

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Tumtum (cont.)

The Gemara resolves the challenge to Abaye's explanation of the Mishnah.

2) Which gender is preferred?

The Mishnah's implication that daughters are preferred to sons is challenged.

Shmuel offers an alternative resolution.

R' Chisda relates that in his opinion girls are preferable to sons.

Alternatively, the Mishnah follows R' Yehudah's opinion, which maintains that girls are preferred to boys.

The context in which R' Yehudah indicates that girls are preferred to boys is sought after and found.

A vague Baraisa is cited and explained by R' Ashi.

Another Baraisa is cited that is explained by Ravina.

In the course of Ravina's explanation he cited another Baraisa.

The last ruling of this Baraisa is explained.

3) Conveying property to a fetus

A man declared that his property should go to his fetus and R' Huna ruled that such a transfer is not valid.

R' Nachman challenges R' Huna from the Mishnah.

R' Huna responds that he does not know who the author of the Mishnah would be.

The Gemara suggests different Tannaim, each of whom could be the author of the Mishnah, but all the suggestions are rejected.

Two additional explanations of the Mishnah are suggested and rejected. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why is it advantageous to have a daughter before a son?

2. How did Hashem bless Avrohom with בכל?

3. Why did R' Huna reject the implication of the Mishnah that one could convey property to a fetus?

4. Explain the halacha that a fetus "disqualifies and does not enable to eat"?

Distinctive INSIGHT

A first born daughter is a good sign for children

א"ר חסדא בת תחילה סימן טוב לבנים...ולדידי עדיף בנות מבנים

Ben Yehoyada writes that when the first child born to a family is a girl, this is a good sign for the בנים, meaning for the children to come later. A oldest daughter is helpful in raising the other children, and for the children, having a "mother's helper" is a benefit. However, a daughter being the first born child is not necessarily a good sign for the father, because he loses the opportunity to perform the mitzvah of פדיון הבן.

Surprisingly, in the very next statement in the Gemara, R' Chisda himself says that for him, having a first born daughter was better. Ben Yehoyada points out that R' Chisda was a kohen. For him, having a daughter only had an upside to it, in that this daughter would help in raising the family. But there was no downside regarding the inability to perform the mitzvah of פדיון הבן, because where the father himself is a kohen this mitzvah is not performed. Now we can understand R' Chisda's full statement. Although for most people having a daughter first is only a benefit for the children, but not for the father, this is only regarding those who are Yisroel. However, for me, and for other fathers who are kohanim and levi'im, having a daughter first is good for the father, as well as for the children.

Rabeinu Gershom explains a different reason why having a daughter first is a good sign. When the Gemara says that "the evil eye will not have control" it means that once a father has a daughter first, people will no longer say or ask, "How many children (or sons) does So-and-so have?" Apparently, if a person has a son first, others notice and start to count his children, which is a lightning-rod for the evil eye. When a person has a daughter first, this aspect of attention is diffused. This is a source from where we see that it is a form of evil eye to ask someone how many children he has, and it seems to be equally inappropriate to answer this question when it is asked. The proper thing to do is to deflect the question, and say, "Baruch Hashem, not enough!" or "Thank you for asking, each one is a treasure!"

The Vilna Gaon explains that the fear of Heaven is referred to as "a daughter," while Torah is parallel with the concept of "a son." This statement of R' Chisda is understood in reference to the Mishnah (Avos 3:9), "Anyone

HALACHAH Highlight

Does a soul become elevated if his daughter hires someone to say kaddish?

Someone who does not leave a son to inherit his estate etc.

There were once two sisters, Rochel and Leah, who inherited their father's estate. Rochel hired someone to say kaddish for her deceased father and then asked Leah to pay half of the fee. Leah refused to pay and the two sisters sought a ruling from the author of Teshuvos Chazon Nachum. Chazon Nachum¹ explored whether there is a benefit to the soul of the deceased if kaddish is said by someone who was hired by Rochel, and if so, we can expect Leah to share that cost. Or perhaps there is no benefit for the deceased, and Leah would not have to pay. His inclination is that in this case the kaddish does not benefit the soul of the deceased. The benefit of hiring someone to say kaddish is limited to where the son hires someone to say kaddish. It is the son's good deeds which provide benefit for the soul of his father since the son is an extension of his father (ברא) (מזכה אבא). When a daughter hires someone to say kaddish it does not benefit the soul of her father since her mitzvos do not provide benefit for the soul of her father.

He cites proof to this principle from authorities who challenge our Gemara. Why should Hashem be angry with

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whose fear of Heaven (a daughter) precedes his Torah wisdom (a son), his wisdom will be sustained." One's fear of Heaven will help to sustain and support his Torah. ■

כל שאינו מניח בן ליורשו וכו'

someone who did not leave a son to inherit when that matter is not in his control? These authorities explain that the principle that a son provides merit for his father indicates that a father inherits the good deeds of his son after he has passed away. The meaning of the phrase כל שאינו מניח בן ליורשו – someone who does not leave a son to inherit his estate – does not refer to whether a person merited to have a son or not; rather it refers to whether one left a son who was properly trained in Torah who will provide the father with merit after his death. Hashem is angry with a person who did not educate his son in such a manner that the son will perform mitzvos that are a benefit to the father. Accordingly, one would conclude that a father does not benefit from the mitzvos performed by his daughter since only the son is an extension of his father and not his daughter. In his final analysis he concludes that a father does, in fact, benefit from the mitzvos performed by his daughter and therefore there is benefit for the soul of the deceased if his daughter hires someone to say kaddish. Rochel cannot, however, obligate Leah to pay the one who is saying kaddish since the recitation of kaddish is only a custom and one cannot be compelled to pay for something that is merely a custom. ■

1. שו"ת חזון נחום ח"א סי' קי"ז. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Are daughters better than sons?

"ולדין בתן עדיפה לי..."

Rav Michel Shurkin, shlita, recounts: "During my last encounter with Rav Moshe Feinstein, zt"l, two months before he was called to yeshivah shel ma'alah, I brought up that I was worried about finding shiduchim for my daughters.

"Rav Moshe replied that this should not concern me at all. 'In Bava Basra 141 we find that Rav Chisda said that he preferred daughters to sons.'

"With his eyes lit up with joy, Rav Moshe quoted the commentary of Tosafos by heart, 'Even though Rav Chis-

dah's sons were Amoraim'—here Rav Moshe mentioned every one of Rav Chisda's sons. Although he was weak, he still remembered everything – 'nevertheless, since his son-in-law Rava and Rami bar Chamah were among the gedolei hador, he preferred daughters to sons.'

Rav Moshe then showered me with warm blessings, so I should not worry."¹

Once when the Chasam Sofer, zt"l, had a girl he was ecstatic. "Now I am assured that I will have a talmid chacham in my household!"

When the Rebbe of Klausenberg, zt"l, recounted this vignette he mentioned the Tosafos quoted above and another source as well. "The Seder Hadoros explains that Rav Chisda-

said: 'While I cannot be certain my sons will be chachamim, I can ensure my daughter will marry chachaim, because of my repute.'

The Rebbe concluded, "It seems clear that this statement is not relevant to everyone, since in order to attain a son-in-law who is a talmid chacham one is required to pay out a large dowry, as we find in Pesachim 49. And even if one is wealthy, perhaps he will not want his daughters to marry a talmid chacham. But Rav Chisda was one of the gedolei hador in addition to being wealthy, as we find in Pesachim 113. This statement is truly fitting for him. Especially as his sons-in-law were of the gedolei hador, as Tosafos explains."² ■

1. מגד גבעות עולם, ח"ב, ע' נ"ד

2. נתיב נייטרא, אייר תשכ"ד, ע' ד' ■