

חומש עם רש"י • וירא • ששי

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VAYERA • 6TH ALIYAH

CHAPTER PREVIEW

In this aliyah, we see Avimelech, the king of the Plisitim, coming to Avraham Avinu together with Phichol, the general of his army. Seeing how Hashem is clearly with Avraham in everything he does, Avimelech seeks to establish a treaty of peace and loyalty between their families for generations to come. Avraham agrees to swear, but first he uses the opportunity to bring up a serious grievance regarding a water well that Avimelech's servants had wrongfully seized.

After Avimelech claims he had no prior knowledge of the theft, the two of them seal their covenant with a gift of sheep and cattle. Avraham sets aside seven specific ewes as a unique testimony that he was the one who dug the disputed well, leading to the naming of the place as Beer-sheba. The aliyah concludes with Avraham planting an eshel, calling out in the name of Hashem, and dwelling in the land of the Plisitim for many years.

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

פסוק א

Pasuk 1

וַיְהִי בַּעֲתֵּה הַהוּא וַיֹּאמֶר אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל שֶׁר צָבָאוֹ אֶל אַבְרָהָם לֵאמֹר
saying Avraham to his army general of and Phichol Avimelech and he said that at the time And it was
אֱלֹהִים עִמָּךְ בְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹשֶׂה:
do you that in all is with you G-d

רש"י

אלהים עמך. לפי שראו שיצא משכונת סדום לשלום, ועם המלכים
the kings and with in peace Sedom from the neighborhood of that he left that they saw because is with you G-d
נלחם ונפלו בידו, ונפקדה אשתו לזקוניו:
in his old age his wife and was remembered into his hand and they fell he fought

פסוק ב

Pasuk 2

וַעֲתָה הַשְׁבָּעָה לִּי בֵּאלֹהִים הֵנָּה אִם תִּשְׁקֹר לִּי וּלְנִינִי
and with my child with me you will deal falsely that not here by God to me swear And now
וּלְנִכְדִּי כַּחֲסֵד אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי עִמָּךְ תַּעֲשֶׂה עִמָּדִי וְעַם הָאָרֶץ
the land and with with me you shall do with you I have done that like the kindness and with my grandchild
אֲשֶׁר גֵּרְתָּהּ בָּהּ:
in it you have sojourned that

רש"י

ולניני ולנכדי. עד כאן רחמי האב על הבן:
the son upon the father the mercy of here until and to my grandson and to my son

רש"י

כחסד אשר עשיתי עמך תעשה עמדי. שְׁאַמְרְתִּי לָךְ הִנֵּה אֶרְצִי לְפָנֶיךָ
is before you my land Behold to you that I said with me you shall do with you I have done that According to the kindness
בראשית רבה :
Rabbah Bereishis

פסוק ג

Pasuk 3

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָהָם אֲנֹכִי אֲשָׁבַע:
will swear I Avraham And said

פסוק ד

Pasuk 4

וְהוֹכַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ עַל אֲדוֹת בְּאֵר הַמַּיִם אֲשֶׁר
which the water the well of the matter of concerning Avimelech — Avraham And Abraham
reproached
גָּזְלוּ עַבְדֵי אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ:
Avimelech the servants of had seized

רש"י

והוכח. נתוכח עמו על כֹּה:
this about with him he argued And he reproved

פסוק ה

Pasuk 5

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ לֹא יָדַעְתִּי מִי עָשָׂה אֶת הַדָּבָר הַזֶּה וְגַם אַתָּה לֹא הִגַּדְתָּ
told not you and also this the matter — did who I knew not Avimelech And said
לִי וְגַם אֲנֹכִי לֹא שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּלִתי הַיּוֹם:
today except heard not I and also me

פסוק ו

Pasuk 6

וַיִּקַּח אַבְרָהָם צֹאן וּבָקָר וַיִּתֵּן לְאַבְיִמֶלֶךְ וַיַּכְרֹתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם בְּרִית:
a covenant both of them and they made to Avimelech and he gave and cattle sheep Avraham And took

פסוק ז

Pasuk 7

וַיַּצֵּב אַבְרָהָם אֶת שִׁבְעַת כֶּבֶשֶׂת הַצֹּאן לְבִדְקוֹן:
by themselves the flock ewes of seven — Avraham And he set

וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ אֶל אֲבִרָהָם מָה הִנֵּה שִׁבְעַת כְּבָשֹׂת הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר הִצַּבְתָּ
you have set which these ewes seven are they what Avraham to Avimelech And said

לְבַדָּנָה:

by themselves

וַיֹּאמֶר כִּי אֶת שִׁבְעַת כְּבָשֹׂת תִּקַּח מִיָּדִי בְּעֵבוֹר תִּהְיֶה לִּי לְעֵדָה כִּי
that as testimony for me it will be so that from my hand you shall take ewes seven — that And he said

חֲפָרְתִּי אֶת הַבְּאֵר הַזֹּאת:

this the well — I dug

רש"י

בעבור תהיה לי. זאת:

this to me shall be in order that

רש"י

לעדה. לשון עדות של נקבה, כמו ועדה המצבה בראשית ל"א :

thirty-one Bereishis the pillar and a witness just as feminine of testimony an expression of for a witness

רש"י

כי חפרתי את הבאר. מריבים היו עליה רועי אבימלך ואומרים אנחנו חפרנוה,
dug it we and saying Avimelech the shepherds of over it were quarreling the well — I have dug that

אמרו ביניהם כל מי שיתראה על הבאר ויצלו המים לקראתו, שלו היא,
it is his towards him the waters and will rise the well at that will appear who any between themselves they said

ועלו לקראת אברהם:

Avraham towards and they rose

עַל כֵּן קָרָא לַמָּקוֹם הַהוּא בְּאֵר שָׁבַע כִּי שָׁם נִשְׁבָּעוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם:
both of them swore there because Sheva Be'er that to the place he called · Therefore

וַיִּכְרְתוּ בְרִית בֵּין שְׂרָפְכָן וּבֵין אַבְיִמֶלֶךְ וּפִיכֹל שֶׁר צָבָאוֹ
his army the general of and Phichol Avimelech and there arose Sheva in Beer a covenant And they sealed

וַיָּשׁוּבּוּ אֶל אֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים:

the Philistines the land of to and they returned

וַיִּטֵּעַ אֶשֶׁל בְּבֵאֵר שָׁבַע וַיִּקְרָא שָׁם בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה אֵל עוֹלָם:

the universe God of Hashem upon the name of there and he called Sheva in Beer an orchard And he planted

רש"י

אשל. רב ושמואל, חד אמר פרדס להביא ממנו פרות לאורחים בסעודה, וחד אמר

said and one at the meal for the guests fruits from it to bring an orchard said one and Shmuel Rav Eshel

פנדיק לאכסניא וכו' כל מיני פרות. ומצינו לשון נטיעה באהלים, שנאמר

as it is said regarding tents planting the expression of and we find fruits kinds of all and in it for lodging an inn

וַיִּטֵּעַ אֶהְיֶי אֶפְדָּנוּ דְּנִיאל י"א :

11 Daniel his palace the tents of and he shall plant

רש"י

ויקרא שם וגו'. על ידי אותו אשל נקרא שמו של הקב"ה אלוה ל'כל

of all God the Holy One of the name was called Eshel that means of by etc. there And he called

העולם, לאחר שאוכלים ושותים אומר להם ברכו למי שאכלתם משלו, סבורים

think of His whose you ate Him bless to them he would say and drank they ate after the universe

אתם שמשלי אכלתם? משל מי שאמר והיה העולם אכלתם סוטה י' :

10a Sotah you ate the universe and came to be Whospoke Him from of you ate that of mine you

פסוק יג

וַיָּגֵר אַבְרָהָם בְּאֶרֶץ פְּלִשְׁתִּים יָמִים רַבִּים:

many days the Philistines in the land of Avraham And sojourned

רש"י

ימים רבים. מרבים על של חברון. בחברון עשה כ"ה שנה וכאן כ"ו,

twenty-six and here years twenty-five he spent in Hebron Hebron those of than more numerous many Days

שהרי בן ע"ה שנה היה בצאתו מחרון, אותה שנה ויבא וישב

and he dwelt and he came year that same from Haran at his departure he was years seventy-five a son of for behold

באלני ממרא, שלא מצינו קדם לכן שנתישב אלא שם, שפכל מקומותיו היה

he was his places for in all there except that he settled this before have we found for not Mamre by the plains of

באורח חונה ונוסע והולך, שנאמר ויעבר אברם, ויעתק משם,

from there and he removed Avram and he passed as it is said and goes on and journeys who pitches camp like a guest

ויהי רעב בארץ ויירד אברם מצרימה בראשית י"ב, ובמצרים לא

not and in Mitzrayim twelve Genesis to Mitzrayim Avram and he went down in the land a famine and there was

עשה אלא שלשה חדשים שהרי שלחו פרעה מיד, וילך למסעיו עד

until on his journeys and he went immediately Pharaoh sent him away for behold months three except did he spend

ויבא וישב באלני ממרא אשר בחברון שם י"ג, שם ישב עד שנהפכה

was overthrown until he dwelt there thirteen there are in Hebron which Mamre by the plains of and dwelt he came

סדום, מיד ויסע משם אברהם מפני בושה של לוט ובא לארץ

to the land of and he came Lot of the shame because of Avraham from there and he journeyed immediately Sodom

פלשתים, וכן צ"ט שנה היה, שהרי בשלישי למילתו באו אצלו המלאכים,

the angels to him came of his circumcision on the third for behold he was years ninety-nine and a son of the Philistines

הָרִי כ"ה שָׁנָה, וְכָאן כְּתִיב יָמִים רַבִּים, מְרַבִּים עַל הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים, וְלֹא בָּא
 did come and not the first ones than more numerous many days it is written and here years twenty-five behold
 הַפְּתוּב לְסֵתָם אֶלָּא לְפָרֵשׁ, וְאִם הָיוּ מְרַבִּים עֲלֵיהֶם שְׁתֵּי שָׁנִים אוֹ יוֹתֵר
 more or years by two than them more numerous they were and if to specify but to leave vague the Scripture
 הִיא מְפָרֶשֶׁת, וְעַל כְּרַחֲךָ אֵינָם יִתְרִים יוֹתֵר מִשָּׁנָה, הָרִי כ"ו שָׁנָה;
 years twenty-six behold than a year more greater they are not your necessity and of specified them it would have
 מִיָּד יֵצֵא מִשָּׁם וְחָזַר לְחֶבְרוֹן, וְאוֹתָהּ שָׁנָה קִדְמָה לְפָנָי עֲקֻדָּתוֹ שֶׁל יִצְחָק
 Yitzchak the binding of before preceded year and that to Hebron and returned from there he went out immediately
 י"ב שָׁנִים, בְּסֵדֶר עוֹלָם:
 Olam in Seder years twelve

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The aliyah begins with Avimelech and Phichol approaching Avraham to swear a covenant of truthfulness and loyalty, which Avraham accepts. Avraham then reproves Avimelech over a stolen well, and after Avimelech denies any knowledge of the matter, they seal their pact with livestock, including seven ewes set apart by Avraham to prove his ownership of the well. After naming the place Beer-sheba to mark their oath, Avimelech and Phichol return home, while Avraham plants a tamarisk tree, invokes the name of Hashem, the Everlasting Elokim, and remains in the land of the Plishtim for a long period.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Torah is showing us a fascinating dynamic in this parsha. Abimelech and Phicol come to Avraham Avinu because they see that "Elokim imcha b'chol asher atah oseh", they recognize that Hashem is with him in everything. Yet, immediately after agreeing to make a treaty, what does Avraham do? The pasuk says, "V'yochach Avraham es Abimelech." He openly reproaches him about the well of water that Abimelech's servants had stolen. Lichoira, why bring up a fight right now when you are trying to seal a peace treaty?

The chiddush here is that true peace and kiddush Hashem cannot be built on a foundation of swept-under-the-rug dishonesty. Avraham Avinu teaches us that being a person of Hashem, someone who walks with emunah and integrity, means we do not ignore injustice or theft just to keep a fake, comfortable quiet. True shalom requires clarity and truth. Avraham did not let the stolen well slide; he brought it to light, resolved it with proof, and only then did they cut the covenant.

In our own lives, we often face situations in business, family, or shul where we want to keep the peace, so we stay quiet about things that are wrong, dishonest, or unfair. We think that ignoring the problem is the "frum" or polite thing to do. But the Torah is teaching us that real avodas Hashem demands that we address issues head-on, with respect but with absolute truth. When we resolve things honestly, we actually create a much stronger, more genuine connection with others.

Today, if there is an unresolved issue, a small misunderstanding, or a business matter that was left vague or unfair, do not just let it slide for a fake peace. Speak up gently, clarify the truth, and build your relationships on a foundation of absolute honesty.

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THE SUGYA

We begin the daf by continuing our shakla v'tarya regarding the status of a tumtum. The Gemara is bothered by a series of kashas from various braisos—including those dealing with arachin, shelamim, olos, bird offerings, and temurah—which seem to explicitly exclude a tumtum from these halachos. Lichoira, if a tumtum is merely a safek (a doubt) as to whether it is a male or a female, we would not need a special gezeiras hakasuv to exclude it. The Gemara's running teretz is to emend these braisos by removing the mention of a tumtum entirely, leaving only the hermaphrodite, which is a distinct creation.

We then move to analyze a dispute between Tannaim regarding the sanctity of a firstborn animal that is a hermaphrodite or a tumtum. The Gemara seeks to determine if this dispute hinges on whether a tumtum is a safek or a distinct entity. Ultimately, the Gemara establishes that everyone agrees a tumtum is a safek; the real point of contention is when the animal urinates from the female organ. We analyze whether we are concerned that its male organ was simply inverted, leaving its gender in doubt, or if we can definitely declare it a female.

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עמוד א' DAF 42A

QUESTION

אֲלֵמָה תִּנָּיֵא: "הַזָּכָר" — וְלֹא טוּמְטוּם וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס!

The Gemara asks: If a tumtum is just a safek, **why then is it taught** in a braisa regarding arachin (valuations) that the word "**the male**" comes to teach us: **and not a tumtum or a hermaphrodite**? If a tumtum is just a safek, we would not need a special gezeiras hakasuv to exclude him!

ANSWER

סָמִי מֵיכֵן טוּמְטוּם.

The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the mention of a **tumtum**; the braisa is actually only referring to a hermaphrodite, which is a distinct creation.

QUESTION

תָּא שְׁמַע: יָכוֹל לֹא יִהְיֶה בְּעֶרְךָ אִישׁ, אֲבָל יִהְיֶה בְּעֶרְךָ אִשָּׁה? תִּלְמוּד לֹוֹמֵר: "הַזָּכָר... אִם נִקְבָּה", וְלֹא טוּמְטוּם וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס!

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** a further kasha from the continuation of that braisa: One **might** have thought that these **shall not be** valuated according to the valuation of a man, but they shall be valuated according to the valuation of a woman? Therefore, **the verse states: "the male... and if she is a female"**, which teaches us: only a definite male or female, **and not a tumtum or a hermaphrodite**! Again, why do we need a pasuk to exclude a tumtum if he is just a safek?

ANSWER

סמי מיכן טומטום.

The Gemara answers: Here too, **remove from here** the mention of a **tumtum**.

QUESTION

תא שמע: "אם זכר אם נקבה" — זכר ודאי נקבה ודאית, ולא טומטום ואנדרוגינוס.

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** another kasha from a braisa regarding shelamim (peace offerings): The pasuk says, "**Whether male or female**", which implies: only a **definite male** or a **definite female**, but not a **tumtum** or a **hermaphrodite**.

ANSWER

סמי מיכן טומטום.

The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the mention of a **tumtum**.

QUESTION

תא שמע: "הזכר" — ולא נקבה. כשהוא אומר למטה "זכר", שאין תלמוד לומר; מה תלמוד לומר? להוציא טומטום ואנדרוגינוס.

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** another kasha from a braisa regarding an olah (burnt offering): The pasuk says, "**the male**", which teaches: **and not a female**. But **when it says below**, by the sheep, "**male**" a second time, **which is not necessary for the verse to state, what does the verse come to teach us?** It comes to **exclude a tumtum and a hermaphrodite**.

ANSWER

סמי מיכן טומטום.

The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the mention of a **tumtum**.

QUESTION

תא שמע: הנעבד, והמוקצה, והאתנן, והמחיר, וטומטום ואנדרוגינוס — כולן מטמאין בגדים אפית הבליעה.

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** another kasha from a braisa regarding bird offerings: A bird **that was worshipped** as an idol, **or set aside** for an idol, **or given as the hire** of a harlot, **or the price** of a dog, **or a tumtum**, **or a hermaphrodite**—if one pinched their necks (melikah) instead of shechting them, **all of them render garments ritually impure when they are in the throat** of the one eating them, because they are pasul for the mizbe'ach and melikah does not permit them.

STATEMENT

רבי אליעזר אומר: טומטום ואנדרוגינוס אין מטמאין בגדים אפית הבליעה, שהיה רבי אליעזר אומר: כל מקום שנאמר "זכר ונקבה" אתה מוציא טומטום ואנדרוגינוס מביניהם.

Rabbi Eliezer says: A tumtum and a hermaphrodite do not render garments ritually impure when they are in the **throat**, because they are actually kosher for bird offerings. As Rabbi Eliezer would say: Wherever it is stated "**male and female**" in the Torah, **you exclude a tumtum and a hermaphrodite from among them**.

INFERENCE

ועוד, הואיל ולא נאמר בו "זכר ונקבה", אין אתה מוציא טומטום ואנדרוגינוס מביניהם!

But a bird offering, since "male and female" is not stated regarding it, you do not exclude a tumtum and a hermaphrodite from among them, and they are kosher. Now, lichoirā, if a tumtum is just a safek, why does the Tanna Kamma hold that it is pasul?

ANSWER

סָמִי מֵיכֶן טוּמְטוּם.

The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the mention of a tumtum.

QUESTION

תָּא שְׁמַע: רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר: הַטְּרִיפָה, וְהַכְּלָאִים, וְיוֹצֵא דוֹפָן, טוּמְטוּם וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס — לֹא קְדוּשִׁים וְלֹא מְקַדִּישִׁין.

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** another kasha: Rabbi Elazar says: A tereifah, and diverse kinds (kilayim), and one born by caesarean section, and a tumtum, and a hermaphrodite—do not become consecrated and do not consecrate other animals.

EXPLANATION

וְאָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל: לֹא קְדוּשִׁים בְּתַמּוּרָה, וְלֹא מְקַדִּישִׁין לַעֲשׂוֹת תַּמּוּרָה!

And Shmuel said in explanation: They do not become consecrated through substitution (temurah), and they do not consecrate another animal to make it a substitution. If a tumtum is just a safek, why is it completely excluded from temurah?

ANSWER

סָמִי מֵיכֶן טוּמְטוּם.

The Gemara answers: **Remove from here** the mention of a tumtum.

QUESTION

תָּא שְׁמַע: רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר אוֹמֵר: חֲמִשָּׁה לֹא קְדוּשִׁים וְלֹא מְקַדִּישִׁין, וְאֵלוּ הֵן: הַטְּרִיפָה, וְהַכְּלָאִים, וְיוֹצֵא דוֹפָן, וְטוּמְטוּם, וְאַנְדְּרוֹגִינוֹס.

The Gemara suggests: **Come and hear** a different version of this braisa: Rabbi Elazar says: There are five types of animals that do not become consecrated and do not consecrate, and these are they: A tereifah, and diverse kinds, and one born by caesarean section, and a tumtum, and a hermaphrodite.

OBJECTION

וְכִי תֵימָא הָכָא נָמִי סָמִי מֵיכֶן טוּמְטוּם — הָּוֵי לְהוּ אֲרַבְעָה!

And if you will say: Here too, **remove from here** the mention of a tumtum—then there would only be four types of animals listed, but the braisa explicitly said there are five!

RESOLUTION

אַפִּיק טוּמְטוּם, וְעֵייל יָתוֹם.

The Gemara answers: **Remove** the mention of a tumtum, and **insert** in its place an orphan (yasoam), which is an animal born after its mother died, which is also disqualified from being brought as a korban.

QUESTION

לִימָא כְּתִנְאִי?

The Gemara suggests: **Let us say** that this question of whether a tumtum is a safek or a distinct creation is like a dispute between Tannaim?

STATEMENT

רַבִּי אֵילָעַי אוֹמֵר מְשׁוּם רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל: אֲנִדְרוֹגִינוֹס בְּכוֹר הוּא וּמוֹמוֹ עִמּוֹ, וְחֻכָּמִים אוֹמְרִים: אֵין קְדוּשָׁה חֲלָה עָלָיו.

As the braisa states: **Rabbi Ilai says in the name of Rabbi Yishmael: A hermaphrodite is a firstborn, and its blemish is with it**, meaning it is holy but must be eaten as a blemished firstborn; **and the Sages say: Sanctity does not take effect upon it** at all.

STATEMENT

רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר מְשׁוּם רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן: הִרִי הוּא אוֹמֵר "הַזָּכָר", וְכָל מְקוֹם שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "זָכָר" אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא לְהוֹצִיא טוֹמְטוֹם וְאֲנִדְרוֹגִינוֹס.

Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda says in the name of Rabbi Shimon: Behold, the verse says "the male" by firstborns, and wherever "male" is stated, it is only to exclude a tumtum and a hermaphrodite.

INFERENCE

וְכִי תִימָא: סָמִי מִיפֶן טוֹמְטוֹם, רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יְהוּדָה הִיָּינוּ רַבָּנִן!

And if you will say: Remove from here the mention of a tumtum in Rabbi Shimon's statement, then the opinion of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda is exactly the same as the Rabbis, who also hold that a hermaphrodite is not kadosh! Why would he repeat their view?

EXPLANATION

אֶלָּא לָאוֹ טוֹמְטוֹם אִיכָּא בֵּינָיְהוּ, דְּתִנָּא קָמָא סָבַר: אֵין קְדוּשָׁה חֲלָה עָלָיו אֲנִדְרוֹגִינוֹס, אֲבָל טוֹמְטוֹם סְפִיקָא הוּא וְקְדוּשׁ מְסִפִּיקָא, וְאַתָּא רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן

Rather, is it not that the status of a tumtum is the point of dispute between them? As the Tanna Kamma (the Rabbis) holds: Sanctity does not take effect upon a hermaphrodite, but a tumtum is a safek and is holy due to doubt; and Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda comes to exclude even a tumtum because he holds it is a distinct creation.

עמוד ב' DAF 42B

QUESTION

בֶּן יְהוּדָה לְמִימַר: טוֹמְטוֹם בְּרִיָּה הוּא וְלֹא קְדוּשׁ!

Does Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda actually come to say that a tumtum is a distinct entity altogether, and therefore it is not sacred at all as a firstborn?

ANSWER

לֹא, דְּכוּלֵּי עֲלָמָא טוֹמְטוֹם בְּבִרְיָה לֹא מְסִפִּיקָא, זָכָר וְנִקְבָּה הוּא דְּמְסִפִּיקָא.

The Gemara answers: **No, for everyone agrees** that we do **not doubt** that a **tumtum** is a distinct **entity**; rather, whether it is a **male or a female** is what we doubt.

STATEMENT

מטיל מים במקום זכרות — דכולי עלמא לא פליגי דזכר הוא,

If it **urinates from the place of the male organ**, everyone does not dispute that he is a male.

STATEMENT

כי פליגי במטיל מים במקום נקבות:

When they dispute is in a case where it **urinates from the place of the female organ**:

EXPLANATION

מר סבר חיישינן שמא נהפכה זכרותו לנקבותו, ומר סבר לא חיישינן.

One **Master**, the Rabbis, **holds** that **we are concerned** that **perhaps its male organ was inverted to its female organ area**, and therefore it remains a doubt; **and** one **Master**, Rabbi Shimon ben Yehuda, **holds** that **we are not concerned** about this possibility, and it is definitely a female.

PROOF

כי הא דהורה רבי אלעזר: בבהמה מטיל מים במקום נקבות — חולין.

This is **like that which Rabbi Elazar ruled**: In the case of an **animal firstborn** that **urinates from the place of the female organ**, it is **chullin**, non-sacred, because it is definitely a female.

OBJECTION

תהי בה רבי יוחנן: מאן דלא חש לתנא קמא ולרבי ישמעאל?

Rabbi Yochanan wondered about it, saying: **Who is this Tanna who is not concerned** for the opinion of the **First Tanna** and for **Rabbi Yishmael**, who both hold that a tumtum is always a doubt?

QUESTION

וליקא רבי יוחנן נמי: מאן דלא חש לרבנן בתראי?

The Gemara asks: **And let Rabbi Yochanan also say**: **Who is this who is not concerned** for the **latter Rabbis** in our Mishnah?

EXPLANATION

דאמר רב חסדא: מחלוקת באנדרוגינוס, אבל בטומטום — דברי הכל ספיקא!

For Rav Chisda said: The dispute in the latter part of the Mishnah is only **regarding an androgynos**, but **regarding a tumtum**, **all agree** that it is a doubt!

ANSWER

רבי יוחנן לא סבירא ליה דרב חסדא,

The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Yochanan does not hold of** this explanation of **Rav Chisda**; he learns that the **latter Rabbis** hold a tumtum is a distinct entity.

QUESTION

אי לא סבירא ליה, לימא הוא דאמר פרבנו בתראי?

The Gemara asks: **If he does not hold of it**, then why did Rabbi Yochanan wonder about Rabbi Elazar's ruling? **Let him say** that Rabbi Elazar **said** his ruling **in accordance with the latter Rabbis**!

ANSWER

הכי נמי קאמר: מאן שביק תרי ועביד כחד!

The Gemara answers: **This indeed is what he is saying: Who** is the one who **leaves aside two** Tannaim, the First Tanna and Rabbi Yishmael, **and acts in accordance with one**, the latter Rabbis!

QUESTION

ורבי אלעזר כמאן סברה?

The Gemara asks: **And Rabbi Elazar, in accordance with whom does he hold** this?

ANSWER

כי הא דאמר ריש לקיש: לא אמרו טומטום ספק אלא באדם, הואיל וזכרותו ונקבותו במקום אחד,

The Gemara answers: He holds **like that which Reish Lakish said: They only said that a tumtum is a doubt in the case of a human, since his male organ and her female organ are in the same place**, meaning both genders urinate from the same general area,

EXPLANATION

אבל בהמה — מטיל מים במקום זכרות וזכר, מטיל מים במקום נקבות ונקבה.

but regarding **an animal**, where the male and female organs are in completely different areas, if it **urinates from the place of the male organ it is a male**, and if it **urinates from the place of the female organ it is a female**.

OBJECTION

מתקיף לה רב אושעיא: וליחוש שפא נהפכה זכרותו לנקבותו!

Rav Oshaya challenged this: **But let us be concerned** that perhaps its male organ was inverted to its female organ area!

ANSWER

אמר ליה: כמאן? פרבי מאיר דחייש למיעוטא?!

Abaye **said to him: In accordance with whom** is your kasha? Is it like Rabbi Meir, who is **concerned for a minority**? The halacha does not follow Rabbi Meir, and we follow the majority of animals where this does not happen.

STATEMENT

אפיי בר אבין ורב חננא בר אבין דאמרי תרוייהו: אפילו תימא רבנו, הואיל ואישתני אישתני.

Abaye bar Avin and Rav Chananya bar Avin both say: **You may even say** Rav Oshaya's kasha is in accordance with **the Rabbis** who do not normally worry about a minority, because they hold: **Since it has changed** in one way by being a tumtum, **it has changed** in other ways too, and we must worry about the inversion.

EXPLANATION

אֵת דָּאָמַר אִישְׁתֵּנִי, וְאֵת דָּאָמַר לֹא אִישְׁתֵּנִי.

So there is one who says that since it has changed, it has changed, and there is one who says that it has not changed.

QUESTION

לִימָא אִישְׁתֵּנִי וְלֹא אִישְׁתֵּנִי תִנָּא?

The Gemara suggests: Shall we say that this question of whether it has changed or it has not changed is a dispute between Tannaim?

PROOF

דִּתְנִינָא: טוּמְטוּם שְׁקִידָשׁ — קְדוּשָׁיו קְדוּשָׁיו, נִתְקַדָּשׁ — קְדוּשָׁיו קְדוּשָׁיו.

As it was taught in a braisa: A tumtum who betrothed a woman, his betrothal is a doubtful betrothal; and if the tumtum was betrothed by a man, the betrothal is a doubtful betrothal.

STATEMENT

וְחוּלֵץ, וְחוּלְצִין לְאִשְׁתּוֹ, וּמִיבָמִים לְאִשְׁתּוֹ.

And if his brother died childless, the tumtum performs chalitzah with the widow; and if the tumtum died childless, the brothers perform chalitzah for his wife, or they perform yibbum with his wife.

STATEMENT

וְתִנָּא אִידָּהּ: אִשְׁתׁ טוּמְטוּם חוּלְצַת וְלֹא מְיֻבָּמֶת.

And it was taught in another braisa: The wife of a tumtum performs chalitzah and may not perform yibbum.

EXPLANATION

סְבֻרוֹהּ, דְּכוּלֵּי עֲלָמָא כְּרַבִּי עֲקִיבָא, דָּאָמַר: סְרִיס חֲמָה לֹא חוּלֵץ וְלֹא מִיבָם.

The Sages assumed that everyone holds in accordance with Rabbi Akiva, who said: A natural eunuch does not perform chalitzah and does not perform yibbum, and his wife is completely exempt from the levirate bond.

QUESTION

מַאי לָאוּ בְּהָא קָמִיפְלָגִי, דְּמֵאן דָּאָמַר חוּלֵץ, וְחוּלְצִין לְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּמִיבָמִים אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ, לָא אָמְרִינַן הוּאִיל וְאִישְׁתֵּנִי אִישְׁתֵּנִי?

What, is it not that they dispute about this: that the one who says the tumtum performs chalitzah, and they perform chalitzah for his wife and perform yibbum with his wife, holds that we do not say: Since he has changed by being a tumtum, he has changed to also be a natural eunuch?

QUESTION

וּמֵאן דָּאָמַר חוּלְצַת וְלֹא מְיֻבָּמֶת, אָמְרִינַן הוּאִיל וְאִישְׁתֵּנִי אִישְׁתֵּנִי?

And the one who says his wife performs chalitzah and may not perform yibbum holds that we do say: Since he has changed, he has changed, and we must worry that he is a natural eunuch?

ANSWER

לֹא, דְּכוּלֵּי עֲלָמָא אָמְרִינַן הוּאִיל וְאִישְׁתֵּנִי אִישְׁתֵּנִי, הָא רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר, וְהָא רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא.

The Gemara rejects this: **No, everyone** can agree that **we do say: Since he has changed, he has changed**. Rather, **this** first braisa is in accordance with **Rabbi Eliezer**, who holds a natural eunuch does perform chalitzah and yibbum, **and this** second braisa is in accordance with **Rabbi Akiva**.

QUESTION

ומאן תנא אליבא דרבי עקיבא?

The Gemara asks: **And who is the Tanna** of the first braisa **according to Rabbi Akiva**, who must hold that a tumtum is definitely a eunuch?

ANSWER

אלימא רבי יהודה — הא ודאי סריס משוי ליה!

If we say it is Rabbi Yehuda, he certainly makes him a eunuch!

PROOF

דתנו, רבי יהודה אומר: טומטום שנקרע ונמצא זכר — הרי זה לא יחלוץ, מפני שהוא כסריס!

As we learned in a Mishnah, Rabbi Yehuda says: A tumtum who was torn open and found to be a male, this one may not perform chalitzah because he is like a eunuch!

ANSWER

אלא רבי יוסי ברבי יהודה היא, דתנא: רבי יוסי ברבי יהודה אומר: טומטום לא חולץ, שפא יקרע וימצא סריס חמה.

Rather, it is Rabbi Yose b'rabbi Yehuda, as it was taught in a braisa: Rabbi Yose b'rabbi Yehuda says: A tumtum does not perform chalitzah, lest he be torn open and found to be a natural eunuch.

QUESTION

אטו כל דמיקרע זכר משתבח, נקבה לא משתבח?

The Gemara asks: **Is that to say that anyone who is torn open is found to be a male, and is not found to be a female?** Why does he only mention the concern of being a eunuch?

ANSWER

שפא קאמר, שפא יקרע וימצא נקבה.

The Gemara answers: **He is saying a double 'perhaps'**: perhaps he will be torn open and found to be a female, in which case she is exempt from chalitzah,

EXPLANATION

אי נמי זכר נמי, שפא ימצא סריס חמה.

or also, if he is a male, perhaps he will be found to be a natural eunuch.

QUESTION

מאי בינניהו? אמר רבא:

The Gemara asks: **What is the difference between them**, Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Yose b'rabbi Yehuda? **Rava said:**

SUMMARY

The Gemara systematically addresses multiple braisos that list a tumtum alongside a hermaphrodite as being excluded from various korbanos and valuations. In each case, the Gemara resolves the kasha by emending the text to remove the mention of a tumtum. When challenged by a braisa that explicitly counts five excluded categories, the Gemara replaces the tumtum with a yasoam (an orphan animal). Finally, the Gemara reframes the Tannaitic dispute regarding a tumtum, explaining that all agree it is a safek, and the machlokes is limited to a case where it urinates from the female organ—specifically, whether we suspect the male organ was inverted, keeping its status as a safek, or if we rule that it is a definite female.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

In our sugya, the Gemara is deeply bothered by the status of a tumtum, an animal whose gender is hidden and covered. The Gemara goes through a beautiful, intense shakla v'tarya, repeatedly asking: is a tumtum simply a safek, a case of doubt where we just don't know what is underneath, or is it a completely different, distinct creation? The Gemara even suggests that if a person's physical nature was changed and covered, we might say 'ho'il v'ishtani ishtani', once it has changed, its whole status has changed.

Think about this l'maaseh in your own avodas Hashem. How often do we look at ourselves, or at our children, and feel like a 'tumtum', that our true potential, our yiras Shamayim, and our best middos are completely covered up and hidden from view? We look at our daily struggles and think, 'Who am I really? Am I a true oved Hashem, or is it all a doubt?' The yetzer hara wants you to believe that because you are covered in struggles, you have become a different creation entirely, that 'ishtani', you have changed for the worse and can no longer bring a korban to Hashem.

But the truth of the Torah is that what is covered is still holy. A safek means the holiness is there, vibrant and real, just waiting to be revealed. Your essence as a Yid is never redefined by the layers that temporarily conceal it. The job of a Yid is not to despair because the light is covered, but to have emunah that underneath the surface, the neshama remains pure and kadosh.

Today, when you feel blocked, covered, or doubtful about your spiritual standing, do not let the yetzer hara convince you that you have changed. Take one small, concrete action, like learning one extra halacha or saying a perek of Tehillim with deep kavanah, to peel back the cover and let your inner, definite holiness shine through.

תהלים • חמשה קאפיטלער

The Five Daily Kapitlach

CHAPTER PREVIEW

These are the five kapitlach of Tehillim said every single day: 32, 43, 83, 121, and 130, each set word for word with its English meaning. They are gathered here as one section so the whole daily Tehillim can be said and downloaded together.

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

פרק ל"ב CHAPTER 32

לְדוֹד מִשְׁכִּיל אֲשֶׁרִי נָשׁוּי פֶשַׁע כָּסוּי חֲטָאָה:
 אֲשֶׁרִי אָדָם לֹא יִחְשַׁב יְהוָה לוֹ עוֹן וְאִין בְּרוּחוֹ רְמִיָּה:
 כִּי הִחֲרַשְׁתִּי בְּלוּ עֲצָמַי בְּשֹׁאֲגָתִי כָּל הַיּוֹם:
 כִּי יוֹמָם וּלְיָלָה תִּכְבֵּד עָלַי יְדָה נִהַפָּה לְשׁוֹדֵי בְּחִרְבָּנִי קִיץ סֵלָה:
 חֲטָאִיתִי אוֹדִיעָה וְעוֹנִי לֹא כִסִּיתִי אֲמַרְתִּי אוֹדָה עָלַי פֶשַׁעִי לִיהוָה וְאַתָּה נִשְׂאָתָּ עוֹן חֲטָאִיתִי סֵלָה:
 עַל זֹאת יִתְפַּלֵּל כָּל חֹסֶיד אֱלֹהִים לְעֵת מִצָּא רַק לְשֹׁטֵף מִיָּם רַבִּים אֱלֹהִים לֹא יִגִּיעוּ:
 אַתָּה סֹתֵר לִי מִצָּר תִּצְרֵנִי רָנִי פֶלֶט תְּסוּבְּבֵנִי סֵלָה:
 אֲשַׁכִּילָה וְאוֹרָה בְּדֶרֶךְ זוֹ תִּלְךָ אֵינִי עֹלָה עֲלֶיךָ עֵינִי:
 אֵל תִּהְיוּ כָּסוּס כְּפָרֶד אִין הִבִּין בְּמִתְגַּ וְרָסוֹן עֲדִיו לְבָלוֹם בַּל קָרַב אֱלֹהִים:
 רַבִּים מִכְּאוֹבִים לָרָשָׁע וְהַבּוֹטֵחַ בִּיהוָה חֹסֵד יְסוּבְּבֵנוּ:
 שִׁמְחוּ בִיהוָה וְגִילוּ צְדִיקִים וְהִרְנִינוּ כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל לֵב:

פרק מ"ג CHAPTER 43

שָׁפֹטֵנִי אֱלֹהִים וְרִיבָה רִיבִי מִגּוֹי לֹא חֹסֶיד מֵאִישׁ מִרְמָה וְעוֹלָה תִּפְלֹטֵנִי:
 כִּי אַתָּה אֱלֹהִי מְעוּזִי לָמָּה זִנְחִתָּנִי לָמָּה קֹדֶר אֶתְהַלֵּךְ בְּלַחֲץ אוֹיֵב:
 שְׁלַח אוֹרָה וְאַמְתָּה הַמָּה יִנְחוּנִי יְבִיאוּנִי אֶל הַר קוֹדֶשְׁךָ וְאֶל מִשְׁכְּנוֹתֶיךָ:
 וְאֶבֹּאָה אֶל מִזְבֵּחַ אֱלֹהִים אֶל אֵל שְׁמֹחַת גִּילִי וְאוֹדָה בְּכִנּוֹר אֱלֹהִים אֱלֹהִי:
 מִה תִּשְׁתַּחֲוֶה נַפְשִׁי וּמִה תִּתְהַמֵּי עָלַי הוֹחִילִי לֹאֱלֹהִים כִּי עוֹד אוֹדְנוּ יְשׁוּעַת פָּנֶי וְאֱלֹהִי:

שִׁיר מִזְמוֹר לְאַסָּף:

אֱלֹהִים אֵל דָּמִי לָךְ אֵל תַּחֲרַשׁ וְאֵל תִּשְׁקֹט אֵל:

כִּי הִנֵּה אוֹיְבֶיךָ יִהְיֶינָיִם וּמִשְׁנֵאֶיךָ נִשְׂאוּ רֹאשׁ:

עַל עֲמָךְ יַעֲרִימוּ סוֹד וַיִּתְּעֲצּוּ עַל צָפוֹנֶיךָ:

אָמְרוּ לָכֵן וְנִכְחֵידֶם מִגּוֹי וְלֹא יִזְכָּר שֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל עוֹד:

כִּי נִוָּעֲצוּ לֵב יַחֲדוּ עָלֶיךָ בְּרִית יִכְרֹתוּ:

אֱהִי אָדוֹם וַיִּשְׁמְעֵאלִים מוֹאֵב וְהַגָּרִים:

גָּבַל וַעֲמֹן וַעֲמֶלֶק פָּלְשֶׁת עִם יִשְׁבִּי צוּר:

גַּם אֲשׁוּר נִלְוָה עִמָּם הָיוּ זִרְעַ לִבְנֵי לוֹט סָלָה:

עֲשֵׂה לָהֶם כְּמִדְיָן כְּסִיסְרָא כְּיִבִּין בְּנַחֵל קִישׁוֹן:

נִשְׁמְדוּ בְּעֵין דָּאֵר הָיוּ דִמְן לְאַדְמָה:

שִׁיתֵּמוּ נְדִיבֵמוּ כְּעָרֵב וְכִזְאָב וְכִזְבַּח וְכִצְלָמְנָע כָּל גְּסִיכְמוֹ:

אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ נִירְשָׁה לָנוּ אֵת גְּאוֹת אֱלֹהִים:

אֱלֹהֵי שִׁיתֵּמוּ כַּגִּלְגָּל כְּקֶשׁ לִפְנֵי רוּחַ:

כְּאֵשׁ תִּבְעַר יָעַר וְכִלְהָבָה תִּלְהַט הָרִים:

כֵּן תִּרְדָּפֶם בְּסַעֲרָךְ וּבְסוּפָתְךָ תִּבְהַלֵּם:

מִלֵּא פְּנֵיהֶם קִלּוֹן וַיִּבְקְשׁוּ שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה:

יִבְשׁוּ וַיִּבְהָלוּ עַדִּי עַד וַיִּחַפְּרוּ וַיֵּאבְדּוּ:

וַיִּדְעוּ כִּי אַתָּה שְׁמֶךָ יְהוָה לִבְדָּדָה עֲלִיוֹן עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ:

שִׁיר לַמַּעֲלוֹת אֶשָּׂא עֵינַי אֶל הַהָרִים מֵאֵין יָבֹא עֲזָרִי:

עֲזָרִי מֵעַם יְהוָה עֲשֵׂה שְׁמִים וְאָרֶץ:

אֵל יִתֵּן לַמוֹט רִגְלָךְ אֵל יָנוּם שְׁמֶרְךָ:

הִנֵּה לֹא יָנוּם וְלֹא יִישָׁן שׁוֹמֵר יִשְׂרָאֵל:

יְהוָה שְׁמֶרְךָ יְהוָה צִלָּה עַל יַד מִיָּנָה:

יוֹמָם הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לֹא יִכָּכֶה וַיֵּרַח בִּלְיָלָהּ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמְרֶךָ מִכָּל רָע יִשְׁמֹר אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ:

יְהוָה יִשְׁמֹר צַאתְךָ וּבֹאֶךָ מֵעַתָּה וְעַד עוֹלָם:

פָּרָק ק"ל CHAPTER 130

שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת מִמַּעַמְקִים קִרְאֲתֶיךָ יְהוָה:

אֲדֹנָי שְׁמֶעָה בְּקוֹלִי תַהֲיֶינָה אָזְנֶיךָ קִשְׁבוּת לְקוֹל תַּחֲנוּנִי:

אִם עֲוֹנוֹת תִּשְׁמֹר יְהוָה אֲדֹנָי מִי יַעֲמֵד:

כִּי עָמַךְ הִסְלִיכָה לְמַעַן תִּזְרָא:

קוֹיֵתִי יְהוָה קִוֵּיתָה נַפְשִׁי וְלִדְבָרוֹ הוֹחֵלֵתִי:

נַפְשִׁי לֹאֲדֹנָי מִשְׁמָרִים לְבַקֵּר שׁוֹמְרִים לְבַקֵּר:

יַחַל יִשְׂרָאֵל אֵל יְהוָה כִּי עִם יְהוָה הַחֲסֵד וְהִרְבָּה עֲמוֹ פְדוּת:

וְהוּא יַפְדֶּה אֶת יִשְׂרָאֵל מִכָּל עֲוֹנֹתָיו:

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When you feel weighed down by your mistakes, do not keep silent or try to hide them. Open your heart to Hashem in honest confession, and then immediately shift your focus to absolute trust in His forgiveness and constant protection, knowing that He never slumbers and is always guarding your steps.

Today, the moment you feel a heavy heart or a sense of spiritual distance, stop what you are doing, speak to Hashem in your own words to acknowledge your mistake, and then say out loud: 'My help is from Hashem, who forgives and guards my soul.'