

דף יומי • בכורות • דף ד'

Daf Yomi • The Full Daf • Elucidated Talmud • Navy & Gold Edition • with Rashi

THE SUGYA

We begin the daf with a deep dive into the wording of our Mishnah, where the Gemara is bothered by a basic kasha: How could the Mishnah say that the Kohanim and Levi'im themselves exempted the firstborn donkeys of the Yisraelim in the midbar? The Torah explicitly tells us that it was the animals of the Levi'im that exchanged and exempted the animals of the Yisraelim, while the Levi'im themselves only exchanged the firstborn sons! To resolve this, the Gemara brings a beautiful shakla v'tarya between Abaye and Rava, who offer different ways to read the Mishnah's laining and establish the source for why Kohanim and Levi'im are exempt from redeeming their own firstborn sons and donkeys.

As the sugya develops, we explore the mechanics of these exemptions. The Gemara raises several powerful kashas on both Abaye and Rava, questioning whether these exemptions should only apply to those specific Levi'im who were actually counted and active in the midbar exchange. Through this, we clarify the halachic status of a female Levite's son, the status of Aharon HaKohen who was excluded from the census, and how we know these exemptions apply for all generations. Finally, the Gemara pivots to analyze the source for using a lamb to redeem firstborn donkeys in the midbar, comparing it to the silver used for redeeming firstborn sons.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

עמוד א' DAF 4A

GEMARA

גמ'

The **Gemara** begins by analyzing the wording of our Mishnah:

QUESTION

אינהו פטרי?!

Did **they**, the Kohanim and Levi'im themselves, **exempt** the firstborn donkeys of the Yisraelim in the midbar?

EXPLANATION

אדם — אדם פטר, בהמה — בהמה פטרה,

With regard to **man**, the Levi'im as **man exempted** the firstborn of the Yisraelim; but with regard to **animal**, the **animal** of the Levi'im **exempted** the firstborn donkeys of the Yisraelim,

PROOF

דכתיב: "קח את הלויים תחת בכור בכני ישראל ואת בהמת הלויים תחת בהמתם!"

as it is written in the Torah: "Take the Levites in place of all the firstborn among the children of Israel, and the animals of the Levites in place of their animals"! So how can the Mishnah say that the Levi'im themselves exempted the donkeys?

ANSWER

אמר אביי, הכי קאמר:

Abaye said, the Mishnah is not talking about how they exempted the Yisraelim, but rather **this is what it is saying**:

EXPLANATION

כהנים ולויים פטורין בהמתם מקל וחומר —

The **Kohanim and Levi'im** are **exempt** from the obligation of redeeming **their animals**, meaning their own firstborn donkeys, and this is derived **from an a fortiori inference**:

PROOF

אם הפקיעה בהמתם של לויים בהמה של ישראל במדבר, דין הוא שתפקיע את של עצמן.

If the **animals of the Levites**, meaning their sheep, **exempted the animals of the Israelites in the wilderness** from their firstborn status, **it is logical that they should exempt their own** firstborn donkeys from this status.

OBJECTION

אמר ליה רבא: והא "פטרו" אינהו קתני!

Rava said to him: How can you say the kal v'chomer is about their animals? **But doesn't** the Mishnah **teach** that "they", meaning the Levi'im themselves, **exempted** the firstborns? The language refers to the people, not their animals!

OBJECTION

ועוד, אם איתא, אפילו מבכור בהמה טהורה נפטרו!

And furthermore, if it is so that their animals are exempt because of this kal v'chomer, then **even from the firstborn of a kosher animal they should be exempt**, since their kosher animals also exempted those of the Yisraelim!

OBJECTION

אלמה תנו: לא נפטרו מבכור בהמה טהורה, אלא מפדיון הבן ופטר חמור?

Why then did we learn in a Mishnah later on: The Kohanim and Levi'im were **not exempted from the firstborn of a kosher animal**, but only from the redemption of the son and the firstborn of a donkey?

ANSWER

אלא אמר רבא, הכי קאמר:

Rather, Rava said, **this is what** the Mishnah is saying:

EXPLANATION

כהנים ולויים פטרו הן עצמן מקל וחומר,

The **Kohanim and Levi'im exempted themselves** from the redemption of their own firstborn sons **from an a fortiori inference**:

PROOF

אם הפקיעה קדושתן של לויים קדושת של ישראל במדבר, לא יפקיע את של עצמן?

If the sanctity of the Levites exempted the sanctity of the Israelites' firstborns in the wilderness, should it not exempt their own firstborn sons?

QUESTION

אֲשֶׁכַּח אָדָם, בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה מִנֶּלֶךְ?

The Gemara asks: **We have found** a source for the exemption of **man**, meaning the Levi'im's own firstborn sons; but **from where do we know** that their **non-kosher animal**, the donkey, is also exempt?

ANSWER

אָמַר קָרָא: "אַךְ פֶּדֶה תִּפְדֶּה אֶת בְּכוֹר הָאָדָם וְאֶת בְּכוֹר הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּמֵאָה תִּפְדֶּה",

The verse states: "But you shall surely redeem the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of the non-kosher animal you shall redeem."

EXPLANATION

כָּל שֶׁיִּשְׁנוּ בְּכוֹר אָדָם — יִשְׁנוּ בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה, וְכָל שֶׁאֵינּוּ בְּכוֹר אָדָם — אֵינּוּ בְּכוֹר בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה.

This juxtaposition teaches: **Anyone who is subject to the firstborn of man is subject to the firstborn of a non-kosher animal, and anyone who is not subject to the firstborn of man is not subject to the firstborn of a non-kosher animal.** Since Levi'im are exempt from redeeming their sons, they are exempt from redeeming their donkeys.

OBJECTION

אָמַר לִיָּה רַב סַפְרָא לְאַבְי: לְדִידָךְ דְּאִמְרַת בְּהֵמָתָם,

Rav Safra said to Abaye: According to your view, where you say that the exemption of their donkeys is derived from the kal v'chomer of their animals,

OBJECTION

בֶּן לְוִי דִּהְוָה לִיָּה שֶׁה דְּאִפְקַע — לִיפְקַע, דְּלֹא הָוָה לִיָּה שֶׁה דְּלִיפְקַע — לֹא לִיפְקַע!

then a **Levite who had a sheep that exempted** a Yisrael's donkey in the midbar, **let his own donkey be exempted**; but one **who did not have a sheep that exempted** a Yisrael's donkey, **let him not be exempted**! Why are all Levi'im exempt?

OBJECTION

בֶּין לְדִידָךְ, בֶּין לְרַבָּא,

Furthermore, **both according to you and according to Rava**, who agree that the exemption is based on the exchange in the midbar,

OBJECTION

בֶּן חֹדֶשׁ דְּאִפְקַע — לִיפְקַע, פְּחוּת מִבֶּן חֹדֶשׁ דְּלֹא אִפְקַע — לֹא לִיפְקַע!

a Levi who was **a month old** in the midbar, **who exempted** a Yisrael, **let him be exempted**; but one who was **less than a month old**, **who did not exempt** a Yisrael, **let him not be exempted**!

OBJECTION

לְוִיָּה לֹא תִיפְקַע?

And also, a son born to a **female Levite**, should he **not be exempted** from redemption, since women were not counted to exempt the Yisraelim?

OBJECTION

אַלמָה אָמַר רַב אֲדָא בַר אֲהָבָה: לְוִיָּה שֶׁיָּלְדָה — בְּנָה פֶטוּר מִחֲמֵשׁ סְלָעִים?

Why then did Rav Adda bar Ahava say: A female Levite who gave birth, her son is exempt from the five sela'im of redemption?

ANSWER

הָא לָא מְשִׁיא, כְּדָמַר בְּרִיָּה דְרַב יוֹסֵף מִשְׁמִיָּה דְרַבָּא, דְּאָמַר:

The Gemara answers: **This last point is not difficult**, as Mar the son of Rav Yosef said in the name of Rava, who said:

EXPLANATION

”פֶּטֶר רַחֵם” בְּפֶטֶר רַחֵם תִּלְה רַחֲמָנָא.

The Torah uses the term “**firstborn of the womb**”, which means the **Merciful One made it dependent on the womb** of the mother. Since she is a Levi, the child is exempt.

OBJECTION

וְאַהֲרֹן שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה בְּאוֹתוֹ מִנֵּין — לָא לִיפְקֹעַ!

Rav Safra continues his challenge: **And Aaron, who was not in that count** of the Levi'im, let him not be exempted!

PROOF

דְּתַנֵּינָא: לָמָּה נִקּוּד עַל ”אַהֲרֹן” שֶׁבְּחֹמֶשׁ הַפְּקוּדִים — שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה בְּאוֹתוֹ מִנֵּין.

As it is taught in a Braisa: **Why are there dots over the name "Aaron" in the Book of Numbers?** To teach that he was not in **that count** of the Levi'im who exchanged the Yisraelim.

ANSWER

אָמַר קָרָא: ”הַלְוִיִּם”, הוֹקְשׁוּ כָּל הַלְוִיִּם זֶה לָזֶה.

The verse states: “**The Levites**”, which teaches that **all the Levites are compared to one another**. Therefore, even those who were not in the count are exempt.

QUESTION

כֹּהֲנִים מִנָּלִין?

The Gemara asks: **From where do we know** that the Kohanim are also exempt?

ANSWER

כְּדֶרְבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי:

It is **in accordance with** the teaching of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said:

EXPLANATION

בְּעֶשְׂרִים וְאַרְבָּעָה מְקוֹמוֹת נִקְרְאוּ כֹהֲנִים ”לְוִיִּם”, וְזֶה אֶחָד מֵהֶן: ”וְהַכֹּהֲנִים הַלְוִיִּם בְּנֵי צְדוֹק”.

In twenty-four places in Tanach the Kohanim are called "Levites", and this is one of them: "But the Kohanim, the Levites, the sons of Tzadok." Therefore, they are included in the exemption of the Levi'im.

עמוד ב' DAF 4B

QUESTION

ולדורות מנלן?

The Gemara asks: **And for generations, from where do we** derive that the Kohanim and Levi'im are exempt from the firstborn obligation?

ANSWER

אמר קרא: "והיו לי הלויים", "והיו" — בהווייתן יהו.

The verse states: "And the Levi'im shall be Mine." The word "and they shall be" teaches that **in their current state of being they shall** remain, meaning their exemption continues for all generations.

QUESTION

וממאי דבשה?

The Gemara asks: **And from where** do we know **that** the redemption of the firstborn donkeys in the wilderness was done specifically **with a lamb**?

ANSWER

אמר רב חסדא: נאמר כסף לדורות, ונאמר שֶׁה לדורות.

Rav Chisda said: "Silver" is mentioned for future generations regarding the redemption of a firstborn son, and "lamb" is mentioned for future generations regarding the redemption of a firstborn donkey.

EXPLANATION

מה כסף האמור לדורות — בו פדו לדורות, בו פדו לאותה שעה,

We compare them: **Just as silver which is mentioned for future generations, with it they redeemed for future generations, and with it they redeemed at that time** in the wilderness for the surplus firstborn,

EXPLANATION

אף שֶׁה האמור לדורות — בו פדו לדורות, בו פדו באותה שעה.

so too, the lamb which is mentioned for future generations, with it they redeemed for future generations, and with it they redeemed at that time in the wilderness.

OBJECTION

מה לכסף — שכן פודין בו הקדשות ומעשר שני!

The Gemara challenges this comparison: **What** is unique **about silver**? Indeed, **we redeem with it consecrated items and Second Tithe**, which is not the case with a lamb! Therefore, we cannot learn the rule of a lamb from silver.

ANSWER

אֲלֵא, אָמַר קְרָא: "אֲךָ פְּדוּה תִּפְדֶּה אֶת בְּכוֹר הָאָדָם וְאֶת בְּכוֹר הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּמְאָה תִּפְדֶּה",

Rather, the verse states: "But you shall surely redeem the firstborn of man, and the firstborn of the impure animal you shall redeem."

EXPLANATION

מָה בְּכוֹר אָדָם לֹא חִלְקֶת בֵּין לְדוֹרוֹת בֵּין לְאוֹתָהּ שְׁעָה — בְּכֶסֶף,

The Torah juxtaposes them: **Just as** by the firstborn of man you did not differentiate between the law for future generations and the law for that time, as both were redeemed with silver,

EXPLANATION

אֲךָ בְּהֵמָה טְמְאָה לֹא תַחְלוּק בּוֹ בֵּין לְדוֹרוֹת בֵּין לְאוֹתָהּ שְׁעָה — בְּשֶׁה.

so too, by the impure animal you should not differentiate in its redemption between the law for future generations and the law for that time, and both must be redeemed with a lamb.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא: שֶׁה אֶחָד שֶׁל בֶּן לֵוִי פָטַר כַּמָּה פְּטָרֵי חֲמוֹרִים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל.

Rabbi Chanina said: One lamb of a Levite exempted several firstborn donkeys of Israelites in the wilderness.

PROOF

אָמַר אֲבִי: תִּדַּע, שֶׁהָרִי מָנָה הַפְּתוּב עוֹדְפִים בָּאָדָם, וְלֹא מָנָה עוֹדְפִין בְּבְהֵמָה.

Abaye said: Know that this is so, for the verse enumerated the surplus in humans, where there were 273 extra Israelite firstborns, but it did not enumerate any surplus in animals. This proves that the Levites' animals must have exempted multiple Israelite animals.

QUESTION

מִמָּאֵי? דִּילְמָא לֹא הָוִי נִפְיִשִּׁי לְהוּ בְּהֵמוֹת טוֹבָא?

The Gemara asks: **From where** is this proven? Perhaps they did not have many animals, and the Israelite firstborn donkeys did not actually outnumber the Levites' lambs?

ANSWER

לֹא סָלְקָא דַּעְתָּהּ! דְּכַתִּיב: "וּמִקְנֵה רֹב הָיָה לְבְנֵי רְאוּבֵן וּלְבְנֵי גָד".

The Gemara answers: **Do not let this enter your mind!** For it is written: "And a great multitude of livestock belonged to the children of Reuven and the children of Gad." So they certainly had many animals.

QUESTION

דִּילְמָא אֲפִילוּ הָבִי, פְּשוּטִים דְּלוֹיִם הָווּ קִיִּימִי לְבִהְדִּי בְּכוֹרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל!

The Gemara asks: Perhaps even so, the non-firstborn animals of the Levites stood in equal number against the firstborn animals of the Israelites, and it was a one-to-one exchange?

ANSWER

אָמַר קְרָא: "וְאֵת בְּהֵמַת הַלְוִיִּם תַּחַת בְּהֵמָתָם", בְּהֵמָה אַחַת תַּחַת בְּהֵמוֹת הָרַבָּה.

The verse states: "And the animal of the Levites in exchange for their animals." The singular word "animal" implies one animal of the Levites was exchanged for many animals of the Israelites.

QUESTION

וַאֲימָא בְּהֶמָּה רַבָּה?

The Gemara asks: **But say** that the singular word "animal" is a collective noun referring to **many animals**, just as we find in the verse "and many animals"?

ANSWER

אִם כֵּן, לִיכְתּוּב קָרָא אוֹ "בְּהֶמָּה תַּחַת בְּהֶמָּה" אוֹ "בְּהֶמָּתָם תַּחַת בְּהֶמָּתָם!"

The Gemara answers: **If so, let the verse write either "animal in exchange for animal" or "their animals in exchange for their animals"!**

EXPLANATION

מַאי "בְּהֶמָּת... תַּחַת בְּהֶמָּתָם"? שָׁמַע מִינָּהּ חֵד פֶּטֶר טוֹבָא.

What is the meaning of "the animal of the Levites in exchange for their animals"? Learn from this that one animal of a Levite exempted many Israelite animals.

PROOF

אָמַר רַבָּא, אֲרֵי אֲנִי נָמִי תַּנִּינָא: וּפְדָה בּוֹ פְּעָמִים הָרַבָּה.

Rava said: We also learned a support for this in our Mishnah: And he may redeem with it many times, if he returns the lamb to the Kohen and buys it back.

EXPLANATION

וְרַבִּי חֲנִינָא טַעֲמָא דְּמַתְּנִיתִין מִפְּרָשׁ, וְהֵכִי קֹאֲמְרִי: מַאי טַעֲמָא פְּדָה בּוֹ פְּעָמִים הָרַבָּה? מִשּׁוּם דְּשָׁה אֶחָד שָׁל בֶּן לֵוִי פּוֹטֵר כַּמָּה פְּטָרֵי חֲמוּרִים שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל.

And Rabbi Chanina is explaining the reason of the Mishnah, and this is what he is saying: What is the reason that one may redeem with it many times? Because one lamb of a Levite exempted several firstborn donkeys of Israelites in the wilderness, showing that a single lamb has the power to exempt multiple firstborns.

STATEMENT

אֵיתָמַר, רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: קֳדָשׁ בְּכוֹרוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר, וְרִישׁ לָקִישׁ אָמַר: לֹא קֳדָשׁ בְּכוֹרוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר.

It was stated: Rabbi Yochanan said: The firstborns were sanctified in the wilderness; and Reish Lakish said: The firstborns were not sanctified in the wilderness.

EXPLANATION

רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן אָמַר: קֳדָשׁ בְּכוֹרוֹת בְּמִדְבָּר, דִּרְחֻמָּנָא אָמַר לִיקְדָּשׁוּ, דְּכָתִיב: "קֳדָשׁ לִי כָּל בְּכוֹר".

Rabbi Yochanan said: The firstborns were sanctified in the wilderness, because the Merciful One said they should be sanctified, as it is written: "Sanctify to Me every firstborn."

EXPLANATION

וְרִישׁ לָקִישׁ אָמַר: לֹא קִדְּשׁוּ בְּכוֹרוֹת בַּמִּדְבָּר, מִדִּכְתִּיב: "וְהָיָה כִּי יָבִיֵאֲךָ", וְכִתִּיב בְּתַרְיָה: "וְהִעֲבַרְתָּ", מִכָּל דִּמְעִיקָרָא לֹא קָדוֹשׁ.

And Reish Lakish said: The firstborns were not sanctified in the wilderness, because it is written: "And it shall be when He brings you," and it is written after it: "And you shall set apart." By inference, initially in the wilderness they were not sanctified.

OBJECTION

אִתִּיבִיָּה רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן לְרִישׁ לָקִישׁ: עַד שֶׁלֹּא הוּקָם הַמִּשְׁכָּן הָיוּ בָּמוֹת מוֹתָרוֹת וְעֹבֹדָה בְּבָכוֹרוֹת!

Rabbi Yochanan challenged Reish Lakish: Before the Tabernacle was erected, high places were permitted and the service was performed by the firstborns! This shows they were sanctified in the wilderness.

ANSWER

אָמַר לִיָּה: בָּאוּתָן שְׂיֻצָאוֹ מִמִּצְרַיִם.

Reish Lakish said to him: That refers to those firstborns who left Egypt, who were already sanctified, but not to those born in the wilderness.

INFERENCE

הֲכִי נִמִּי מִסֵּתֶפְרָא, דָּאִי לֹא תִימָא הָכִי, בֶּן שָׁנָה בֶּר מֵיַעֲבַד עֹבֹדָה הוּא?

The Gemara notes: This also stands to reason, for if you do not say so, is a one-year-old child fit to perform the Temple service? Since the Mishkan was built one year after leaving Egypt, any firstborn born in the wilderness would be too young.

QUESTION

וּדְקָאֲרִי לָהּ, מַאי קָאֲרִי לָהּ?

The Gemara asks: And the one who asked this challenge, why did he ask it? He surely knew a one-year-old cannot perform the service!

EXPLANATION

הֲכִי קָא קִשְׁיָא לִיָּה: אִי אָמַרְתָּ בְּשָׁלְמָא דְלֹא פָּסִיק קְדוּשַׁתִּיָּהוּ — הֵנָּה דִּמְעִיקָרָא נִמִּי לֹא פִקְעָא קְדוּשַׁתִּיָּהוּ, אֶלָּא אִי אָמַרְתָּ דְּפָסִק קְדוּשַׁתִּיָּהוּ — הֵנָּה דִּמְעִיקָרָא נִמִּי פִקְעָא לִיָּה קְדוּשַׁתִּיָּהוּ.

The Gemara answers: This is what was difficult for him: Granted if you say that their sanctity did not cease in the wilderness, then those original ones also did not lose their sanctity. But if you say that their sanctity ceased for those born in the wilderness, then those original ones should also have lost their sanctity!

ANSWER

וְאִידֵּךְ: דְּקָדוֹשׁ — קָדוֹשׁ, דְּלֹא קָדוֹשׁ — לֹא קָדוֹשׁ.

And the other, Reish Lakish, would answer: Those that were sanctified in Egypt remained sanctified; those that were not sanctified in the wilderness were not sanctified.

OBJECTION

אִתִּיבִיָּה: אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם שֶׁהוּקָם הַמִּשְׁכָּן, קָרְבוּ בּוֹ לָהֶם בִּישְׂרָאֵל נְדָרִים וְנִדְבוֹת, חֲטָאוֹת וְאַשְׁמוֹת, בְּכוֹרוֹת וּמַעֲשָׂרוֹת.

Rabbi Yochanan challenged him: On the day the Tabernacle was erected, Israel offered vows, free-will offerings, sin offerings, guilt offerings, firstborns, and tithes. This shows firstborns were offered in the wilderness!

ANSWER

הָכִי נָמִי — בְּאוֹתָן שֶׁיֵּצְאוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם.

Reish Lakish answers: Here too, it refers to those firstborns who left Egypt.

INFERENCE

וּמִיָּנָה: אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם הוּא דְקָרוֹב, מִיָּכָן וְאֵילָּה לָא קָרוֹב!

The Gemara asks: But from this Baraisa itself we see: On that day they were offered, but from then on they were not offered! This supports Reish Lakish.

OBJECTION

אִיכָּא דְאָמְרִי: אֵיתִיבִיהּ רִישׁ לְקִישׁ לְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם שֶׁהוּקָם הַמִּשְׁכָּן קָרְבוּ לָהֶם יִשְׂרָאֵל
נְדָרִים וְנִדְבוֹת חֲטָאוֹת וְאַשְׁמוֹת בְּכוֹרוֹת וּמַעֲשָׂרוֹת. אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם — אֵין, מִיָּכָן וְאֵילָּה — לָא!

There are those who say a different version: Reish Lakish challenged Rabbi Yochanan: On the day the Tabernacle was erected, Israel offered vows, free-will offerings, sin offerings, guilt offerings, firstborns, and tithes. On that day, yes, but from then on, no! This proves firstborns were not offered in the wilderness.

ANSWER

אִימָא: מֵאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם וְאֵילָּה.

Rabbi Yochanan answers: Say and correct the text to read: From that day onward they offered them.

EXPLANATION

וּמֵאִי קָמַשְׁמַע לָן? מֵאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם — אֵין, מַעֲיָקְרָא — לָא. אֵלמָא חוֹבוֹת בְּבִמָּה לָא קָרוֹב.

And what does this teach us? From that day when the Mishkan was built, yes, they offered them, but originally on private altars, no. Consequently, obligatory offerings were not offered on a private altar.

OBJECTION

תָּא שְׁמַע, נִמְצְאָתָּ אֵתָּה אוֹמֵר: בְּשָׁלֹשָׁה מְקוֹמוֹת קָדְשׁוֹ בְּכוֹרוֹת לְיִשְׂרָאֵל — בְּמִצְרַיִם, וּבְמִדְבָּר,
וּבְכַנְיֶסֶתוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל לְאֶרֶץ.

Come and hear a proof: You turn out to say: In three places firstborns were sanctified to Israel: in Egypt, in the wilderness, and upon Israel's entry into the Land. This explicitly contradicts Reish Lakish!

EXPLANATION

בְּמִצְרַיִם מָהוּ אוֹמֵר? "קָדֵשׁ לִי כָּל בְּכוֹר". בְּמִדְבָּר הוּא אוֹמֵר: "כִּי לִי כָּל בְּכוֹר בְּבִנִי יִשְׂרָאֵל".
בְּכַנְיֶסֶתוֹ לְאֶרֶץ הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְהָיָה כִּי יָבִיֵאֵךְ... וְהִעֲבַרְתָּ".

The Baraisa details: In Egypt, what does it say? "Sanctify to Me every firstborn." In the wilderness, it says: "For Mine is every firstborn among the children of Israel." Upon their entry into the Land, it says: "And it shall be when He brings you... and you shall set apart."

ANSWER

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: בשלשה מקומות הוזָהְרוּ עַל הַבְּכוֹרוֹת לִיקְדָּשׁ, וְלֹא קִדְּשׁוּ.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: This Baraisa means that in three places they were commanded regarding the firstborns to be sanctified, but they were not actually sanctified in the wilderness.

QUESTION

ובמצרים נמי לא קדוש? הא קאמרינן דקדוש!

The Gemara asks: And in Egypt were they also not sanctified? But we said that they were sanctified!

ANSWER

הכי אמר: מהן קדשו, ומהן לא קדשו.

The Gemara answers: This is what he meant to say: Of these three places, some were sanctified, and of these, some were not sanctified.

OBJECTION

מתקריף לה רב פפא: ובמדבר לא קדשו? והכתיב: "פקד כל בכר זכר לבני ישראל!"

Rav Pappa challenged this: And in the wilderness were they not sanctified? But isn't it written: "Count every male firstborn of the children of Israel" in the wilderness?

RESOLUTION

אלא, אי איתמר הכי איתמר: רבי יוחנן אמר: קדשו ולא פסקו, וריש לקיש אמר: קדשו

Rather, if it was stated, it was stated like this: Rabbi Yochanan said: They were sanctified in Egypt and their sanctity never ceased in the wilderness; and Reish Lakish said: They were sanctified in Egypt, but ceased in the wilderness.

SUMMARY

The Gemara resolves the Mishnah's phrasing by establishing that Kohanim and Levi'im are exempt from redeeming their own firstborn sons and donkeys. Rava derives the donkey exemption through a hekesh (comparison) in the pesukim between the redemption of man and non-kosher animals, teaching that anyone exempt from redeeming a son is exempt from redeeming a donkey. The Gemara then addresses various challenges regarding who is included in this exemption, proving that it applies to all Levi'im—including those under a month old in the midbar, Aharon HaKohen, and even the son of a female Levite because the Torah makes the exemption dependent on her womb. We also learn that Kohanim are included in this exemption because they are referred to as "Levites" in Tanach, and that this halacha remains for all generations. The daf concludes with Rav Chisda's attempt to derive that the firstborn donkeys in the midbar were redeemed with a lamb, using a gezerah shavah to the silver used for redeeming firstborn sons.

The Gemara is bothered by how the Levi'im could exempt their own firstborn sons and donkeys based on the exchange that happened in the midbar. Rava teaches us a beautiful yesod: the Levi'im exempted themselves through a kal v'chomer. If their holiness was powerful enough to lift and exempt the firstborns of all of Klal Yisrael, it must certainly work to exempt their own.

Think about what the Tanna is telling us here. Sometimes we spend so much time trying to help others, to share a good word, or to bring kedushah into the lives of those around us, that we forget about ourselves. We think our spiritual influence is only meant for the outside. But the Torah is teaching us that the very first place your kedushah must have an effect is on you and your own household. If you have the ability to inspire a friend or show warmth to a neighbor, that same koach must be turned inward to elevate your own avodas Hashem.

Today, take one small spiritual strength or positive attribute that you normally use when interacting with others, and apply it b'davka to your own personal avodah or your own family. If you are patient with strangers, bring that patience home; if you speak gently to colleagues, use that same gentle speech with your own children.

תהלים • חמשה קאפיטלער

The Five Daily Kapitlach

CHAPTER PREVIEW

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

All introductions and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

פֿאַרק ל"ב CHAPTER 32

לְדוֹד מִשְׁכִּיל אֲשֶׁרִי נָשׁוּי פֶשַׁע כָּסוּי חֲטָאָה:
אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם לֹא יִחְשַׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן וְאִין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה:
כִּי הִחַרְשָׁתִּי בָּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם:
כִּי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה תִּכְבֵּד עָלַי יְדָה נִהַפָּה לְשׁוֹדִי בַּחֲרֻבִּי קִיץ סֵלָה:
חֲטָאתִי אוֹדִיעָה וְעוֹנִי לֹא כֹסִיתִי אֲמַרְתִּי אוֹדָה עָלַי פֶשַׁעִי לִיהוָה וְאַתָּה נָשֵׂאתָ עוֹן חֲטָאתִי סֵלָה:
עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חֹסִיד אֱלֹהִים לְעֵת מִצָּא רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מִיָּם רַבִּים אֱלֹהִים לֹא יִגִּיעוּ:
אַתָּה סֹתֵר לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרֵנִי רָנִי פֶלֶט תְּסוּבְּבֵנִי סֵלָה:
אֲשַׁכִּילָה וְאוֹרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ זוֹ תִּלְךָ אֵינִי עֹלָה עֵינִי:
אֵל תִּהְיוּ כָּסוּס כְּפָרֵד אִין הִבִּין בְּמִתְּג וְרָסוֹן עֲדִיו לִבְלוֹם בַּל קָרַב אֱלֹהִים:
רַבִּים מִכְּאוּבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בִּיהוָה חֲסֵד יְסוּבְּבֵנוּ:
שִׁמְחוּ בִיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים וְהִרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב:

פֿאַרק מ"ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפֹטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חֹסִיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי:
כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִי מְעוּזִי לָמָּה זִנְחִתָּנִי לָמָּה קִדַּר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב:
שְׁלַח אוֹרָה וְאַמְתָּה הַמָּה יִנְחֹנֵנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קוֹדֶשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:
וְאֲבֹאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שְׁמֹחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדָה בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִי:
מִה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וּמִה תִּתְהַמֵּי עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לֵאלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדְנִי יְשׁוּעַת פָּנֶי וְאֱלֹהִי:

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאָסָף:

אֱלֹהִים אֵל דָּמִי לָךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאֵל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יִהְיֶינָיִם וּמִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ נִשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ:

עַל עֲמָךְ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וַיִּתְּעֲצּוּ עַל צָפוֹנֶיךָ:

אָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנִכְחֵידֶם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזְכָּר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:

כִּי נִוָּעֲצוּ לֵב יַחֲדוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ:

אֱהִי אָדוֹם וַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאֵב וְהַגָּרִים:

גָּבַל וַעֲמֹן וַעֲמֶלֶק פָּלְשֶׁת עִם יִשְׁבִּי צוּר:

גַּם אֲשׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זִרְעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סָלָה:

עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְּיִבִּין בְּנַחַל קִישׁוֹן:

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְּעֵין דָּאֵר הָיוּ דָמָן לְאֲדָמָה:

שִׁיתֵּמוּ נְדִיבֵמוֹ כְּעֶרֶב וְכִזְאָב וְכִזְבַּח וְכִצְלָמָנֶע כָּל גְּסִיכְמוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירְשָׁה לָנוּ אֵת גְּאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

אֱלֹהֵי שִׁיתֵּמוּ כַּגִּלְגָּל כְּקֹשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ:

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעֶר יָעַר וְכִלְהִיבָה תִּלְהַט הָרִים:

כֵּן תִּרְדָּפֶם בְּסַעְרָךָ וּבְסוּפֹתֶיךָ תִּבְהַלֵּם:

מִלֵּא פְּנֵיהֶם קִלּוֹן וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה:

יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהַלּוּ עָדִי עַד וַיַּחֲפְרוּ וַיֵּאבְדּוּ:

וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה לִבְדָּדָה עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי:

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ:

אֵל יִתֵּן לַמוֹט רִגְלָךָ אֵל יָנוּם שִׁמְרָךָ:

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהוָה שִׁמְרָךָ יְהוָה צִלָּךָ עַל יַד מִינֶיךָ:

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יִכָּכֶה וַיֵּרַח בִּלְיָלָהּ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמֹר צִאתְךָ וּבואְךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:

פָּרָק ק"ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעַמְקִים קָרָאתִיהָ יְהוָה:

אֲדֹנָי שְׁמֶעָה בְּקוֹלִי תַהֲיֶינָה אָזְנוֹיָהּ קִשְׁבוֹת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנָי:

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֹד:

כִּי עָמָךְ הִסְלִיכָה לְמַעַן תִּגְוֹרָא:

קוֹיֵתִי יְהוָה קִוְּתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלֵתִי:

נַפְשִׁי לֹאֲדֹנָי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר שְׁמָרִים לְבָקֶר:

יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֲסֹד וְהַרְבֵּה עֲמוֹ פְדוּת:

וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו:

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'