דַּף יוֹמִי · עֲרָכִין · דַּף ט״ו

Daf Yomi · The Full Daf · Elucidated Talmud · Navy & Gold Edition · with Rashi

📖 THE SUGYA

We begin with the shakla v'tarya on the fine of the oines (rapist) and the motzi shem ra (defamer). The Gemara explores how the Torah fixes penalties, contrasting a flat fine with payments for tzear, boshes, and dzik, such as the case of an ox killing an eved. We then move into a new Mishnah that highlights a striking chiddush: the Torah is more machmir on a motzi shem ra, who only spoke with his mouth, than on an oines who did an actual maaseh! The defamer pays a hundred selaim no matter the woman's lineage, showing us the severe weight the Torah places on dibbur.

From here, the Gemara enters a deeply moving sugya on the חטא of lashon hara, bringing raayos from the Meraglim. The Sages analyze the ten nisyonos with which our ancestors tested Hashem in the midbar—at the Yam Suf, Marah, Rephidim, the Manna, the quail, and the Eigel—showing that even after all those sins, the gzar din was sealed davka because of the lashon hara spoken about Eretz Yisrael. Through beautiful Midrashim, including the shakla v'tarya between Hashem and the sar shel yam, the Gemara brings home the terrifying power of speech and how careful a Yid must be with every word.

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

עמוד א׳ DAF 15A

OBJECTION

אִילּוּ בָּאוּ עָלֶיהָ שְׁנַיִם, אֶחָד שֶׁלֹּא כְּדַרְכָּהּ וְאֶחָד כְּדַרְכָּהּ,

Consider: **If two men had relations with her** by force, **one in an unnatural manner** (anally), which does not ruin her virginity, **and one in a natural manner** (vaginally),

OBJECTION

יֹאמְרוּ: בָּעַל פְּגוּמָה — חֲמִשִּׁים, בָּעַל שְׁלֵמָה — חֲמִשִּׁים?

will people say: One who had relations with a damaged woman—who lost her modesty through the first act—pays **fifty** selaim, **and one who had relations with an undamaged virgin** also pays **fifty** selaim?! That makes no sense!

REFUTATION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ אַבָּיֵי: אִי הָכִי, גַּבֵּי עֶבֶד נָמֵי יֹאמְרוּ: עֶבֶד בָּרִיא — שְׁלֹשִׁים, עֶבֶד מוּכֶּה שְׁחִין — שְׁלֹשִׁים!

Abaye said to him: If so, regarding a slave killed by an ox **also, will people say:** For killing a **healthy slave** one pays **thirty** selaim, and for a **slave afflicted with boils** one also pays **thirty** selaim?! Yet there the Torah explicitly fixed a flat penalty of thirty selaim regardless of value!

RESOLUTION

אֶלָּא אָמַר אַבָּיֵי, אָמַר קְרָא ״תַּחַת אֲשֶׁר עִנָּהּ״, מִכְּלָל דְּאִיכָּא בּוֹשֶׁת וּפְגָם.

Rather, Abaye said, the verse states: "Because he afflicted her," which teaches by inference that there is an additional liability for shame and damage over and above the fixed fifty-sela fine.

RESOLUTION

רָבָא אָמַר, דְּאָמַר קְרָא: "וְנָתַן הָאִישׁ הַשֹּׁכֵב עִמָּהּ וגו'", הֲנָאַת שְׁכִיבָה חֲמִשִּׁים, מִכְּלָל דְּאִיכָּא מִילְּתָא אַחֲרִיתִי, וּמַאי נִיהוּ? בּוּשֶׁת וּפְגָם.

Rava said, for the verse states: "Then the man that lay with her shall give..."—meaning that for the personal pleasure of lying with her, the fixed fine is fifty selaim; by inference there is another matter that he must pay for besides that, and what is it? Shame and damage.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מַתְנִי' בְּמוֹצִיא שֵׁם רַע לְהָקֵל וּלְהַחֲמִיר, כֵּיצַד?

MISHNAH: Regarding a defamer, a husband who falsely claims his new bride was not a virgin, there are halachos where the Torah was lenient and halachos where it was stringent. How so?

MISHNAH

אֶחָד שֶׁהוֹצִיא שֵׁם רַע עַל גְּדוֹלָה שֶׁבַּכְּהוּנָּה וְעַל קְטַנָּה שֶׁבְּיִשְׂרָאֵל — נוֹתֵן מֵאָה סֶלַע.

Whether one defamed the most distinguished woman in the Kehunnah or whether he defamed the lowliest woman in Yisrael, he gives one hundred selaim as a fixed fine.

MISHNAH

נִמְצָא הָאוֹמֵר בְּפִיו חָמוּר מִן הָעוֹשֶׂה מַעֲשֶׂה,

It turns out then that one who speaks with his mouth and defames (paying one hundred selaim) is more severe than one who does an action (a rapist, who pays fifty selaim).

MISHNAH

שֶׁכֵּן מָצִינוּ שֶׁלֹּא נִתְחַתֵּם גְּזַר דִּין עַל אֲבוֹתֵינוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר אֶלָּא עַל לָשׁוֹן הָרָע, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וַיְנַסּוּ אוֹתִי זֶה עֶשֶׂר פְּעָמִים וְגו'".

For so we found that the decree of judgment was sealed against our ancestors in the Wilderness only because of lashon hara, as it is stated: "And they have tested Me these ten times, and have not listened to My voice."

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

גְּמָ' מַאי? דִּלְמָא מִשּׁוּם דְּקָא גָּרִים לַהּ קְטָלָא, דִּכְתִיב: "וְאִם אֱמֶת הָיָה הַדָּבָר וגו' וְהוֹצִיאוּ אֶת הַנַּעֲרָה וגו'"!

GEMARA: From where do we know that speaking with one's mouth is inherently more severe? **Perhaps** the defamer pays more **because he is causing her death, as it is written: "But if this word was true... then they shall bring out the maiden... and stone her"!** So his crime is severe because of the lethal outcome he sought to cause, not just speech!

ANSWER

אָמַר רָבָא, אָמַר קְרָא: "כִּי הוֹצִיא שֵׁם רָע", עַל שֵׁם רַע שֶׁהוֹצִיא.

Rava said, the verse states: "Because he brought forth an evil name," showing that the penalty is imposed specifically **for the evil name that he brought forth,** for the malicious speech itself.

QUESTION

וְכֵן מָצִינוּ שֶׁלֹּא נִתְחַתַּם גְּזַר דִּין וְכוּ'. מִמַּאי דִּלְמָא דְּאַכַּתִּי לָא מְלָא סְאָתָן,

The Mishnah taught: **And so we found that the decree of judgment was not sealed, etc.** The Gemara asks: **From where** do we know this? **Perhaps until then their measure** of sins **was not yet full,**

QUESTION

דְּאָמַר רַב הַמְנוּנָא: אֵין הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא נִפְרָע מִן הָאָדָם עַד שֶׁתִּתְמַלֵּא סְאָתוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "בְּמִלֹּאת סַפְקוֹ יֵצֶר לוֹ".

as Rav Hamnuna said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, does not exact punishment from a person until his measure is filled, as it is stated: "In the fullness of his sufficiency he shall be in straits." So lashon hara was merely the final sin that topped off the measure, not necessarily the main cause!

ANSWER

אָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ, אָמַר קְרָא: "וַיְנַסּוּ אוֹתִי זֶה עֶשֶׂר פְּעָמִים", עַל זֶה נִתְחַתַּם גְּזַר דִּין.

Reish Lakish said, the verse states: "And they have tested Me zeh (this) ten times"—the word zeh teaches that **for this** specific sin of the Meraglim's lashon hara **the decree of judgment was sealed.**

BRAISA

תַּנְיָא, אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן פַּרְטָא: בּוֹא וּרְאֵה כַּמָּה גָּדוֹל כֹּחַ שֶׁל לָשׁוֹן הָרָע,

It was taught in a Braisa, Rabbi Elazar ben Parta said: Come and see how great is the power of lashon hara!

BRAISA

מִנָּלַן? מִמְּרַגְּלִים; וּמָה הַמּוֹצִיא שֵׁם רַע עַל עֵצִים וַאֲבָנִים כָּךְ, הַמּוֹצִיא שֵׁם רַע עַל חֲבֵירוֹ עַל אַחַת כַּמָּה וְכַמָּה!

From where do we know it? From the spies; for if one who brings out an evil report about trees and stones (inanimate land) is punished **so severely, one who brings out an evil report about his fellow human being, how much more so!**

QUESTION

מִמַּאי? דִּלְמָא מִשּׁוּם דְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא בַּר פָּפָּא,

The Gemara asks: **From where** do we know their severe punishment was for lashon hara? **Perhaps it was because of** the sin mentioned by **Rabbi Chanina bar Pappa,**

QUESTION

דְּאָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא בַּר פָּפָּא: דָּבָר גָּדוֹל דִּבְּרוּ מְרַגְּלִים בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה, דִּכְתִיב: ”כִּי חָזָק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ”, אַל תִּיקְרֵי ”כִּי חָזָק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ” אֶלָּא ”מִמֶּנּוּ”, כִּבְיָכוֹל, בַּעַל הַבַּיִת אֵין יָכוֹל לְהוֹצִיא כֵּלָיו מִשָּׁם.

for Rabbi Chanina bar Pappa said: A grave thing the spies spoke at that hour, as it is written: "For they are stronger than us [mimmennu]"—do not read it "stronger than us [mimmennu]", but rather "stronger than Him [mimmennu]"; as if to say, the Owner (Hashem) cannot remove His vessels from there! So it was heresy, not lashon hara, that brought the punishment!

ANSWER

אֶלָּא אָמַר רַבָּה אָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ, אָמַר קְרָא: ”וַיָּמוּתוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים מוֹצִאֵי דִּבַּת הָאָרֶץ רָעָה”, עַל דִּבַּת הָאָרֶץ שֶׁהוֹצִיאוּ.

Rather, Rabbah said that Reish Lakish said, the verse states: "And those men who brought up an evil report of the land died by the plague..."—showing they died specifically for the evil report of the land that they brought forth.

BRAISA

תַּנְיָא: אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוּדָה, עֶשֶׂר נִסְיוֹנוֹת נִיסּוּ אֲבוֹתֵינוּ לְהַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא:

It was taught in a Braisa: Rabbi Yehuda said, with ten trials our ancestors tested the Holy One, Blessed be He:

BRAISA

שְׁנַיִם בַּיָּם, וּשְׁנַיִם בַּמַּיִם, שְׁנַיִם בַּמָּן, שְׁנַיִם בַּשְּׂלָיו, אַחַת בָּעֵגֶל, וְאַחַת בְּמִדְבַּר פָּארָן.

Two at the Sea, two with water, two with the Manna, two with the quail, one with the Golden Calf, and one in the Wilderness of Paran (the spies).

EXPLANATION

שְׁנַיִם בַּיָּם: אַחַת בַּיְרִידָה וְאַחַת בָּעֲלִיָּיה.

The Gemara details them: Two at the Sea: One upon going down into the sea, and one upon ascending from the sea.

PROOF

בַּיְרִידָה — דִּכְתִיב ”הֲמִבְּלִי אֵין קְבָרִים בְּמִצְרַיִם”.

Upon going down—as it is written: "Is it because there are no graves in Mitzrayim that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness?"

PROOF

בָּעֲלִיָּיה — כִּדְרַב הוּנָא, דְּאָמַר רַב הוּנָא: יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁבְּאוֹתוֹ הַדּוֹר מְקֻטַּנֵּי אֱמָנָה הָיוּ,

Upon ascending—as in the statement of Rav Huna, for Rav Huna said: Yisrael of that generation were lacking in faith,

PROOF

כִּדְרַבָּה בַּר מָרִי, דְּאָמַר רַבָּה בַּר מָרִי: מַאי דִּכְתִיב ”וַיַּמְרוּ עַל יָם בְּיַם סוּף וַיּוֹשִׁיעֵם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ”?

as supported by Rabbah bar Mari, for Rabbah bar Mari said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "And they rebelled at the sea, at the Yam Suf, yet He saved them for His name's sake"?

PROOF

מְלַמֵּד שֶׁהָיוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל מַמְרִים בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה, וְאוֹמְרִים: כְּשֵׁם שֶׁאָנוּ עוֹלִים מִצַּד זֶה כָּךְ מִצְרַיִם עוֹלִים מִצַּד אַחֵר.

This teaches that Yisrael were rebelling at that hour, and saying: Just as we are ascending from this side of the sea, so the Mitzrim are ascending from another side to attack us!

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְשַׂר שֶׁל יָם: פְּלוֹט אוֹתָם לַיַּבָּשָׁה!

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the ministering angel of the sea: Spew out the dead Mitzrim onto the dry land so Yisrael can see them!

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לְפָנָיו: רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, כְּלוּם יֵשׁ עֶבֶד שֶׁנּוֹתֵן לוֹ רַבּוֹ מַתָּנָה וְחוֹזֵר וְנוֹטְלָהּ הֵימֶנּוּ?

The angel said before Him: Master of the Universe, is there any slave to whom his master gives a gift and then takes it back from him? You gave me the Mitzrim to drown!

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לוֹ: אֲנִי נוֹתֵן לְךָ אֶחָד וּמֶחֱצָה שֶׁבָּהֶם.

Hashem said to him: I will give you one and a half times their number in the future (the army of Sisera).

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לְפָנָיו: רִבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, כְּלוּם יֵשׁ עֶבֶד שֶׁתּוֹבֵעַ אֶת רַבּוֹ?

The angel said before Him: Master of the Universe, is there any slave who can take his master to court if He fails to pay?

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לוֹ: נַחַל קִישׁוֹן יִהְיֶה עָרֵב, מִיָּד פְּלָטָן לַיַּבָּשָׁה, דִּכְתִיב: "וַיַּרְא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת מִצְרַיִם מֵת עַל וְגוֹ'".

Hashem said to him: The Kishon Stream will be a guarantor to deliver Sisera's army into the sea! Immediately, the sea spewed them out onto the dry land, as it is written: "And Yisrael saw the Mitzrim dead on [the seashore]..."

EXPLANATION

שְׁנַיִם בַּמַּיִם — בְּמָרָה וּבִרְפִידִים.

Two with water—at Marah and at Rephidim.

PROOF

בְּמָרָה, דִּכְתִיב: "וַיָּבֹאוּ מָרָתָה וְלֹא יָכְלוּ לִשְׁתּוֹת", וּכְתִיב: "וַיָּלֶן הָעָם עַל מֹשֶׁה".

At Marah—as it is written: "And they came to Marah, and they could not drink water..." and it is written: "And the people complained against Moshe."

PROOF

בִּרְפִידִים — דִּכְתִיב: "וַיַּחֲנוּ בִּרְפִידִים וְאֵין מַיִם לִשְׁתּוֹת", וּכְתִיב: "וַיָּרֶב הָעָם עִם מֹשֶׁה".

At Rephidim—as it is written: "And they encamped at Rephidim, and there was no water for the people to drink," and it is written: "And the people strove with Moshe."

EXPLANATION

שְׁנַיִם בַּמָּן — דִּכְתִיב:

Two with the Manna—as it is written:

עמוד ב׳ DAF 15B

BRAISA

"אַל תֵּצְאוּ" וַיֵּצְאוּ,

"Do not go out" to gather manna on Shabbos, and yet they went out,

BRAISA

"אַל תּוֹתִירוּ" וַיּוֹתִירוּ.

Moshe commanded "Do not leave over" of the manna until morning, and they left over.

BRAISA

שְׁנַיִם בַּשְּׂלָיו [בִּשְׂלָיו] —

There were two nisyonos regarding the quail

BRAISA

רִאשׁוֹן וּבִשְׂלָיו שֵׁנִי.

the first quail incident and the second quail incident.

BRAISA

בִּשְׂלָיו רִאשׁוֹן — "בְּשִׁבְתְּכֶם עַל סִיר הַבָּשָׂר".

The first quail nisayon was when they complained, "When we sat by the flesh-pots".

BRAISA

בִּשְׂלָיו שֵׁנִי — "וְהָאסַפְסֻף אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבּוֹ".

The second quail nisayon was when "the mixed multitude that was among them lusted a lust".

BRAISA

בָּעֵגֶל — כִּדְאִיתֵיהּ,

The nisayon with the Golden Calf was as it is written in the Torah,

BRAISA

בְּמִדְבַּר פָּארָן — כִּדְאִיתֵיהּ.

and the nisayon **in the wilderness of Paran** with the Meraglim was **as it is written** in the Torah.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶּן זִימְרָא:

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei ben Zimra:

QUESTION

מַאי דִּכְתִיב ״מַה יִּתֵּן לְךָ וּמַה יֹּסִיף לָךְ לָשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה״?

What is the meaning of **that which is written: "What shall be given to you, and what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue"?**

EXPLANATION

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לַלָּשׁוֹן:

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the tongue:

EXPLANATION

כָּל אֵבָרָיו שֶׁל אָדָם זְקוּפִים וְאַתָּה מוּטָל,

All the limbs of a person are upright, but you are lying flat.

EXPLANATION

כָּל אֵבָרָיו שֶׁל אָדָם מִבַּחוּץ וְאַתָּה מִבִּפְנִים,

All the limbs of a person are on the outside, but you are on the inside.

EXPLANATION

וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלָּא שֶׁהִקַּפְתִּי לְךָ שְׁתֵּי חוֹמוֹת, אַחַת שֶׁל עֶצֶם וְאַחַת שֶׁל בָּשָׂר,

And not only that, but I have surrounded you with two walls, one of bone—the teeth—**and one of flesh**—the lips.

EXPLANATION

״מַה יִּתֵּן לְךָ וּמַה יֹּסִיף לָךְ לָשׁוֹן רְמִיָּה״?

"What shall be given to you, and what more shall be done to you, you deceitful tongue," to hold you back from speaking lashon hara?

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶּן זִימְרָא:

Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Yosei ben Zimra:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע כְּאִילּוּ כָּפַר בָּעִיקָּר, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:

Anyone who speaks lashon hara, it is as if he denied the fundamental belief in Hashem, **as it is stated:**

PROOF

”אֲשֶׁר אָמְרוּ לִלְשֹׁנֵנוּ נַגְבִּיר שְׂפָתֵינוּ אִתָּנוּ מִי אָדוֹן לָנוּ”.

"Who said: With our tongue we will prevail, our lips are with us; who is master over us?"

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בֶּן זִימְרָא:

And Rabbi Yosei ben Zimra said:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע, נְגָעִים בָּאִים עָלָיו, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:

Anyone who speaks lashon hara, tzaraas afflictions come upon him, as it is stated:

PROOF

”מְלָשְׁנִי בַסֵּתֶר רֵעֵהוּ אוֹתוֹ אַצְמִית”,

"Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy [atzmit]";

PROOF

וּכְתִיב הָתָם: ”לַצְמִיתֻת”,

and it is written there regarding real estate: "In perpetuity [latzmitus]",

PROOF

וּמְתַרְגְּמִינַן: לַחֲלוּטִין.

and we translate latzmitus into Aramaic as: "Lachalutin"—for absolute confirmation.

PROOF

וְתָנַן: אֵין בֵּין מְצוֹרָע מוּסְגָּר לִמְצוֹרָע מוּחְלָט אֶלָּא פְּרִיעָה וּפְרִימָה.

And we learned in a Mishnah: There is no difference between a quarantined leper and a confirmed leper [metzora muchlat] except for letting the hair grow wild and rending clothes, which shows that the word atzmit refers to a metzora muchlat.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ:

Reish Lakish said:

QUESTION

מַאי דִּכְתִיב ”זֹאת תִּהְיֶה תּוֹרַת הַמְּצוֹרָע”?

What is the meaning of that which is written: "This shall be the law of the leper [metzora]"?

ANSWER

זֹאת תִּהְיֶה תּוֹרָתוֹ שֶׁל מוֹצִיא שֵׁם רַע.

This shall be the law of one who brings out an evil name [motzi shem ra].

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ:

And Reish Lakish said:

QUESTION

מַאי דִּכְתִיב ״אִם יִשַּׁךְ הַנָּחָשׁ בְּלֹא לָחַשׁ וְאֵין יִתְרוֹן לְבַעַל הַלָּשׁוֹן״?

What is the meaning of that which is written: "If the serpent bites without a whisper, then what advantage is there to the master of the tongue"?

EXPLANATION

לֶעָתִיד לָבֹא מִתְקַבְּצוֹת כָּל הַחַיּוֹת וּבָאוֹת אֵצֶל נָחָשׁ, וְאוֹמְרוֹת:

In the time to come, all the animals will gather and come to the serpent and say:

EXPLANATION

אַרְיֵי דּוֹרֵס וְאוֹכֵל, זְאֵב טוֹרֵף וְאוֹכֵל, אַתָּה מָה הֲנָאָה יֵשׁ לְךָ?

A lion tramples and eats, a wolf tears and eats; but you, what benefit do you have when you bite and inject poison without eating?

EXPLANATION

אוֹמֵר לָהֶם: וְכִי מָה יִתְרוֹן לְבַעַל הַלָּשׁוֹן?

The serpent says to them: And what advantage is there to the master of the tongue who speaks lashon hara without any benefit?

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רֵישׁ לָקִישׁ:

And Reish Lakish said:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע מַגְדִּיל עֲוֹנוֹת עַד לַשָּׁמַיִם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:

Anyone who speaks lashon hara magnifies his sins up to the heavens, as it is stated:

PROOF

״שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם וּלְשׁוֹנָם תִּהֲלַךְ בָּאָרֶץ״.

"They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth."

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא אָמַר מָר עוּקְבָא:

Rav Chisda said that Mar Ukva said:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע רָאוּי לִסּוֹקְלוֹ בְּאֶבֶן,

Anyone who speaks lashon hara is worthy of being stoned with stones.

PROOF

כְּתִיב הָכָא "אוֹתוֹ אַצְמִית", וּכְתִיב הָתָם "צָמְתוּ בַּבּוֹר חַיָּי וַיַּדּוּ אֶבֶן בִּי".

It is written here: "Him will I destroy [atzmit]", and it is written there: "They have destroyed [tzamtu] my life in the dungeon, and have cast stones upon me."

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא אָמַר מָר עוּקְבָא:

And Rav Chisda said that Mar Ukva said:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע, אוֹמֵר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא: אֵין אֲנִי וְהוּא יְכוֹלִין לָדוּר בָּעוֹלָם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:

With regard to anyone who speaks lashon hara, the Holy One, Blessed be He, says: I and he cannot dwell together in the world, as it is stated:

PROOF

"מְלָשְׁנִי בַסֵּתֶר רֵעֵהוּ אוֹתוֹ אַצְמִית גְּבַהּ עֵינַיִם וּרְחַב לֵבָב אֹתוֹ לֹא אוּכָל",

"Whoever slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy; one who is haughty of eye and proud of heart, him I cannot bear [oto lo uchal]";

EXPLANATION

אַל תִּיקְרֵי "אוֹתוֹ לֹא אוּכָל" אֶלָּא "אִתּוֹ לֹא אוּכָל",

do not read it as "him I cannot bear [oto lo uchal]", but rather read it as "with him I cannot dwell [itto lo uchal]".

STATEMENT

וְאִיכָּא דְּמַתְנֵי לַהּ עַל גַּסֵּי הָרוּחַ.

And there are those who teach this derashah regarding arrogant people.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב חִסְדָּא אָמַר מָר עוּקְבָא:

Rav Chisda said that Mar Ukva said:

STATEMENT

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע, אוֹמֵר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא לְגֵיהִנֹּם:

Regarding anyone who speaks lashon hara, the Holy One, Blessed be He, says to Gehinnom:

STATEMENT

אֲנִי עָלָיו מִלְמַעְלָה וְאַתָּה עָלָיו מִלְמַטָּה נְדוֹנֶנּוּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר:

I from above him and you from below him will judge him, as it is stated:

PROOF

”חִצֵּי גִבּוֹר שְׁנוּנִים עִם גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים“,

"Sharp arrows of a mighty warrior, with coals of broom wood."

PROOF

אֵין חֵץ אֶלָּא לָשׁוֹן, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”חֵץ שָׁחוּט לְשׁוֹנָם מִרְמָה דִּבֵּר“.

"Arrow" refers to nothing other than the tongue, as it is stated: "Their tongue is a slaughtered arrow, speaking deceit."

PROOF

וְאֵין גִּבּוֹר אֶלָּא הַקָּדוֹשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”ה' כְּגִבּוֹר יֵצֵא“,

And "mighty warrior" refers to nothing other than the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is stated: "Hashem shall go forth as a mighty warrior."

EXPLANATION

גַּחֲלֵי רְתָמִים הַיְינוּ גֵּיהִנָּם.

And "coals of broom wood" means Gehinnom.

QUESTION

אָמַר רַבִּי חָמָא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מָה תַּקָּנָתוֹ שֶׁל מְסַפְּרֵי לָשׁוֹן הָרָע?

Rabbi Chama bar Rabbi Chanina said: What is the remedy for speakers of lashon hara so they may gain atonement?

ANSWER

אִם תַּלְמִיד חָכָם הוּא — יַעֲסוֹק בַּתּוֹרָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”מַרְפֵּא לָשׁוֹן עֵץ חַיִּים“,

If he is a talmid chacham, he should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: "A healing tongue is a tree of life",

PROOF

וְאֵין לָשׁוֹן אֶלָּא לָשׁוֹן הָרָע, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”חֵץ שָׁחוּט לְשׁוֹנָם“,

and "tongue" refers to nothing other than lashon hara, as it is stated: "Their tongue is a slaughtered arrow";

PROOF

וְאֵין עֵץ אֶלָּא תּוֹרָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לַמַּחֲזִיקִים בָּהּ“,

and "tree" refers to nothing other than Torah, as it is stated: "It is a tree of life to those who grasp it."

ANSWER

וְאִם עַם הָאָרֶץ הוּא יַשְׁפִּיל דַּעְתּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: ”וְסֶלֶף בָּהּ שֶׁבֶר (רוח) [בְּרוּחַ]“.

And if he is an am ha'aretz, he should humble his mind, as it is stated: "But perverseness therein is a brokenness in spirit."

STATEMENT

רַבִּי אַחָא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא אוֹמֵר: סִיפֵּר אֵין לוֹ תַּקָּנָה,

Rabbi Acha bar Rabbi Chanina says: If one already spoke lashon hara, he has no remedy through Torah study,

PROOF

שֶׁכְּבָר כְּרָתוֹ דָּוִד בְּרוּחַ הַקֹּדֶשׁ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "יַכְרֵת ה' כָּל שִׂפְתֵי חֲלָקוֹת לָשׁוֹן מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדֹלוֹת".

for Dovid already cut him off with ruach hakodesh, as it is stated: "May Hashem cut off all flattering lips, the tongue that speaks proud things."

QUESTION

אֶלָּא מָה תַּקָּנָתוֹ שֶׁלֹּא יָבֹא לִידֵי לָשׁוֹן הָרָע?

Rather, what is his remedy so that he will not come to speak lashon hara in the future?

ANSWER

אִם תַּלְמִיד חָכָם הוּא יַעֲסוֹק בַּתּוֹרָה, וְאִם עַם הָאָרֶץ הוּא יַשְׁפִּיל דַּעְתּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְסֶלֶף בָּהּ שֶׁבֶר (רוח) [בְּרוּחַ]".

If he is a talmid chacham he should engage in Torah study, and if he is an am ha'aretz he should humble his mind, as it is stated: "But perverseness therein is a brokenness in spirit."

BRAISA

תָּנָא דְּבֵי רַבִּי יִשְׁמָעֵאל:

The Tanna of the school of Rabbi Yishmael taught:

BRAISA

כָּל הַמְסַפֵּר לָשׁוֹן הָרָע מַגְדִּיל עֲוֹנוֹת כְּנֶגֶד שָׁלֹשׁ עֲבֵירוֹת, עֲבוֹדָה זָרָה וְגִילּוּי עֲרָיוֹת וּשְׁפִיכוּת דָּמִים.

Anyone who speaks lashon hara magnifies his sins equal to the three severe sins of idol worship, forbidden sexual relations, and bloodshed.

PROOF

כְּתִיב הָכָא "לָשׁוֹן מְדַבֶּרֶת גְּדוֹלוֹת",

It is written here: "A tongue speaking great things [gedolos]";

PROOF

וּכְתִיב בַּעֲבוֹדָה זָרָה "אָנָּא חָטָא הָעָם הַזֶּה חֲטָאָה גְדֹלָה".

and it is written by idol worship: "Ah, this people has sinned a great sin [chata'ah gedolah]".

PROOF

בְּגִילּוּי עֲרָיוֹת כְּתִיב: "וְאִישׁ אֲשֶׁר הָרָעָה הַגְּדֹלָה הַזֹּאת",

Regarding forbidden sexual relations it is written: "How then can I do this great wickedness [hara'ah hagedolah hazos]"?

PROOF

בִּשְׁפִיכוּת דָּמִים כְּתִיב: ״גָּדוֹל עֲוֹנִי מִנְּשֹׂא״.

Regarding bloodshed it is written: "My punishment is greater [gadol] than I can bear."

QUESTION

״גְּדוֹלוֹת״ אֵימָא תַּרְתֵּי!

The Gemara asks: But the word "Gedolos" is plural, so say that lashon hara equals two of these sins!

QUESTION

הֵי מִינַּייהוּ מַפְקָא?

Which of them would you exclude to leave only two?

STATEMENT

בְּמַעְרָבָא אָמְרִי:

In the West (Eretz Yisrael), they say:

STATEMENT

לָשׁוֹן תְּלִיתַאי קָטֵיל תְּלִיתַאי,

The threefold tongue kills three:

EXPLANATION

הוֹרֵג לַמְסַפְּרוֹ, וְלַמְקַבְּלוֹ, וְלָאוֹמְרִין עָלָיו.

It kills the one who speaks it, and the one who accepts it, and the one about whom it is spoken.

QUESTION

אָמַר רַבִּי חָמָא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מַאי דִּכְתִיב ״מָוֶת וְחַיִּים בְּיַד לָשׁוֹן״,

Rabbi Chama bar Rabbi Chanina said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Death and life are in the hand of the tongue"?

QUESTION

וְכִי יֵשׁ יָד לַלָּשׁוֹן?

Does a tongue have a hand?

ANSWER

לוֹמַר לָךְ: מָה יָד מְמִיתָה — אַף לָשׁוֹן מְמִיתָה.

Rather, it is to tell you: Just as a hand can kill, so too the tongue can kill.

QUESTION

אִי מָה יָד אֵינָהּ מְמִיתָה אֶלָּא בְּסָמוּךְ לָהּ — אַף לָשׁוֹן אֵינָהּ מְמִיתָה אֶלָּא בְּסָמוּךְ לָהּ?

If so, we might say: Just as a hand can kill only when close to it, so too can the tongue kill only when close to it?

ANSWER

תַּלְמוּד לוֹמַר: ”חֵץ שָׁחוּט לְשׁוֹנָם”.

The verse states: "Their tongue is a slaughtered arrow"—it kills from afar like an arrow.

QUESTION

אִי מָה חֵץ עַד אַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה, אַף לָשׁוֹן עַד אַרְבָּעִים וַחֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה?

If so, we might say: Just as an arrow shoots only up to forty or fifty amos, so too the tongue can kill only up to forty or fifty amos?

ANSWER

תַּלְמוּד לוֹמַר: ”שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם וּלְשׁוֹנָם תִּתְהַלַּךְ בָּאָרֶץ”.

The verse states: "They set their mouth against the heavens, and their tongue walks through the earth"—it reaches everywhere.

QUESTION

וְכִי מֵאַחַר דִּכְתִיב ”שַׁתּוּ בַשָּׁמַיִם פִּיהֶם”, ”חֵץ שָׁחוּט לְשׁוֹנָם” לְמָה לִי?

And since it is written: "They set their mouth against the heavens", why do I need "Their tongue is a slaughtered arrow"?

ANSWER

הָא קָמַשְׁמַע לַן, דְּקָטִיל כְּחֵץ.

This comes to teach us that it kills like an arrow which wounds quietly from a distance.

QUESTION

וְכִי מֵאַחַר דִּכְתִיב ”חֵץ שָׁחוּט לְשׁוֹנָם”, ”מָוֶת וְחַיִּים בְּיַד לָשׁוֹן” לְמָה לִי?

And since it is written: "Their tongue is a slaughtered arrow", why do I need "Death and life are in the hand of the tongue"?

ANSWER

לְכִדְרָבָא, דְּאָמַר רָבָא: דְּבָעֵי חַיִּים — בְּלִישָׁנֵיהּ, דְּבָעֵי מִיתָה — בְּלִישָׁנֵיהּ.

It is needed for that which Rava said, as Rava said: One who wants life, it is dependent on his tongue; one who wants death, it is dependent on his tongue.

QUESTION

הֵיכִי דָּמֵי לִישָׁנָא בִּישָׁא?

What is an example of an evil tongue [leshana bisha]?

ANSWER

רָבָא אָמַר: כְּגוֹן דְּאָמַר "אִיכָּא נוּרָא בֵּי פְּלָנְיָא".

Rava said: For instance, if one says: "There is a fire in So-and-so's house."

OBJECTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ אַבָּיֵי: מַאי קָא עָבֵיד? גַּלּוּיֵי מִילְּתָא בְּעָלְמָא הוּא!

Abaye said to him: What is he doing wrong here? **It is merely revealing a factual matter!**

RESOLUTION

אֶלָּא דְּמַפֵּיק בְּלִישָׁנָא בִּישָׁא, דְּאָמַר: "הֵיכָא מִשְׁתְּכַח נוּרָא אֶלָּא בֵּי פְּלָנְיָא".

Rather, the case is **where he expresses it with an evil tongue, where he says: "Where else would fire be found if not in So-and-so's house** where they cook excessively?"

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבָּה: כֹּל מִילְּתָא דְּמִיתְאַמְרָא בְּאַפֵּי מָרַהּ, לֵית בַּהּ מִשּׁוּם לִישָׁנָא בִּישָׁא.

Rabbah said: Any matter that is said in the presence of its owner does not have an prohibition of an evil tongue.

OBJECTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: כָּל שֶׁכֵּן חוּצְפָּא וְלִישָׁנָא בִּישָׁא!

Abaye **said to him: All the more so** it is **impudence and an evil tongue** when said to his face!

RESOLUTION

אֲמַר לֵיהּ: אֲנָא כְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי סְבִירָא לִי, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי: מִיָּמַי לֹא אָמַרְתִּי דָּבָר וְחָזַרְתִּי לַאֲחוֹרַי. אָמַר

Rabbah **said to him: I hold like Rabbi Yosei, as Rabbi Yosei said: In all my days, I never said anything and retracted it** to speak behind someone's back. **He said**

SUMMARY

The sugya opens by resolving the payments for an oines, establishing through Abaye and Rava that besides the fixed fifty-sela fine, there is a separate chiyuv to pay for boshes and nezek based on pesukim. The Mishnah then contrasts the oines (fifty selaim) with the motzi shem ra (one hundred selaim), revealing that dibbur is treated more severely than a maaseh, just as the gzar din in the midbar was sealed specifically over the lashon hara of the Meraglim. The Gemara proves this from pesukim, refuting alternative sevaros that the decree was due to heresy or simply completing their measure of sin, and goes on to detail the ten nisyonos in the midbar, including the deep midrashic exchange between Hashem and the angel of the sea regarding the Mitzrim and Sisera.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה · WHAT TO TAKE HOME

Look at what the Gemara is mechadesh here! Am Yisrael in the midbar went through ten huge nisyonos. They fell in emunah at the Yam Suf, they complained about water and manna, they even made the Eigel HaZahav! And yet, after all of those severe aveiros, Hashem's gezar din was not sealed. What finally sealed their decree to perish in the midbar? Davka the lashon hara of the Meraglim! Think about that sevara: a person can fall into terrible physical aveiros, but when a Yid uses his mouth to speak bad, to find fault, that is what tips the scale and seal the din.

The Tanna, Rabbi Elazar ben Parta, brings a wondersame raaya: if the Meraglim were punished so severely for speaking evil about 'trees and stones', the inanimate dirt of Eretz Yisrael, kal v'chomer how terrible it is when someone speaks bad about a fellow Yid, a living neshama! Look at how Hashem built the human body: every single organ is out in the open, but the tongue is hidden inside, shut behind two protective walls, one of bone and one of flesh. Hashem is telling us: keep a double lock on this door! Do not let it open so easily to talk ill of others.

We live in a world where talking about people, pointing out flaws, and passing judgment is second nature. But our sugya teaches us that the yetzer hara tricks us into thinking speech is 'just words.' It is not just words! Speech has the power to build worlds or seal a gezar din. When we guard our mouth, we are not just avoiding an aveirah; we are holding onto our bitachon and keeping the Shechinah dwelling together with us.

Today, accept upon yourself one small gedar in speech: the next time a conversation turns toward discussing someone's personal flaws or making a negative comment, even about a situation or a place, take a deep breath, keep the 'two walls' closed, and quietly change the subject.