

שאלו שלום ירושלים Yom Yerushalayim Sameach!

Daf 46: פְּדִיּוֹן הַבְּכוֹר – Redemption of the [Firstborn] Son

“Yesh Bechor” (There is a firstborn) begins on this *daf*. It is the eighth *perek* (chapter) of *Masechet Bechorot*, which deals with the laws of *Pidyon HaBen* (Redemption of the [firstborn] son).

According to one approach, it was forbidden to make use of any *bechorei Yisrael* (firstborn boys of *B'nai Yisrael*) who had come out from Egypt. When *B'nai Yisrael* left Egypt, God instructed Moshe: “*Kadesh Li kol bechor*” (sanctify **every** firstborn to Me). According to Sforno’s interpretation, had God not commanded Moshe to immediately redeem all of the *bechorim*, it would have been prohibited to utilize any of those people for mundane purposes because of their holy status.

Bechorot still possess a special status today. Although they are not sacred, it is a *mitzvah* to redeem the firstborn son, by giving five silver coins to the *kohen*.

Daf 47: בַּמָּה אֶתָּה חֹפֵץ יוֹתֵר? – Which Do You Want More?

During the *Pidyon HaBen* ceremony, the *kohen* asks the father: “Which do you want more, your *bechor* (firstborn) son, or the five silver coins?” The father answers: “I want my son.” After which, the father hands the *kohen* the five silver coins, as a *pidyon* (fee for redemption).



If the father were to answer that he prefers the money, would the *kohen* take his son? Certainly not. However, in Rambam’s *Sefer HaMitzvot* (in which Rambam provides a listing of all the commandments of the Torah, with a brief description for each), Rambam explains that we say the formula stated above because the Torah requires the *pidyon* to be implemented in a way which clarifies that the *bechor* was meant to be holy and set aside for God. Hence, the reason for performing the “*pidyon*” ritual ceremony.



FROM THE TALMUD
SEDER KODASHIM
MASECHET BECHOROT
daf 52

מִן הַתְּלֻמוֹד:
סדר קודשים, מסכת בכורות, דף נ"ב:
”ואלו שאין חוזרין ביובל: הבכורה,
והיורש את אשתו, והמייבם את
אשת אחיו, והמתנה, דברי רבי מאיר.
וחכמים אומרים: המתנה כמכר”

Translation

חוזרין ... *Chozrin* ... Returned
[to their original owner]
יורש ... *Yoresh* ... Heir
מתנה ... *Matana* ... Gift

Explanation

During the Jubilee year, all property that had been sold is returned to their original owners. However, a person who inherited a parcel of the land as a result of his being a *bechor* (firstborn), as well as someone who inherited land from his wife do not return the land. Regarding land received as a gift, Rabbi Meir and the Sages disagreed whether that property must be returned.



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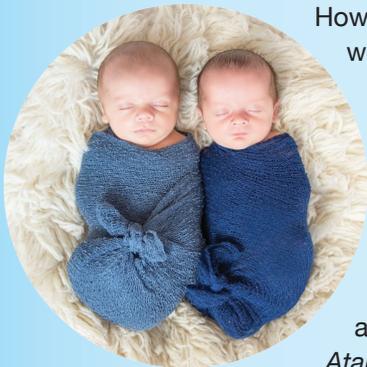
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Daf 48: קִדְּבֹנֹת בְּעֲלֵי מֵוִם – Redemption of the [Firstborn] Son, in the Case of Twins



How is *Pidyon HaBen* fulfilled in a case where twins were born? The answer is that in such as case, there are two *Brit* ceremonies, but one *Pidyon HaBen* for the firstborn twin — as only the twin who was born first is deemed the *bechor*.

A *Brit Milah* for each of the twins is planned to take place on the eighth day after their births. After 30 days, a *Pidyon HaBen* is orchestrated and the father recites two blessings: “*Baruch Atah HaShem ... asher kidshanu b’mitzvotav ve’tzivanu ahl Pidyon HaBen*” (Blessed are You God ...

Who sanctified us through Your *mitzvot* and commanded us to redeem our [firstborn] son), and the blessing of *Shehecheyanu* ([Thank You to the One] who has given us life and sustained us until this time).

Daf 49: פְּדִיּוֹן הַבֵּן מוֹקְדִים – Premature Redemption of the [Firstborn] Son



In a far-flung, distant village lived a Jew who was overjoyed following the birth of his firstborn son. In the village where he resided there was no *kohen*. So, the father decided to set out for the nearby big city, to give five silver coins

to the *kohen* in order to redeem his newborn son. When the father arrived in the big city, he found the location of the scholarly *kohen*. He promptly handed the *kohen* the five coins for the redemption of his son and headed home.

The father made this payment before the infant was 30 days old. What is the *halacha* in such a case? If the father tells the *kohen*, in advance, that he wanted the *Pidyon* to occur on the baby’s 30th day, then money remains in the *kohen*’s possession until the son turns 30 days, at which time, the *Pidyon* goes into effect.

What happened leading up to the SIX DAY WAR?

DURING THE FIRST QUARTER OF 1967 THERE WERE 270 INCIDENTS ON ISRAEL’S BORDERS.

MAY 14th

Egyptian Army put on alert and sends troops into Sinai.

MAY 15th

Israel calls up some reserve units.

MAY 18th

Egypt demands that UN forces are removed from Sinai and the Gaza Strip.

MAY 19th

UN Secretary General complies and orders all UN troops out.

MAY 20th

Over 100,000 Egyptian troop in Sinai.

MAY 23th

Egypt closes the Straits of Tiran to Israeli shipping thus blockading Israel from the South.

MAY 30th

Jordan and Egypt sign a mutual defense pact.

MAY 31st

Iraqi President Aref says, “The existence of Israel is an error which must be rectified. This is our opportunity to wipe out the ignominy which has been with us since 1948. Our goal is clear: to wipe Israel off the map.”

JUNE 3rd

Moshe Dayan becomes Defense Minister.

JUNE 5th

Israel attacks.



Israeli soldiers preparing for war (May 1967).
Photo Source: israeldefense.co.il



Daf 50: בְּכוֹר שֶׁלֹּא נִפְדָּה עַל יְדֵי אָבִיו – A [Firstborn] Son, Not Redeemed by His Father

Many years ago, there was a boy in Jerusalem who wore a silver medallion on which it was written that he was a *bechor* (firstborn) who had not been redeemed by his father, and as such, was obligated to redeem himself once he grew up.

Rabbi Shmuel Salant instructed that the silver medallion be hung around the boy's neck and insisted the boy's mother make sure the medallion was not removed under any circumstance — until the boy was old enough and redeemed himself. This is one of the customs practiced in a case where a father did not redeem his son, and the son's redemption was postponed until that son was capable of redeeming himself.

Daf 51: לְהַחזִיר אֶת הַכֶּסֶף לְאָבִא – Returning the Money to the Father

On one occasion, a *Pidyon HaBen* took place, and the *kohen* involved became aware that the infant's family was poor and lacked means. After the *Pidyon*, the *kohen* approached the father in secret and said: *Yasher Koach!* (Well-Done!) that you enabled me to fulfill this important *mitzvah*. However, now, I am giving this money back to you.



Is the *kohen* permitted to return the *Pidyon* money to the father? The answer is yes. The father gave the *kohen* five silver coins, after which the *kohen* is permitted to do whatever he wishes with those coins. Therefore, he is permitted to give them as a gift to the father of the infant son. The Talmud recounts that Rabbi Hanina, who was a *kohen*, always returned the money to the father of the *bechor* after completion of the *Pidyon HaBen*.

Daf 52: יְרוּשַׁת בֵּית הַקְּבָרוֹת – Inheritance of a Cemetery

When a woman dies, the husband inherits her assets. The *mishnah* taught on this *daf* states that Rabbi Yochanan Ben Beroka said a husband who inherits property from his wife should return that land to the members of her family, and they in turn should compensate him with a sum of money equal to the value of the land.

Why is husband who inherits property required to return that property? And if he needs to return the property, why is the deceased wife's family required to compensate the husband for that land? Indeed, when someone inherits an inheritance, those assets belong to him!

The Talmud explains that this *sugiya* (Talmudic debate) addresses a situation where the husband inherits a family's *beit kevarot* (burial site). *Chazal* ruled that a husband is obligated to return a familial burial site to his wife's family, in order to allow them to continue being buried alongside their ancestors.



THE SIX DAY WAR TIMELINE

DAY 1: JUNE 5th

Israeli Air Force destroys Egyptian, Jordanian, and Syrian Air Forces; Israeli troops cross into Sinai; Jordan shells West Jerusalem.

DAY 2: JUNE 6th

Israel captures Gaza Strip and IDF moves to the center of Sinai. IDF begins to circle the Old City, capture Ammunition Hill and UN compound.

DAY 3: JUNE 7th

Israel completes the capture of Sinai. The Old City is captured, and finally, the Kotel is in Israeli hands after almost 2,000 years. Rabbi Shlomo Goren famously blows the shofar at the Kotel.

DAY 4: JUNE 8th

Israel captures Yehudah and Shomron.

DAY 5: JUNE 9th

After four days of shelling by the Syrians, Israeli forces begin the assault on the Golan Heights.

DAY 6: JUNE 10th

Israel completes the capture of the Golan Heights taking the town Kuneitra and Mt. Hermon.



IDF Chief Chaplain Rabbi Shlomo Goren, surrounded by IDF soldiers, blows the shofar in front of the Kotel. June 1967.
Photo Source: Israel Government Press Office



Look closely at the illustration and answer the following questions:

1. Who is the person sitting in a jeep, holding a Torah scroll and shofar?
2. In which rabbinic positions did the central figure serve?
3. What date did the event depicted here take place?
4. What locations are depicted here and how do they relate to the central figure in the illustration?



(1) The man in the jeep is Rabbi Shlomo Goren; Chief Rabbi of the IDF; Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv; and Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel; (2) 28 Iyar 1967; (3) The Kotel; Kever Rachel and Me'arat HaMachpelah, which are the places Rabbi Goren was quick to enter during the Six Day War.

Dvar Torah BAMIDBAR

פְּרַשְׁתַּת בְּמִדְבָּר

One of the first directives God gave *B'nai Yisrael* as they set out on their long walk in the desert, was to make flags for each *shevet* (tribe). What was the significance of these flags? What did they come to symbolize?

On a simple level, the flags served the practical purpose of keeping order in the wilderness. *B'nai Yisrael* were a large mass of hundreds of thousands of people. The flags served to keep everyone informed of his place while they continued on through the desert. However, on a deeper level, it can be said that a flag is a symbol of each person's character and represents the collective sense of purpose to which the individuals who march behind it are associated. Raising the flag symbolizes faith in a chosen path and conveys a certain aspiration.

Following long years of slavery and hard labor in Egypt, upon the Exodus *B'nai Yisrael* proudly waved their flags — as free human beings, living and believing in common faith and purpose.



QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

All answers can be found in this Daf Yomi publication

1. What is required of a *bechor* who has not been redeemed by his father?
2. What is the *halacha* in the case where *Pidyon Haben* was performed before the 30th day?
3. How is the *Mitzvah of Pidyon HaBen* observed in the event of the birth of twins?

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