



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Tzara'as (cont.)

The Gemara decides that R' Chanina's original assertion that the Mishnah does not follow R' Akiva is more reasonable.

It was stated earlier that according to R' Akiva there are four shades of tzara'as. The Gemara asks for the source of this statement.

On the second attempt the Gemara identifies the source that according to R' Akiva there are four shades of tzara'as.

The Gemara proves that בהרת is the whitest of the tzara'as blemishes.

A Beraisa describes the appearance of different tzara'as blemishes.

R' Zeira explains how we know that there is a blemish that is secondary to the בהרת.

A Beraisa supports this explanation.

R' Bibi in the name of R' Asi explains what is meant when the Mishnah stated that שאת is similar to white wool.

R' Chanina offers a parable to explain the different levels and categories of tzara'as blemishes.

This parable is slightly modified.

R' Ada bar Abba offers his own analogy to explain the different levels and categories of tzara'as blemishes.

This parable is slightly modified.

Rava and Ravina offer additional parables.

The Gemara elaborates on Rava's parable.

2) Tum'ah of the Beis HaMikdash and its sacred items

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REVIEW and Remember

1. How do different appearances of blemishes combine with one another?

2. What is the meaning of the term פתוך?

3. How does R' Chanina illustrate the view of Chachamim?

4. How do we know that the verses refer to the tum'ah of the Beis HaMikdash and its sacred items?

Distinctive INSIGHT

A kohen who inspects the spot must be an expert in the shades of white and their names

אמר לו לומר לך כל כהן שאינו בקי בהן ובשמותיהן אינו רואה את הנגעים

The Gemara (5b) noted that the Mishnah which lists each of the four colors of white which are t'mei'im was not authored by Rabbi Akiva. The Gemara realized that according to Rabbi Akiva, all colors can be combined with the shade of שאת (white as wool) to comprise an area which is tamei. This is because the two sub-white colors (סיד—lime white, and קרום ביצה—egg-membrane white) are תולדות of שאת, and שאת itself can combine with בהרת (snow-white) based upon the verse (Vayikra 14:56). This is what Rabbi Akiva means when he says that the colors can be combined “זו למעלה מזו.” It would have been sufficient for the Mishnah to have simply said, “every white shade from egg-membrane white and brighter is tamei, and they all can join to form the requisite area.” Rabbi Yehoshua asked his father, Rabbi Akiva, why the Mishnah lists each color separately and by name. Rabbi Akiva answered that the Mishnah thereby teaches that a kohen must be familiar with each shade of white and its name in order to be qualified to inspect and declare any plague that he sees to be tamei. If he is not trained in this regard, he should not avail himself to examine and decide about such matters.

The general rule is that a discolored mark which is white can only be examined and declared tamei by a kohen. Obviously, if he is ignorant of the various colors of discolored skin and which are tmei'im, he would not be able to function in this regard. Tosafos (ד"ה כל כהן) notes that if a Yisroel is well-versed in this area, and he instructs the kohen to understand what he is seeing, the kohen can use the assistance of the Yisroel and make the declaration of tamei regarding a spot his is examining. On the one hand, as we have seen, it is not necessary that the kohen be independently familiar with the full details of these halachos. On the other hand, Tosafos proves from a Gemara in Arachin (3a) that the kohen has to at least understand what the non-kohen is explaining to him and telling him about the appearance of the plague, so that he is aware of what he is saying when he makes his pronouncement, and that it is he who is making the determination of “tamei.”

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HALACHAH Highlight

Examining tzara'as blemishes by a non-expert

כל כהן שאינו בקי בהן ובשמותיהן אינו רואה את הנגעים

Any kohen who is not an expert in them and their names may not examine tzara'as blemishes

R' Akiva declares that a kohen who is not an expert in recognizing tzara'as blemishes and their names may not examine tzara'as blemishes to determine whether the person afflicted with the blemishes is tamei. This is contradicted by a Mishnah and Beraisa cited in the Gemara Arachin (3a) that indicates that a kohen who is not an expert in recognizing tzara'as blemishes and their names is fit to examine them. Ravina answers that a non-expert may examine tzara'as blemishes if he will understand when others explain to him how to rule but a non-expert who does not understand when others explain to him may not examine blemishes.

Tosafos¹ explains that when a kohen is not an expert in examining tzara'as blemishes he must take with him an expert, even one who is not a kohen, to the examination. The expert will then instruct the kohen whether the blemish is tahor or tamei and the kohen will make the appropriate declaration. The reason this is necessary is that the Torah mandates that the declaration of tum'ah or taharah come from the mouth of the kohen.

According to a second explanation² Ravina was not referring to a kohen who will understand when explained to him but he referred to a non-kohen who could understand when the nature of the blemish is explained to him. What is the necessity for a non-kohen who is not an expert himself? Since

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A Beraisa demonstrates how we know that the pasuk refers to tum'ah of the Beis HaMikdash and its sacred items.

The exposition of the Beraisa is challenged. ■

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Rambam writes (הלכות טומאת צרעת ט:ב) that a declaration regarding a white spot must be made by a kohen, even if he is a minor or an imbecile; as long as an expert stands next to him and tells him what to say, this is valid. Kesef Mishnah explains that Rambam certainly agrees that the kohen cannot just parrot the words of the expert, but he must understand what is being explained to him. Chazon Ish writes that it is adequate if the kohen understands for the moment, even if would have to be reminded again the next time he sees a spot a week later. ■

anyway there is a need for a non-kohen who is an expert - he should speak to the kohen directly. Tosafos³ answers that we refer to a case where the non-kohen expert has weak eyes and cannot examine the tzara'as blemish personally. He will explain to the non-kohen non-expert what to look for and that person will examine the blemish to determine whether the blemish makes the person tamei or not. He will then instruct the kohen who does not even understand these matters when explained to him what to declare and the declaration will determine whether the person is tamei or tahor. ■

1. תוסי ערכיגן ג. ד"ה דמסברי ליה וסבר.

2. תוסי שם ותוסי לסוגיין ד"ה כל כהן.

3. תוסי לסוגיין ד"ה כל כהן. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Rising Above for the Right Reasons

"אין שאת אלא לשון גבוה..."

Rav Moshe Sternbuch, shlit"a, explains that the three forms of tzora'as allude to three different natural flaws which cause one to speak lashon hara. "The word "שאת" has the same root as "מתנשא," to rise above. This alludes to one who speaks lashon hara so that he can feel bigger than his friend. "ספחתי" as in נספח, means to be attached to something. This person slanders as a result of the bad environment to which he is attached that considers lashon hara a normal mode of conversation in-

stead of the poisonous speech it is. 'בהרת' comes from בהיר, which means to clarify. This person's excuse for speaking slander is to clarify the absolute truth. Each of these causes is equally נגע צרעת — a leprous plague."¹

But of course these characteristics are not intrinsically bad. What could be wrong with trying to find the absolute truth or closely adhering to the right kind of environment? It is only when we use these for negativity that they are perverted and make us spiritually diseased.

As far as the positive application of 'שאת', which means to rise above, the Shem MiShmuel learns a very inspiring lesson from its positive application. "The verse states regarding Kayin, 'ואם תיטב

— If you will improve, you will rise.' God told Kayin, 'Why do you have a negative self-image? This is incorrect since if you go in the ways of the righteous you will be of the greatest.' The meaning of the word 'שאת' is uplifted as we find in Shevuos 6, 'אין שאת אלא לשוןגבוה.' In our context, Hashem was adjuring Kayin to fulfill the verse, 'ויגבה לבו בדרכי ה' — And his heart was proud in the ways of Hashem.'"

He concludes, "Now we can better understand the beginning of God's statement to Kayin: 'Why are you angry about the past and why has your face fallen out of despair for what the future holds?'"² ■

1. טעם ודעת, ויקרא, י"ג ב'.

2. שם משמואל, בראשית. ■