

דף יומי • בכורות • דף ח'

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

THE SUGYA

We start off the daf with a fascinating discussion in the Braisa regarding the physical characteristics and mating habits of different creatures, including the dolphins, which Rav Yehuda explains are the "sons of the sea" that are half-human and half-fish. The Gemara goes on to analyze the physical signs that determine whether a species gives birth to live offspring or lays eggs, and clarifies the exact timing of when different animals mate and give birth, whether by day, by night, or both.

This leads the Gemara into a very practical halachic discussion regarding a chicken, which only lays eggs during the day. We learn how this reality affects the halachos of Yom Tov, specifically regarding an egg found in a nest early on Yom Tov morning, and whether we can assume it was laid before Yom Tov and is therefore permitted to be eaten, or if it is muktzah. We also learn about the unique way certain creatures mate, and the famous Braisa that lists the gestation periods of various animals and matches them up with the ripening times of different trees.

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

עמוד א' DAF 8A

BRAISA

הדולפנין פריין ורבין כבני אדם.

The Braisa states: **The dolphins reproduce like humans**, meaning they mate face-to-face and nurse their young.

QUESTION

מאי דולפנין?

The Gemara asks: **What are dolphins?**

ANSWER

אמר רב יהודה: בני ימא.

Rav Yehuda said: They are the creatures called **sons of the sea**, which are half-human and half-fish.

BRAISA

כל שפיציו מבחוץ — מוליד, וכל שבפנים — מטיל ביצים.

The Braisa continues: **Any** male animal **whose testicles are on the outside**, the female **gives birth** to live offspring; **and any** male animal **whose testicles are on the inside**, the female **lays eggs**.

QUESTION

איני? והאמר שמואל: און ואון בר כלאים זה בזה,

The Gemara asks: **Is that so? But didn't Shmuel say:** A domestic goose and a wild goose are kilayim, diverse kinds, with one another, and it is forbidden to mate them?

QUESTION

וְהִינֵן בָּהֶּ: מֵאֵי טַעְמָא?

And we discussed it: **What is the reason** that they are considered kilayim?

ANSWER

אָמַר אַבְי: זֶה בִּיצָיו מִבְּחוּץ, וְזֶה בִּיצָיו מִבְּפָנִים,

Abaye said: **This one**, the wild goose, **has its testicles on the outside**, and **that one**, the domestic goose, **has its testicles on the inside**, so they are different species.

OBJECTION

וְתַרְוִיּהוּ מְטִילֵי בִיצִים!

And yet both of them lay eggs! This contradicts the rule that an animal with external testicles gives birth to live offspring.

RESOLUTION

אָלֵא, כָּל שְׂזוּכְרוֹתוֹ מִבְּחוּץ — מוֹלִיד, מִבְּפָנִים — מְטִיל בִיצִים.

Rather, we must adjust the rule: **Any animal whose male organ is on the outside** when not mating **gives birth** to live offspring; and if it is **on the inside**, the female **lays eggs**. The wild goose's male organ is internal, even though its testicles are external.

BRAISA

כָּל שֶׁתִּשְׁמִישׁוֹ בַּיּוֹם — יוֹלֵד בַּיּוֹם, בַּלַּיְלָה — יוֹלֵד בַּלַּיְלָה,

The Braisa continues: **Any species whose mating is by day, gives birth by day**; and if its mating is by night, it gives birth by night.

BRAISA

כָּל שֶׁתִּשְׁמִישׁוֹ בֵּין בַּיּוֹם בֵּין בַּלַּיְלָה — יוֹלֵד בֵּין בַּיּוֹם בֵּין בַּלַּיְלָה.

Any species whose mating is both by day and by night, gives birth both by day and by night.

EXPLANATION

תִּשְׁמִישׁוֹ בַּיּוֹם יוֹלֵד בַּיּוֹם — תְּרַנְגוֹל,

The Gemara explains: An animal whose **mating is by day and gives birth by day** is a chicken.

EXPLANATION

בַּלַּיְלָה יוֹלֵד בַּלַּיְלָה — עֶטְלָה,

An animal whose mating is **by night and gives birth by night** is a bat.

EXPLANATION

תִּשְׁמִישׁוֹ בֵּין בַּיּוֹם בֵּין בַּלַּיְלָה יוֹלֵד בֵּין בַּיּוֹם בֵּין בַּלַּיְלָה — אָדָם וְכָל דְּדָמֵי לֵיה.

An animal whose **mating is both by day and by night** and gives birth both by day and by night is a **human and anything similar to him**.

QUESTION

למאי נפקא מינה?

The Gemara asks: **What is the practical halachic difference** of knowing whether a chicken only lays eggs by day?

ANSWER

לכדרב מרי פריה דרב כהנא, דאמר רב מרי פריה דרב כהנא:

The Gemara answers: It is **for that** which Rav Mari the son of Rav Kahana said. For Rav Mari the son of Rav Kahana said:

STATEMENT

בדק בקינה של תרנגולין מערב יום טוב ולא מצא בה ביצה,

If **one searched in the nest of chickens on the eve of Yom Tov** and did not find a newly laid egg in it,

STATEMENT

ולמחר השכים ומצא בה ביצה — מותרת באכילה ביום טוב, אימר: לא בדק יפה.

and the next day, on Yom Tov, **he rose early before dawn and found an egg in it**, it is permitted to be eaten on Yom Tov.

We do not say it was laid on Yom Tov itself, which would make it muktzah; rather, **say: He did not search well** the day before, and the egg was already there, since chickens do not lay eggs at night.

OBJECTION

והלא בדק יפה!

The Gemara challenges: **But didn't he search well?** The case is where we know he searched thoroughly!

RESOLUTION

אימר: יצתה רובה וחזרה הנה,

The Gemara answers: Even so, **say: Most of the egg had emerged before Yom Tov and then returned** inside the chicken before he searched,

RESOLUTION

וכדרבי יוחנן, דאמר רבי יוחנן: ביצה שיצתה רובה מערב יום טוב וחזרה — מותרת לאוכלה ביום טוב.

and this is in accordance with Rabbi Yochanan's ruling. For Rabbi Yochanan said: **An egg, most of which emerged on the eve of Yom Tov and returned** inside, is permitted to be eaten on Yom Tov, because once most of it emerged, it is considered fully laid.

BRAISA

כל שתשמישו ועיבורו שוה — יולדים ומגדלים זה מזה.

The Braisa continues: **Any two species whose mating and gestation periods are identical**, can give birth to offspring together **and can nurse** and raise **each other's** young.

BRAISA

הכל משמשין פנים כנגד עורף, חוץ משלשה שמשמשין פנים כנגד פנים, ואלו הן: דג, ואדם, ונחש.

All animals **mate face-to-back**, except for three that **mate face-to-face**, and these are they: Fish, and humans, and the snake.

QUESTION

ומאי שנא הני תלתא?

The Gemara asks: **And what is different about these three** that they mate face-to-face?

ANSWER

כי אתא רב דימי אמרי במערבא: הואיל ודיברה עמהם שכינה.

When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael, **they said in the West**: It is because the Shechinah spoke with them, so they were given a more honorable way of mating.

BRAISA

תנא: גמל — אחר כנגד אחר.

A Tanna **taught** in a Braisa: **A camel** mates **back-to-back**.

BRAISA

תנו רבנן: תרנגולת — לעשרים ואחד יום, וכנגדה באילן — לוז,

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: A **chicken** hatches its eggs in **twenty-one days**, and corresponding to it among trees, taking twenty-one days from budding to ripening, is the **almond** tree;

BRAISA

כלב — לחמשים יום, וכנגדו באילן — תאינה,

a **dog** gives birth in **fifty days**, and corresponding to it among trees is the **fig** tree;

BRAISA

חתול — לחמשים ושתים יום, וכנגדו באילן — תות,

a **cat** gives birth in **fifty-two days**, and corresponding to it among trees is the **mulberry** tree;

BRAISA

חזיר — לששים יום, כנגדו באילן — תפוח,

a **pig** gives birth in **sixty days**, and corresponding to it among trees is the **apple** tree;

BRAISA

שועל וכל מיני שרצים — ששה חודשים, וכנגדם באילן — תבואה.

a fox and all types of creeping animals have a gestation of six months, and corresponding to them among plants is grain;

BRAISA

בְּהֵמָה דְּקָה טְהוֹרָה — לַחֲמִשָּׁה חֳדָשִׁים, וּכְנֻגָּדוֹ בְּאֵילָן — גֶּפֶן.

small kosher livestock, like sheep and goats, give birth in five months, and corresponding to them among trees is the grape vine;

BRAISA

בְּהֵמָה גְּסָה טְמֵאָה — לְשָׁנִים עֶשֶׂר חֹדֶשׁ, וּכְנֻגָּדוֹ בְּאֵילָן — דָּקֵל.

large non-kosher livestock, like donkeys, give birth in twelve months, and corresponding to them among trees is the date palm;

BRAISA

טְהוֹרָה — לְתִשְׁעָה חֳדָשִׁים, וּכְנֻגָּדָהּ בְּאֵילָן — זֵית.

large kosher livestock, like cows, give birth in nine months, and corresponding to them among trees is the olive tree;

BRAISA

הַזָּאֵב וְהָאֵרִי וְהַדּוֹב וְהַנֶּמֶר וְהַפְּרָדִּלְס וְהַפִּיל וְהַקּוֹף וְהַקִּיפּוֹף — לְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים, וּכְנֻגָּדוֹ בְּאֵילָן — בָּנוֹת שׁוֹחַ.

the wolf, the lion, the bear, the leopard, the bardelas, the elephant, the monkey, and the long-tailed ape give birth in three years, and corresponding to them among trees are white figs;

BRAISA

אַפְּעָה לְשִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, וּכְנֻגָּדוֹ בְּאֵילָן — קָרוֹב.

a viper gives birth in seventy years, and corresponding to it among trees is the carob tree.

EXPLANATION

קָרוֹב זֶה, מִשְׁעַת נְטִיעָתוֹ עַד שְׁעַת גְּמַר פִּירוֹתָיו — שִׁבְעִים שָׁנָה, וְיָמֵי עִיבוּרוֹ שְׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים.

The Gemara notes: This carob tree, from the time of its planting until the time of the ripening of its fruit is seventy years, and the period of its gestation, from budding to ripening, is three years.

BRAISA

נָחַשׁ לְשִׁבְעַת שָׁנִים, וּלְאוֹתוֹ רָשָׁע לֹא מְצִינוּ חֵבֵר.

The Braisa continues: A snake gives birth in seven years, and for that wicked one, the snake, we have not found a counterpart among trees.

BRAISA

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים: מוֹכָסְסִים.

And some say: The counterpart is the **muchsasim** tree, which takes seven years to ripen.

QUESTION

מָנָא הָנִי מִיֵּלִי?

The Gemara asks: **From where do we know these words**, that a snake's gestation is seven years?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב, וּמָטוּ כָּה מְשׁוּם דְּרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ בֶּן חֲנַנְיָא, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "אָרוּר אַתָּה מְכַל הַבְּהֵמָה וּמְכַל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה".

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said, and they arrived at it in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya, as it is stated in the curse of the snake: "Cursed are you from among all the domestic animals and from among all the beasts of the field."

QUESTION

אִם מְבִהֶמָה נִתְקַלְלָה, מִחַיָּה לֹא כָּל שָׁפוֹן?

The Gemara analyzes the pasuk: **If it was cursed more than a domestic animal**, whose gestation is long, **is it not all the more so** cursed more **than a wild beast**, whose gestation is shorter?

ANSWER

אֵלָּא, לֹוֹמַר לָהּ: כָּשֶׁם שֶׁנִּתְקַלְלָה הַבְּהֵמָה מִחַיָּה, אֶחָד לְשָׁבָעָה, וּמֵאִי נִיהוּ? חֲמוּר מִחֲתוּל,

Rather, it is to tell you: **Just as the domestic animal is cursed more than the wild beast, one to seven—and what is it?**

The gestation of a **donkey**, which is twelve months, compared **to** that of a **cat**, which is fifty-two days, which is roughly a sevenfold increase —

ANSWER

כֹּה נִתְקַלְלָה הוּא מְבִהֶמָה, אַחַת לְשָׁבָע, דִּהְיָה לִיה שֶׁב שָׁנִי.

so was the snake cursed more than the domestic animal, one to seven. Since a donkey's gestation is one year, seven times that **makes it seven years**.

QUESTION

אִימָא: כָּשֶׁם שֶׁנִּתְקַלְלָה חַיָּה מְבִהֶמָה, אַחַת לְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים, וּמֵאִי נִיהוּ? אָרִי מִחֲמוּר,

The Gemara asks: But why not say: **Just as the wild beast is cursed more than the domestic animal, one to three years—**

and what is it? The gestation of a **lion**, which is three years, compared **to** that of a **donkey**, which is one year—

QUESTION

כֹּה נִתְקַלְלָה הוּא מִחַיָּה אַחַת לְשָׁלֹשׁ שָׁנִים, דִּהְיָה לִיה תִּשְׁעָה שָׁנִים.

so was the snake cursed more than the wild beast, one to three. Since a lion's gestation is three years, three times that **makes it nine years** for the snake!

עמוד ב' DAF 8B

ANSWER

מִי פָתִיב "מְכַל הַחַיָּה וּמְכַל הַבְּהֵמָה"?

The Gemara responds: **Is it written: "From among all beasts, and from among all animals"?** That would imply the snake is cursed more than the beasts, which are cursed more than the animals.

ANSWER

"מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכָּל הַחַיָּה" כְּתִיב!

Rather, **"From among all animals, and from among all beasts,"** is written!

ANSWER

אָרוּר הוּא מִבְּהֵמָה שֶׁנִּתְקַלָּה מִחַיָּה.

This means **it is cursed from among the domesticated animals, which themselves were cursed from among the undomesticated animals.**

QUESTION

וַאֲימָא: כָּשֶׁם שֶׁנִּתְקַלָּה בְּהֵמָה מִחַיָּה אֶחָד לְשָׁלֹשׁ,

The Gemara challenges: **But say instead: Just as the domesticated animals were cursed more than the undomesticated animals by a measure of one to three;**

EXPLANATION

וַאֲמַי נִיהוּ? עֹז מִחֲתוּל,

and what is that? It is the case of **a goat** whose gestation is five months, compared **to a cat** whose gestation is fifty-two days, which is roughly a one-to-three ratio;

QUESTION

כֹּה נִתְקַלָּל הוּא מִבְּהֵמָה אֶחָד לְשָׁלֹשׁ, דִּהְיוּ לִיה חֲמִיֶּסֶר יָרְחִי!

so too, the snake **was cursed more than the domesticated animals,** i.e., the goat, **by a proportion of one to three, which would make it fifteen months** of gestation, and not seven years!

ANSWER

אִיבָעִית אִימָא: "מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה" כְּתִיב.

The Gemara answers: **If you wish, say that "Cursed are you from among all animals" is written,** which includes the most accursed of them, the donkey, whose gestation is twelve months, and the snake is cursed seven times that.

ANSWER

אִי בָעִית אִימָא: קָלָה הוּא, קָלָה שְׂדֵי עֵילוּיָה.

If you wish, say instead: Since **it is a curse** that the snake received here, **we cast the most extreme curse upon it** that can possibly be derived from the text.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לִיה קַיֶּסֶר לְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן חֲנַנְיָה: נָחַשׁ לְכַמָּה מֵיעֶבֶר וּמוֹ לֵיד?

The Gemara relates: **The Roman emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya: In the case of a snake, after how long a period of gestation does it give birth?**

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: לנשב שני.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: After seven years.

OBJECTION

והא סבי דבי אתונא ארבעינהו, ואולייד לתלת!

The emperor challenged: But the elders of the school of Athens bred them, and they gave birth after three years!

RESOLUTION

הנהו מעברי הו מעיקרא ארבע.

Rabbi Yehoshua responded: Those snakes were already pregnant from beforehand for four years.

OBJECTION

והא קמשמשי שמושי!

The emperor asked: But they engaged in intercourse in the Athenian school, and animals only do so to become pregnant, not when they are already pregnant!

RESOLUTION

אינהו נמי משמשי כאדם.

Rabbi Yehoshua responded: Snakes also engage in intercourse like humans, for pleasure, and not solely for reproduction.

QUESTION

והא חכימי אינהו?

The emperor said to him: But are they not wise? How can you argue with them?

STATEMENT

אנו חכימין מינאיהו.

Rabbi Yehoshua responded: We are wiser than they.

STATEMENT

אי חכימת, זיל זכניהו ואיתניהו לי!

The emperor said: If you are wiser, go defeat them in debate and bring them to me.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: כמה הוו? שיתין גברי.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: How many are there? The emperor answered: Sixty men.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: עביד לי ספינתא דאית בה שיתין כתי, וכל ביתא אית בה שיתין ביסתרקי. עבד ליה.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Construct a ship for me that has sixty rooms, and each room should have sixty mattresses in it. The emperor constructed it for him.

STATEMENT

כִּי מָטָא לְהֵתֶם לְבֵי טִבְחָא, אֲשַׁכְחִיהָ לְהָהוּא גִבְרָא דְקָא פְּשִׁיט חַיִּיתָא.

When he arrived there in Athens, he went to a butcher shop, and found a certain man who was flaying an animal.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ: רִישִׁךָ לְזַבְוִנִי? אָמַר לֵיהּ: אֵין.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Is your head for sale? The butcher said to him: Yes.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ: בְּכַמָּה? אָמַר לֵיהּ: בְּפִלְגָא דְזוּזָא. יָהֵב לֵיהּ.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: For how much? The butcher said to him: For half a zuz. Rabbi Yehoshua gave it to him.

STATEMENT

לְסוּף, אָמַר לֵיהּ: אֲנָא רִישָׁא דְחַיִּיתָא אָמַרִי לָךְ?

In the end, after paying, the butcher went to give him the animal's head. Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Did I say to you that I wanted the head of the animal? I meant your own head!

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ: אֵי בְּעִית דְּאֲשַׁבְּקָךְ סָגִי אַחֲוֵי לִי פִיתְחָא דְבֵי אַתּוּנָא.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: If you wish for me to let you be, go and show me the entrance to the school of Athens.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ: מִסְתַּפִּינָא דְכָל דְּמַחֲוֵי קְטָלִי לֵיהּ.

The butcher said to him: I am afraid, as anyone who shows its location, they kill him.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לֵיהּ: דְּרִי כָּרִיכָא דְקִנְיָא, וְכִי מָטִית לְהֵתֶם זְקִפָּה כְּמָאן דְּקָא מְתַפַּח.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to him: Carry a bundle of reeds, and when you arrive there, stand it up like one who is resting, to mark the spot.

STATEMENT

אֲשַׁכַּח דִּרְבַּנָּאֵי מַגֵּנָאֵי וְדִרְבַּנָּאֵי מַבְרָאֵי, דְּאֵי חֲזוּ כְּרַעַא דְּעֵיילָא — קְטָלִי לְהוּ לְבָרָאֵי, וְדִנְפָקָא — קְטָלִי לְהוּ לְגֹוָאֵי.

Rabbi Yehoshua went and found guards on the inside and guards on the outside, and they had spread sand on the ground, so that if they saw footsteps entering, they would kill the outer guards for letting someone in, and if they saw footsteps exiting, they would kill the inner guards for letting someone out.

STATEMENT

אָפּבאַה לִסְנֹדָּהּ לִיה — קָטְלִי לְהוּ לְגִנְאִי,

Rabbi Yehoshua **reversed his sandal** and walked out, making it look like someone had left. When the authorities saw the footsteps, **they killed the inner guards**.

STATEMENT

אָפּבאַה לִסְנֹדָּהּ לִיה — קָטְלִי לְהוּ לְכוּ־לְהוּ.

He then **reversed his sandal** again and walked in, making it look like someone had entered. **They then killed all of them**, including the outer guards, and he entered.

STATEMENT

אָשְׁכַּח יְנוּקֵי מְלָעִיל, סְבִי מְלַתְחַת.

He entered and **found the younger sages sitting in the upper section**, and the elder sages sitting in the lower section.

STATEMENT

אָמַר: אִי יְהִיבִנָּא שְׁלָמָא לְהִנִּי, קָטְלִי לִי הִנִּי, סְבָרִי: אֲנִי עַד־יִפְיִנּוּ, דְּאֲנִי קִשְׁיִנּוּ טָפִי וְאִינְהוּ דְּרִדְקִי.

He **said** to himself: **If I greet these younger ones first, those elders will kill me**, as they will maintain: **We are better, because we are older and they are children**.

STATEMENT

אָמַר: שְׁלָמָא לְכוּ.

So he **said: Greetings to you**, addressing both groups generally.

QUESTION

אָמְרוּ לִיה: מַאי עֲבִידְתִּיהּ?

They said to him: What is your business here?

STATEMENT

אָמַר לְהוּ: אֲנִי חֲכִימָא דִּיהוּדָאִי אָנָּא, בְּעִינָא לְמִיגְמַר חֲכָמְתָּא מִינְיָכוּ.

He **said to them: I am a Sage of the Jews**, and I desire to learn wisdom from you.

STATEMENT

אִי הָכִי, נִיבְעִי לָהּ!

They **said: If so, let us ask you questions** to see if you are worthy!

STATEMENT

אָמַר לְהוּ: לְחַיִּי, אִי זָכִיתוּ — כָּל דְּבַעֲתוֹ עֲבִידוּ בִּי, וְאִי זָכִינָא בָּכוּ — אִיכְלוּ גִבְאִי בְּסַפִּינְתָּא.

He **said to them: Very well. If you win, do to me whatever you wish**, and if I defeat you, you must come eat with me on my ship.

QUESTION

אָמרוּ לֵיהּ: הָהוּא גַבְרָא דְאָזִיל וּבָעֵי אֶתְתָא וְלֹא יָהֲבוּ לֵיהּ, מַאי חֲזִי לֵיהּ דְאָזִיל הֵיכָא דְמַדְלוּ מִינֵיהּ?

They said to him: In the case of a certain man who goes and asks to marry a woman and they do not give her to him, why would he see fit to go to a family that is greater than he is? Surely they will reject him too!

STATEMENT

שָׁקַל סִיכָתָא, דָּצָה לְתַתָּאי — לֹא עָאֵל, לְעִילָאי — עָאֵל.

Rabbi Yehoshua took a peg and stuck it into the lower part of the wall, but it did not go in. He then stuck it into the upper portion of the wall where there was a hole, and it went in.

ANSWER

אָמר: הָאִי נָמִי מִיתְרָמִי בֵּת מְזֻלִּיהּ.

He said to them: In this case too, by the more distinguished family, perhaps he will find the girl destined for him because there is a "hole" or opening for him there.

QUESTION

גַבְרָא דְאֻזִּיף וְטָרִיף, מַאי חֲזֵא דְהָדַר אֻזִּיף?

They asked: In the case of a man who lends money and the borrower defaults so he has to seize his property, why would he see fit to lend again?

ANSWER

אָמר לָהּ: גַבְרָא אָזֵל לְאַגְמָא, קָטַל קַמָּא טוֹנָא וְלֹא מָצִי בֵּיהּ, קָטַל וּמָנַח עִילּוּיָהּ, עַד [דְּמִיתְרָמִי] אֵינִישׁ מְדֻלִּי לֵיהּ.

He said to them: This is like a man who goes to the marsh, cuts a first bundle of wood and cannot lift it. He goes and cuts more wood and places it upon the first, until a person happens to pass by and helps him raise it. So too, a lender keeps lending, hoping he will eventually find a borrower who will pay him back easily.

QUESTION

אָמרוּ לֵיהּ: אֵימָא לָן מִיֵּלִי דְבְדִיאִי!

They said to him: Tell us a matter of nonsense!

STATEMENT

אָמר לָהּ: הָהּ הָהוּא כּוּדְנִיתָא דִּילִידָא, וְהָהּ תִּלִּי לֵיהּ פִּיתְקָא, וּכְתֹב בֵּיהּ דְּמָסִיק פְּבִי אַבָּא מָאָה אֶלְפָּא זוּזִי.

He said to them: There was a certain mule that gave birth, and a note was hanging on its neck, and on it was written that it is owed 100,000 zuz by its father's household.

OBJECTION

אָמרוּ לֵיהּ: וְכוּדְנִיתָא מִי יִלְדָּה?

They said to him: But can a mule give birth?

RESOLUTION

אָמַר לָהֶם: [הֵנִי נִינְחוּ] מִלֵּי דְבָרֵי אֵי.

He said to them: This is why these are matters of nonsense! You asked for nonsense, and then you questioned its logic!

QUESTION

מִלְחָא כִּי סָרְיָא, בְּמַאי מְלַחֵי לָהּ?

They asked: When salt becomes spoiled, with what do they salt it to preserve it?

ANSWER

אָמַר לָהֶם: בְּסִילְתָּא דְכוּדְנִיתָא.

He said to them: With the afterbirth of a mule.

OBJECTION

וּמִי אִיכָּא סִילְתָּא לְכוּדְנִיתָא?

They asked: But is there an afterbirth for a mule, which cannot give birth?

RESOLUTION

וּמִלְחָא מִי סָרִי?

He replied: And does salt ever spoil? Just as salt never spoils, so too a mule never has an afterbirth.

QUESTION

בְּנֵי לֹן בֵּיתָא בְּאַוִּירָא דְעָלְמָא!

They said: Build us a house in the air of the world!

STATEMENT

אָמַר שָׁם, תִּלָּא בֵּין רְקִיעָא לְאַרְעָא.

Rabbi Yehoshua pronounced a Divine Name and suspended himself between heaven and earth.

ANSWER

אָמַר לָהֶם: אָסִיקוּ לִי לִיבְנֵי וְטִינָא.

He said to them: Bring up bricks and mortar to me here, and I will build it!

QUESTION

מְצִיעֶתִּיה דְעָלְמָא הֵיכָא?

They asked: Where is the exact center of the world?

ANSWER

זָקָפָה לְאַצְבָּעֶתִּיהּ, אָמַר לָהֶם: הֵכָא.

He raised his finger and said to them: Right here.

OBJECTION

אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ: וּמִי יֵימַר?

They said to him: And who says this is true?

RESOLUTION

אָיִתּוֹ אֲשֶׁלִּי וּמִשׁוּחוֹ.

He replied: Bring ropes and measure it yourselves if you do not believe me!

QUESTION

אֵית לָן בֵּירָא בְּדִבְרָא, עֵיילָא לְמַתָּא!

They said: We have a well in the field; bring it into the city!

ANSWER

אָמַר לָהּ: אֲפֹשִׁילוּ לִי חֲבָלֵי מִפָּאֲרִי וְאֶעֱיִילָיָהּ.

He said to them: Spin me ropes made of bran, and I will drag it in with them.

QUESTION

אֵית לָן רִיחָא דְתַבִּירָא, חִיטִּיָּהּ.

They said: We have a broken millstone; sew it back together!

ANSWER

אָמַר: כְּרוּכוּ לִי מִינֵיהּ גִּרְדֵּי וְאִיחִיטִּיָּהּ.

He said: Spin me thread from its chippings, and I will sew it.

QUESTION

מִשָּׂרָא דְסַכִּינֵי בְּמַאי קָטְלִי?

They asked: A bed of knives, with what do they harvest it?

ANSWER

בְּקַרְנָא דְחֻמְרָא.

He replied: With the horn of a donkey.

OBJECTION

וּמִי אִיכָא קַרְנָא לְחֻמְרָא?

They asked: But is there a horn on a donkey?

RESOLUTION

וּמִי אִיכָא מִשָּׂרָא דְסַכִּינֵי?

He replied: And is there a bed of knives that grows in the ground?

QUESTION

אֵייתוּ לִיהָ תְּרֵי בֵּיעֵי, אָמְרוּ לִיהָ: הִי דִּזְגָּתָא אוֹפְמָתִי וְהִי דִּזְגָּתָא חִיּוּרְתִּי?

They brought him two eggs and said to him: Which is from a black hen and which is from a white hen?

ANSWER

אֵייתִי לָהּ אִיהוּ תְּרֵי גְבִינֵי, אָמַר לָהּ: הִי דְעִיזָא אוֹפְמָתִי וְהִי דְעִיזָא חִיּוּרְתִּי?

He brought them two cheeses and said to them: Which is from a black goat and which is from a white goat?

QUESTION

וּרְצוּצָא דְמִית, מַהִיכָא נִפְיָא רוּחִיָּה?

They asked: A chick that died inside its shell, from where does its spirit depart?

ANSWER

מַהִיכָא דְעָל נִפְק.

He replied: From where it entered, it departed.

QUESTION

אֲחֹרֵי לֵן מָנָא דְלֹא שְׂוִי חֲבִילִיָּה!

They said: Show us a vessel that is not worth its own transport cost!

ANSWER

אֵייתִי בּוּדְיָא, פִּשְׁטִיָּה. לֹא הָוָה עֵייל בְּתַרְעָא. אָמַר לָהּ: אֵייתוּ מָרִי סִיתְרוּהָ. הֵינֵנוּ מָנָא דְלֹא שְׂוִי חֲבִילִיָּה.

He brought a reed mat and spread it out. It could not fit through the doorway because it was too wide. He said to them: Bring axes and break down the walls to get it out. He said: This is a vessel that is not worth its transport cost, as you must destroy the house to move it.

STATEMENT

אֵיתִינְהוּ כָל חַד וְחַד, כִּי חֲזִי שִׁיתִין בִּיסְתְּרָקִי, אָמַר: כּוּלְהוּ חֲבָרֵי לְהַכָּא אָתּוּ.

Having defeated them, he brought them, each and every one, to his ship. When each sage saw sixty mattresses in his room, he said: All of my colleagues have come here too, and he was appeased.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לִיהָ לְסַפּוּנָא: שְׂרִי סַפִּינְתָּהּ. בְּהֵדֵי דְקָאָתּוּ שְׁקֵל עֶפְרָא מֵעֶפְרִיָּהּ.

Rabbi Yehoshua said to the sailor: Set sail with your ship. While they were coming on the journey, he took some soil from their soil of Athens.

SUMMARY

The Gemara first clarifies the rules of animal reproduction, resolving a contradiction regarding the external signs of egg-laying versus live-bearing species by focusing on the position of the male organ. We then learn that because chickens only lay

eggs by day, an egg found early on Yom Tov morning is permitted, as we assume it was either laid the day before or that most of it had emerged before Yom Tov and returned inside, following Rabbi Yochanan's rule. Finally, the Gemara lists the three creatures that mate face-to-face—fish, humans, and the snake—explaining that this is because the Shechinah spoke with them, and concludes with a detailed Braisa mapping the gestation periods of animals, from the twenty-one days of a chicken to the seventy years of a viper and the seven years of a snake, deriving the snake's seven-year gestation from the curse in the Torah.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Gemara on our daf brings down a fascinating list of the gestation periods of different animals and the corresponding ripening times of trees, showing how the physical world is perfectly aligned. In the middle of this, the Gemara points out that while most animals mate face-to-back, three species mate face-to-face: fish, humans, and the snake. Why? The Gemara explains: "Because the Shechinah spoke with them."

Think about this chiddush. The snake was cursed to the lowest depths, yet because Hashem once spoke to it in Gan Eden, it retained a permanent mark of dignity in its physical nature. Lichoira, we see from here a tremendous yesod about the power of a single connection with the Ribono shel Olam. If a snake, the ultimate symbol of tumah and curse, is forever elevated just because the Shechinah once spoke to it, how much more so a Yiddishe neshama!

Every single day, we speak to the Shechinah in our tefillos, and Hashem speaks to us through the holy Torah we learn. This is not just a spiritual concept; it is a reality that must change how we carry ourselves. A Yid who stands before Hashem cannot live a cheap, animalistic life. The closeness we have with the Ribono shel Olam demands that we act with a higher level of dignity, refinement, and kedushah in everything we do.

Today, before you stand up to daven Shemoneh Esrei or open a Gemara, stop for ten seconds and remind yourself: "I am about to speak with the Shechinah." Let that awareness bring a natural dignity and royalty to your speech, your posture, and your entire day.