



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins with a dispute whether two witnesses are needed for seclusion the same as two witnesses are needed for a warning. A description of the warning the husband gives to his wife is presented.

2) The order of the Massechtos

The Gemara wonders why Masseches Sotah follows Masseches Nazir.

A Baraisa is cited to answer the Gemara's inquiry and following an additional challenge the Gemara explains the rationale for the order of Nedarim, Nazir and Sotah.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

The word **המקנה** indicates that a man is prohibited to warn his wife against going into seclusion with another man.

4) Shidduchim

R' Shmuel bar R' Yitzchok would introduce masseches Sotah with an exposition related to shidduchim.

Rabbah bar bar Chana also describes the difficulty for Hashem to make shidduchim.

The assertion that it is difficult for Hashem to make shidduchim is challenged.

To answer this challenge the Gemara distinguishes between a first marriage and a second marriage.

5) Defilement

It is inferred that both R' Yehoshua and R' Eliezer would agree that only one witness is necessary for defilement (**טומאה**) and a Mishnah expresses the same position. The Gemara asks for the source that one witness should be believed.

A Baraisa is cited that provides the source for this ruling.

The necessity for this exposition is unsuccessfully challenged.

6) Clarifying the dispute

The rationales behind R' Yehoshua and R' Eliezer's respective positions are explained.

R' Eliezer's position is unsuccessfully challenged.

A second version of R' Eliezer's position is presented.

The rationale behind this second version is explained.

A point that relates to whether there is an "end to the matter" in the Baraisa just cited containing the second version of R' Eliezer's position is clarified.

R' Chanina from Sura warns that nowadays one should be careful and not warn his wife against going into seclusion with another man since it may create an everlasting prohibition.

7) קינוי

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Distinctive INSIGHT

The juxtaposition of the laws of Sotah and the laws of Nazir

שכל הרואה סוטה בקלקולה יזיר עצמו מן היין

The Gemara notes that the significance of the juxtaposition of the laws of Sotah and the laws of Nazir is to teach us that anyone who sees a Sotah in her disgrace should separate himself from wine, which can lead to adultery.

Many are puzzled by this statement of Chazal, for one would assume that the man who has witnessed first hand the horrendous fate of a Sotah would truly appreciate the debased nature of this immoral behavior and should be the last to be enticed by it?

The Baal Shem Tov explained that if a person witnessed a Sotah in her disgrace he must interpret this as a heavenly lesson that he is weak in that area and he must consequently seek to improve himself and erect extra barriers to guard himself.

Based on this, Rabbi Tzvi Haskell suggests that we can perhaps understand another lesson of Chazal (Berachos 31a), that one who departs from his friend should do so with words of Torah so that through this he will remember him. This message of Chazal, however, is discussing a friend who otherwise might be forgotten, not a dear friend whose memory is etched in one's mind. If this is so, why is it so important to find a vehicle by which to remember him?

Perhaps with the insight of the Baal Shem Tov we now understand that when we meet people and become acquainted with them, it is not simply by chance. Rather,

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REVIEW and Remember

1. Explain the rationale for the order of the Massechtos of Kesubos, Nedarim, Nazir, and Sotah?

2. Are all shidduchim difficult for Hashem to make?

3. What is the basis for the dispute between R' Yehoshua and R' Eliezer?

4. Why is it important, nowadays, for a husband to avoid warning his wife from going into seclusion with another man?

HALACHAH Highlight

Is a written warning valid?

וקנא את אשתו והיא נטמאה

“And he warned his wife and she became defiled.”

Sefer Divrei Chachamim v'Chidosam¹ initially suggests that a husband should be able to write a warning to his wife in the presence of witnesses. This would be different than the halachos of taking an oath where the Torah is particular that the oath should be articulated and merely writing an oath is not binding. He then expresses uncertainty about the matter because the Yerushalmi indicates that the word דבר (Devarim 24:1) refers to the husband's warning which suggests that the warning must include an element of speech. Teshuvos Even Yekara² takes it for granted that a husband who warns his wife in writing has issued a valid warning because the warning is nothing more than an expression of protest against his wife's going into seclusion with a particular man and there is no reason the protest should be made verbally rather than orally. Minchas Pitim³ also accepts the assertion that a warning issued in writing is valid but expresses uncertainty whether it is acceptable for the husband to write a warning and send it in the mail to his wife because it may be that she has to receive the written warning in the presence of witnesses.

Maharsham⁴ also addressed this matter and wrote that he does know a reason a warning issued in writing should

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Reish Lakish defines the word קינוי which indicates that the husband has the power to establish that a warning was issued.

Abaye is cited as offering another definition of the word קינוי which indicates that two witnesses are needed to establish that a warning was issued. ■

not be valid if the wife recognizes and can read her husband's handwriting. Furthermore, one could infer from a ruling of Rambam⁵ that a warning issued in writing is acceptable. Rambam writes that a woman who cannot hear does not drink the bitter waters because the verse states —ואמר אל האשה—and he will say to his wife,” which excludes a wife who cannot hear. Why is an exposition necessary, asks Maharsham, since without the ability to hear she won't know that her husband issued a warning? The necessity for the exposition indicates that the husband can issue a warning in a way other than speaking it to his wife, e.g. a written warning and the only reason to exclude a woman who is deaf is this exposition. Maharsham proceeds to offer alternative reasons why an exposition is necessary that don't necessarily indicate that a written warning is acceptable. In the end, however, he follows his initial approach that a written warning is valid. ■

1. ספר דברי חכמים וחיזוקם סוטה פ"א ה"א
2. שו"ת אבן יקרה מהדר"ת סי' ז'
3. מנחת פיתים סי' קע"הח
4. שו"ת מהרש"ם ח"א סי' רכ"ט
5. רמב"ם פ"ב מהל' סוטה ה"ב-ג ■

STORIES Off the Daf

“A Voice Calls Out...”

”בת קול יוצאת ואומרת...”

As most people in shidduchim find, it usually takes some trying to find the right match. For some, it takes literally years of trying and meeting with dozens of prospective spouses. Few are those who get engaged with the first person suggested.

Rav Dovid Moshe from Tchortkov, zt”l, would pay the people who made each suggested shidduch his children met, even those that didn't work out. When someone asked him regarding

this seemingly strange custom, he had a very interesting answer. “In Sotah 2, Chazal tell us that a voice declares ‘the daughter of ploni to ploni’ forty days before the fetus is formed. On the surface it seems strange that the Gemara describes the voice as saying אומרת and not קובעים or מכריחים which would imply setting or deciding. It seems quite likely that another voice mentions a different possibility, and a further voice intones a third possible match. And perhaps even more. Either way, most people have many people they must meet before they find their true bashert. It is only after one meets all the inappropriate matches that one finally gets engaged to the right one.”

The Rebbe concluded, “Therefore every match suggested and subsequently met brings the real match closer to reality. Now you can understand why I pay each and every shadchan even if things don't work out. Since they are helping things along, they deserve monetary compensation!” ■

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they, too, serve as our teachers of character traits and life experiences. The fear is that if we forget the teacher, we may forget the lessons too. From all this, we see that life is but a classroom and all of us are the students. May Hashem grant us the wisdom and the will to truly understand and appreciate all of Hashem's lessons to us. ■

