explain that he made the Neder because he is a Kohen living with a forbidden woman:

👉 A Chacham would not simply annul it and allow him to continue the Aveirah.

1️⃣1️⃣ Neder Al Daas Rabim

The Gemara gives another solution:

👉 The Neder can be made Al Daas Rabim – with the authority or understanding of the public.

Such a Neder has far greater strength.

The Gemara discusses whether a Neder made publicly can be annulled and distinguishes that from:

👉 A Neder made Al Daas Rabim.

1️⃣2️⃣ For a Mitzvah It Can Be Annulled

Even a Neder Al Daas Rabim has an important exception:

👉 L'Dvar Mitzvah – when annulling it is necessary for a Mitzvah.

The Gemara illustrates this with an unforgettable case.

1️⃣3️⃣ The Rebbe Who Was Removed

There was a Melamed who was excessively harsh with his students.

Rav Acha made him accept a Neder:

👉 He would no longer teach children.

Later, Ravina allowed him to return.

Why?

👉 They could not find another teacher as effective as he was.

Since teaching the children was a Mitzvah need, the Neder could be annulled.

The source presents extremely strong language regarding how severely the teacher had treated the children.

1️⃣4️⃣ Why the Kohen Needs a Strong Neder

The Gemara distinguishes between different commitments required from a Kohen.

When the issue involves a powerful Yetzer Hara:

👉 A simple promise is not sufficient.

A stronger commitment such as a Neder is required.

This is why the Kohen living with a forbidden woman must take particularly serious precautions before returning to the Avodah.

Hadran – Beginning a New Perek

1️⃣5️⃣ Two Types of Bechor

The Daf now begins a new Perek dealing with two separate concepts of Bechor.

There is:

👉 Bechor L'Nachalah – the firstborn who receives a double portion of inheritance.

👉 Bechor L'Kohen – the firstborn son who requires Pidyon HaBen.

These two statuses are not always the same.

A child can be:

👉 Both.

👉 Bechor for inheritance but not Pidyon HaBen.

👉 Obligated in Pidyon HaBen but not receive a double inheritance.

👉 Neither.

1️⃣6️⃣ Pidyon HaBen – Peter Rechem

For Pidyon HaBen, the Torah requires:

👉 Peter Rechem – the child who first opens the mother's womb.

Therefore, what happened in previous pregnancies and births matters.

A previous birth can remove the next child's status as Peter Rechem even though the later child may still be the father's Bechor for inheritance.

1️⃣7️⃣ Bechor for Yerushah – Reishis Ono

Inheritance follows a different definition.

The Torah describes the Bechor as:

👉 Reishis Ono.

The Mishnah therefore discusses cases where a previous pregnancy or birth affects Pidyon HaBen but does not prevent the next viable son from receiving the double portion of a Bechor.

1️⃣8️⃣ A Previous Nefel

The Mishnah discusses a woman who previously had a Nefel.

Depending on exactly what occurred:

👉 The later child may not be Peter Rechem for Pidyon HaBen.

Yet:

👉 He can still be the Bechor for inheritance.

The two Halachos therefore have to be evaluated independently.

1️⃣9️⃣ Unusual Previous Births

The Mishnah lists several unusual previous births, including:

👉 A malformed birth resembling an animal or bird.

👉 A Sandal – a flattened fetal form associated with a twin pregnancy.

👉 A Shilya.

👉 A Shafir Merukam.

👉 A fetus delivered in pieces.

These cases determine whether the next child is still considered the first opening of the womb and whether he remains the firstborn for inheritance.

2️⃣0️⃣ First Child for the Father, Not the Mother

Suppose a man never had children, but he marries a woman who previously gave birth.

Their son can be:

👉 The father's Bechor for inheritance.

But:

👉 He is not the mother's Peter Rechem.

Therefore:

👉 He can receive the double inheritance without requiring Pidyon HaBen.

2️⃣1️⃣ Birth Before Conversion or Freedom

The Mishnah discusses a woman who gave birth while she was:

👉 A non-Jew.

or:

👉 A Shifchah.

She subsequently converted or became free and then gave birth again.

The previous birth affects how the later child is classified.

The Daf analyzes whether the later child qualifies for Pidyon HaBen and Bechorah for inheritance based on the different requirements of each Halachah.

2️⃣2️⃣ Pidyon HaBen Without Double Yerushah

The reverse case is also possible.

A man already has a son, but then has a child with a woman who has never previously given birth.

That child is:

👉 Not the father's firstborn for inheritance.

But he is:

👉 His mother's Peter Rechem.

Therefore, he requires Pidyon HaBen even though he does not receive a double portion.

2️⃣3️⃣ Kohenes and Leviyah

The Mishnah discusses cases involving:

👉 A Kohenes.

👉 A Leviyah.

Their firstborn sons do not have the ordinary obligation of Pidyon HaBen.

This creates cases of uncertainty when it is unclear which woman gave birth to which child.

2️⃣4️⃣ Uncertain Father – Certain Peter Rechem

A woman did not wait the required three months between husbands and subsequently gave birth.

We may not know whether:

👉 The child belongs to the first husband.

or:

👉 The second husband.

For inheritance:

👉 He cannot establish which father owes him a double portion.

But regarding Pidyon HaBen:

👉 He can still definitely be his mother's Peter Rechem.

Therefore, he may require redemption despite being unable to claim Bechorah from either possible father.

When Is Birth Considered to Have Happened?

2️⃣5️⃣ Does the Head Emerging Count as Birth?

Shmuel teaches regarding a Nefel:

👉 The emergence of the head alone does not necessarily exempt the next child from Bechorah.

The Gemara asks how this fits with the Mishnah, which appears to treat the emergence of the head as significant.

One answer is that in the relevant case:

👉 "Rosh" means the head together with most of the body.

2️⃣6️⃣ A Viable Child Is Different

The Gemara distinguishes between:

👉 A viable child.

and:

👉 A Nefel that cannot survive.

For a viable child:

👉 The emergence of the head can constitute birth.

For a nonviable fetus:

👉 The rules may be different.

This distinction is central to determining whether the next child remains a Bechor.

2️⃣7️⃣ Human Birth Versus Animal Birth

The Gemara considers whether the rules can be learned from animals.

With an animal:

👉 Once the head emerges, it is visibly out into the world.

With a human birth:

👉 The circumstances are physically different.

The Gemara therefore considers whether the definition of birth can automatically be transferred from animals to people.

2️⃣8️⃣ The Forehead as the Critical Point

The Gemara discusses another definition:

👉 The emergence of the forehead.

The forehead can be considered the critical point at which the child has emerged sufficiently for Halachic birth.

This becomes relevant not only to Bechorah but also to:

👉 Tumah and Taharah following childbirth.

👉 Conversion occurring during the birth.

👉 Identifying a firstborn.

2️⃣9️⃣ Conversion During the Birth

The Daf gives a fascinating case:

A non-Jewish woman begins giving birth and then converts during the process.

If the critical part of the child had already emerged before the conversion:

👉 The Halachic birth is treated as having occurred while she was still a non-Jew.

This affects:

👉 Tumas Leidah.

👉 The Korban associated with childbirth.

The exact point at which birth occurs is therefore crucial.

Recognising the Face

3️⃣0️⃣ “Yakir” – Recognising the Bechor

For Bechorah, the Torah uses the word:

👉 Yakir – he shall recognise.

The Gemara asks how much of the face must be visible for recognition.

Is the forehead enough?

Or must one see:

👉 The forehead together with the nose?

This becomes important in defining the emergence of the child for Bechorah.

3️⃣1️⃣ Identifying a Man for an Agunah

The Gemara compares this with testimony that a woman's husband has died.

For Edus Ishah, identification requires:

👉 The facial structure including the nose.

The Gemara explains that the requirements of identification in an Agunah case cannot automatically be applied to Bechorah.

3️⃣2️⃣ Leniencies and Stringencies of Edus Ishah

The Gemara points out an apparent contradiction.

For an Agunah we are remarkably lenient regarding who may testify:

👉 Testimony heard from another person can be accepted.

👉 A woman can testify.

👉 Even testimony from an Eved or Shifchah can be accepted.

So why require such careful facial identification?

The answer:

👉 We are lenient regarding who can transmit the testimony.

But:

👉 We are strict regarding what must actually have been seen.

The identification itself must be reliable.

3️⃣ 3️⃣ Yakir Versus Hakaras Panim

The Daf concludes by distinguishing between two expressions.

Regarding Bechorah:

👉 Yakir.

Regarding identification of a deceased husband:

👉 Hakaras Panim.

They do not necessarily demand the identical level of facial recognition.

For Bechorah, the forehead can be sufficient according to the discussion.

For Edus Ishah:

👉 Recognition of the face, including the nose, is required.

📌 Key Chazarah

- A left-handed Kohen is Pasul; Rebbi and the Chachamim dispute an ambidextrous Kohen.
- Extreme abnormalities of complexion and body size can disqualify a Kohen.
- Kipe'ach involves an abnormally tall physical formation, not merely being tall.
- Reish Lakish advises against combining the same extreme physical characteristics in marriage.
- The Mishnah discusses Cheresh, Shoteh and Shikor.
- Intoxication from substances other than wine depends on the Machlokes discussed by the Gemara.
- Some conditions disqualify an animal as a Korban but do not disqualify a Kohen.
- The Daf discusses Oso V'Es Beno and whether it applies to a father and offspring.
- A Kohen living with a woman forbidden to him needs a strong commitment to separate before performing the Avodah.
- A Neder Al Daas Rabim generally has exceptional strength.
- For a Dvar Mitzvah, even such a Neder can sometimes be annulled.

- The Gemara tells the memorable story of the exceptionally harsh Melamed who was eventually reinstated because no equivalent teacher could be found.
- The new Perek distinguishes Bechor for inheritance from Bechor for Pidyon HaBen.
- Bechor L'Nachalah depends on the father's firstborn status; Pidyon HaBen depends on Peter Rechem of the mother.
- A child can qualify for one, both, or neither.
- Previous miscarriages and unusual births can affect Peter Rechem differently from inheritance.
- A mother's previous child can remove Pidyon HaBen even when the child is the father's Bechor.
- A child can require Pidyon HaBen while being unable to claim a double inheritance.
- The Daf analyzes when birth Halachically occurs – including emergence of the head or forehead.
- A viable child and a Nefel can have different rules.
- Conversion during childbirth demonstrates how important the precise moment of birth can be.
- For Bechorah, Yakir relates to recognition of the child.
- In an Agunah case, we may be lenient about who testifies but remain strict about what facial identification was actually seen.

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