

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Yevamot 69 - 75

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Week of 1 7 Adar I 5760 / 7 13 February 2000

Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide *Daf Yomi* cycle

The Parameter of Disqualification

A *kohen gadol* who has relations with a widow, which is prohibited by Torah law, disqualifies her from the benefits of the priesthood. If she is the daughter of a *kohen* she may no longer eat the *terumah* to which she was hitherto entitled, and even if she is not from a kohanite family, she becomes forbidden to marry any *kohen*.

kohen gadol, or does the same disqualification

result from her participation in other forbidden relationships?

Three different opinions exist regarding this question. The source for all of them is the same the explicit situation of *kohen gadol* and widow. They diverge, however, when it comes to the matter of drawing parallels to this case.

The first Tana (in the Tosefta cited on 68a) declares that any forbidden relationship results in disqualification. Just as the *kohen gadol* forbidden relationship with a widow disqualifies her, so too does any forbidden relationship on her part disqualify her.

Rabbi Yossi disagrees by limiting disqualification to those forbidden relationships whose prohibition extends to the next generation. This will apply in almost all cases, with the exception of an Egyptian or Edomite convert. The Torah severely limited a convert from these nations regarding his or her marriage opportunities by prohibiting their first and second generations from marrying a Jew born of a Jewish mother, in no such restriction. If a second generation Egyptian or Edomite convert, therefore, had a forbidden relation with an ordinary Jewess, she would be disqualified under the broad definition of the first Tana but not so according to Rabbi Yossi. His criterion is that just as the offspring of a forbidden union between a *kohen gadol* and widow is himself disqualified, so must this extended disqualification exist for the mother to be disqualified, which does not apply to our case of the second generation Egyptian convert.

A third approach is that of Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel who thus formulates his rule: Only if the daughter of the woman is forbidden in

Maobite convert. The Torah prohibited the male converts of all generations from these nations from marrying a woman born of a Jewish mother, in most cases, but placed no such restriction on their female converts. Since a *kohen gadol* male and female offspring, this cannot be extended to the case of these converts, whose daughters are eligible for regular marriage.

Yevamot 69a

A Forty-Year Lapse

When the Torah relates that the Children of Israel offered a *korban Pesach* (Passover Sacrifice) a year after their exodus from Egypt, it is to be understood as criticism rather than praise, say our Sages (*Sifri Bamidbar 9*), because it was the only one offered during their 40 years in the wilderness.

The reason they did not offer these sacrifices is that they did not perform circumcision on the children born in the wilderness, and an uncircumcised child disqualifies his father from offering a *korban Pesach*. But why, asks the *gemara*, did they not perform circumcision until they reached *Eretz Yisrael* some 40 years later?

Two reasons are given in response. One is that the strain of traveling presented a danger to the life of a newly circumcised child. Another is that the northern wind necessary for allowing the healing rays of the sun to shine upon them did not blow during the day during all those years, so that it was dangerous to perform circumcision.

If so, asks Tosefot, why was the nation criticized for not performing circumcision, since they were helpless to do so? Even if we explain the criticism on the grounds that they brought upon themselves the prolonged journey in the wilderness through the sin of the spies, they should not have been disqualified from offering a *korban Pesach*. Just as a child who has not reached eight days of age does not disqualify his father from the *korban Pesach*, as he is not yet ready for circumcision and his father is helpless in this regard, so too, asks Tosefot, the helplessness of Jews in the wilderness to perform circumcision for medical reasons should not be a disqualifier.

A response to the challenge of Tosefot has been provided by the commentaries. There is a sharp distinction between the status of a child not yet old enough for circumcision and one who is of age but incapable of undergoing circumcision for medical reasons. The former is not

arel *arel* *milah* is not yet incumbent on him. He therefore cannot disqualify his father because *arel* *arel* *sness* to perform it does not

because the death of his brothers through circumcision indicate a family weakness which presents a danger to life. *perek* one who did not undergo circumcision

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✉ info@ohr.org.il
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