

דף יומי • הל"ן • דף קמ"ב ע"א

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THE SUGYA

We start off on our daf finishing up the sugya of Shmuel's advice to Levi bar Simon regarding how to properly acquire the young birds in a nest on Erev Yom Tov. The Gemara explains that since these were new produce, they weren't yet acquired, and Shmuel had to give him a specific eitzah of banging on the nest to make the mother birds fly up so he could acquire the young and then transfer them over.

Then, we learn a beautiful and fundamental Mishnah regarding the mitzva of Shiluach HaKein. The Mishnah teaches that even if a person needs a bird for the taharah process of a metzora, he still cannot take the mother with the children. From here, the Mishnah makes a powerful kal v'chomer: if for Shiluach HaKein, which is an easy mitzva that only costs a person about an issar, the Torah promises long life and goodness, how much more so will the reward be great for the more difficult mitzvos in the Torah!

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

QUESTION

בעומד ואומר "זה וזה אני נוטל" סגי?

But lichaira, **by standing** on Erev Yom Tov **and saying**, "This bird and that bird I will take" on Yom Tov, that should be **sufficient** to prepare them for Yom Tov use! Why did Shmuel need to give him a different advice?

ANSWER

הנהו פירי חדתי הוו, דלוי בר סימון גופיה לא הוה קני להו,

The Gemara answers: **Those** birds **were new produce**, meaning they were newly hatched in the nest, **which Levi bar Simon himself had not yet acquired**, since they were hefker and he had not yet made a kinyan on them.

EXPLANATION

והכי קאמר ליה: זיל וטרוף אקון, דליתגבחו וניקנינהו לוי בר סימון, והדר ליקנינהו ניהלך בסודר.

And this is what Shmuel was saying to him: Go and bang on the nest so that the mother birds will rise up, and then the nest, which is Levi's courtyard, will acquire them for Levi bar Simon, and then he can transfer ownership to you through a kinyan chalipin with a cloth.

MISHNAH מִשְׁנָה

MISHNAH

מתני' לא יטול אדם אם על פנים, אפילו לטהר את המצורע.

MISHNAH: A person may not take the mother bird with the offspring, even if he is taking her to purify the leper, which is a great mitzvah.

MISHNAH

ומה אם מצוה קלה, שהיא כאיסור, אמרה תורה "למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים",

And if regarding a light mitzvah, which costs only about an issar to perform, the Torah says, "So that it may go well with you and you may prolong your days,"

MISHNAH

קל וחומר על מצות המורות שבתורה.

then surely we can learn a kal vachomer that the reward is much greater for the more difficult mitzvos in the Torah.

גמרא GEMARA

BRAISA

גמ' תנא, רבי יעקב אומר: אין לה כל מצוה ומצוה שבתורה שמתן שכרה בצדה, שאין תחיית המתים תלוייה בה.

GEMARA: It was taught in a braisa, Rabbi Yaakov says: There is not a single mitzvah in the Torah whose reward is written alongside it, whose reward is not dependent on the resurrection of the dead, meaning the true reward is only given in the World-to-Come.

BRAISA

בכבוד אב ואם כתיב: "למען יאריך ימיה ולמען ייטב לך",

For example, by honoring father and mother it is written: "So that your days may be lengthened and so that it may go well with you."

BRAISA

בשילוח הקן כתיב: "למען ייטב לך והארכת ימים".

And by sending away the nest it is written: "So that it may go well with you and you may prolong your days."

BRAISA

הרי שאמר לו אביו: עלה לבירה והבא לי גוזלות! ועלה, ושלח את האם ולקח את הבנים, ובחזרתו נפל ומת.

Yet, it once happened that a father said to his son, "Climb up to the loft and bring me fledglings!" And he climbed up, and sent away the mother and took the offspring, thereby performing both kibbud av and shiluach haken, and on his return he fell and died.

BRAISA

היכן אריכות ימיו של זה? והיכן טובתו של זה?

Where is the length of days of this one? And where is the goodness of this one?

BRAISA

אָלָא "לְמַעַן יֵאָרִיכוֹן יָמֶיךָ" – בְּעוֹלָם שְׂכוּלֹו אֲרוּרָה, "וּלְמַעַן יֵיטֵב לָךְ" – לְעוֹלָם שְׂכוּלֹו טוֹב.

Rather, "so that your days may be lengthened" refers to the world that is entirely long, which is Olam Haba, "and so that it may go well with you" refers to the world that is entirely good.

QUESTION

וּדְלָמָא לָא הָוָה הָכִי?

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps such an incident never happened**, and in reality, people do receive their reward in this world?

ANSWER

רַבִּי יַעֲקֹב מַעֲשֶׂה חָזָא!

The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Yaakov actually saw such an event** happen with his own eyes!

QUESTION

וּדְלָמָא מְהֵרָהּ בְּעֵבֶרָה הָוָה?

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps he was thinking of a sin** at that moment, and that is why he was punished?

ANSWER

מִחֲשַׁבְתָּהּ רָעָה אֵין תְּקַדּוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצַרְפָּה לְמַעֲשֶׂה.

The Gemara answers: **A bad thought is not joined by the Holy One, Blessed be He, to an action**, so he would not be punished with death for a mere thought.

QUESTION

וּדְלָמָא מְהֵרָהּ בְּעֵבֶרָה זָרָה הָוָה, דְּכָתִיב: "לְמַעַן תִּפְשֶׁשׂ אֶת בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּלִבָּם", וְאָמַר רַב אַחָא בַר יַעֲקֹב: זֶה מִחֲשַׁבְתָּהּ עֵבֶרָה זָרָה.

The Gemara asks: **But perhaps he was thinking of avodah zarah**, as it is written: "In order to seize the House of Israel in their heart," and Rav Acha bar Yaakov said: This refers to the thought of avodah zarah, for which one is indeed punished?

ANSWER

הָכִי קָאָמַר: אִם אֵיתָא דְאִיפָא שְׂכַר מִצְוֹת בְּהָאִי עָלְמָא, תִּהְיִי לִיה וְתִגָּן עָלֵיהּ דְּלֹא לִיתִי לִידֵי הִרְהוּר וְלִיתִּזְקָה, אָלָא שְׂכַר מִצְוֹת בְּהָאִי עָלְמָא לֵיפָא.

The Gemara answers: **This is what Rabbi Yaakov is saying**: If it is so that there is reward for mitzvos in this world, the merit of the mitzvah should have benefited him and protected him so that he would not even come to have such thoughts and be harmed. Rather, we must conclude that there is no reward for mitzvos in this world.

QUESTION

וְהָאָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: שְׁלוּחֵי מִצְוָה אֵינָן נִזְקָיִם!

The Gemara asks: **But didn't Rabbi Elazar say: Those sent to perform a mitzvah are not susceptible to harm?** How could he have been harmed while performing the mitzvah?

ANSWER

בְּחֻצָּתָם שְׂאֵנִי.

The Gemara answers: **On their return it is different**, as the protection only lasts while going to do the mitzvah.

OBJECTION

וְהָאֵמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: שְׁלוּחֵי מִצְוָה אֵינָן נִזְקִים, לֹא בְּהֵלִיכָתָן וְלֹא בְּחֻצָּתָם!

The Gemara objects: **But didn't Rabbi Elazar say: Those sent to perform a mitzvah are not susceptible to harm, neither on their going nor on their return!**

RESOLUTION

סוּלָם רְעוּעַ הָיָה, וּמָקוֹם דְּקָבוּעַ הָיָה שְׂאֵנִי, דְּכָתִיב: "וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֵיךְ אֵלֶּה וְשָׁמַע שְׁאוּל וַהֲרֹגֵנִי".

The Gemara answers: **It was a rickety ladder, and a place where danger is established is different**, for we do not rely on miracles even when doing a mitzvah, as it is written: "And Shmuel said, 'How can I go? If Shaul hears of it, he will kill me.'"

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: אֵלְמָלָא דְרָשִׁיָּה אַחֵר לְהָאֵי קְרָא כְּרַבִּי יַעֲקֹב בַּר בְּרַתִּיהּ – לֹא חָטָא.

Rav Yosef said: **Had Acher, Elisha ben Avuyah, interpreted this pasuk like Rabbi Yaakov, the son of his daughter, did, he would not have sinned** and gone off the derech.

QUESTION

מַאי חָזָא?

The Gemara asks: **What did Acher see** that caused him to lose his emunah?

ANSWER

אֵיכָּא דְאָמְרִי: כִּי הָאֵי מַעֲשֵׂה חָזָא,

Some say: He saw an incident like this very one that Rabbi Yaakov saw, where a son died while honoring his father and sending the mother bird.

ANSWER

וְאֵיכָּא דְאָמְרִי: לִישְׁנָא דְרַבִּי חוּצְפִית הַמְתוּרְגָּמָן חָזָא, דְּהָיָה מוּטָלָת בְּאַשְׁפָּה.

And some say: He saw the tongue of Rabbi Chutzpis the Meturgeman, which was cast in the garbage dump after he was murdered by the Roman government.

STATEMENT

אָמַר: פֶּה שֶׁהִפִּיק מְרַגְלִיּוֹת לְחוּץ עֶפְרָא?!

Acher said: **Shall a mouth that produced pearls of Torah lick the dust?!**

EXPLANATION

וְהוּא לֹא יָדַע "לְמַעַן יִיטֵב לָךְ" – בְּעוֹלָם שְׂכוּלוֹ טוֹב, "וּלְמַעַן יִאֲרִיכוֹן יָמֶיךָ" – בְּעוֹלָם שְׂכוּלוֹ אָרוֹךְ.

But he did not know that "so that it may go well with you" refers to the world that is entirely good, and "so that your days may be lengthened" refers to the world that is entirely long.

STATEMENT

הִדְרֹן עָלֶיךָ שִׁילוּחַ הַקֵּן, וְסָלִיקָא לָהּ מִסְכַּת חוּלִין.

We shall return to you, "Shiluach HaKen," and completed is Maseches Chullin!

SUMMARY

The Gemara brings down the famous shitta of Rabbi Ya'akov, who teaches that there is no reward for mitzvos in this world, and that all promised rewards—such as long life and goodness—refer to the World-to-Come, which is entirely long and good. Rabbi Ya'akov learned this from a tragic ma'aseh where a son went to fulfill both kibbud av and Shiluach HaKein, yet fell and died upon his return. The Gemara analyzes this incident, questioning why the rule of 'shluchei mitzva einu nizokin' (those on the path of a mitzva are not harmed) did not protect him, resolving that it was a rickety ladder where danger was established, or that he was on his return journey. Finally, the Gemara notes that if Elisha ben Avuya (Acher) had only darshened these pesukim the way his grandson Rabbi Ya'akov did, he would never have fallen into heresy after witnessing similar tragedies.

The Gemara here brings down the famous, powerful kasha of Rabbi Ya'akov: We see a young man who goes up a ladder to fulfill two of the greatest mitzvos, honoring his father and sending away the mother bird, and on his way down, he falls and dies. Where is his long life? Where is his goodness? The teretz is the foundation of our entire emunah: "S'char mitzvos b'hai alma leika", the true reward for mitzvos is not in this world. The Torah is promising us a world that is "kulo aroch," entirely long, and "kulo tov," entirely good.

Lichoira, this is a very heavy concept to carry. We want to see the good right now! But the Tanna is teaching us a deep yesod in our avodas Hashem. If we received a check in the mail every time we put on tefillin or gave tzedakah, our mitzvos wouldn't be an act of ratzon and connection to Hashem; they would be a business transaction. Hashem wants us to build a real, loving relationship with Him, which means we do His ratzon because He is our Father, trusting that every single drop of our sweat and effort is being saved up for the ultimate, eternal reward.

Rav Yosef tells us something frightening: if Acher (Elisha ben Avuyah) had only learned this d'rash of Rabbi Ya'akov, he never would have sinned and gone off the derech. Acher saw the tongue of the great martyr Rabbi Chutzpis HaMeturgeman dragging in the dirt and asked, "Is this the mouth that spoke Torah?" Because he expected his reward in this world, his emunah shattered. When we expect this-world results for our spiritual investments, we set ourselves up for disappointment and confusion when life gets difficult.

Today, when you do a mitzva, whether it is davening with kavanah, learning a blatt Gemara, or helping your spouse, remind yourself: "I am not looking for immediate payment." Do the mitzva purely to bring nachas ruach to Hashem, with the deep emunah that every single ma'aseh tov you do is eternal, waiting for you in the world that is kulo tov.