from truncated [nimmulæi] people, as Rav Beivai’s family traced their lineage to the house of Eli, all of whose descendants were destined to be short-lived (see 1 Samuel 2:31). You speak truncated [mulayat] and unsound matters. When the semen passes through its proper place, it fertilizes, but if it does not pass through its proper place, it does not fertilize. Since he cannot father children, he is like one whose testicles have been crushed, and therefore he may not enter into the congregation.

Rav Yehuda said that Shmuel said: If a man’s member had been punctured and it later healed and the hole closed up with flesh, in any case where, if he would emit semen, it would tear open again, he is unfit to enter into the congregation; but if not, he is fit. Rav discussed this ruling and raised a question: Where is this perforation? If we say it is below the corona, at the end of the man’s member, why should this perforation render him unfit? Even if the member was entirely severed, he would also be fit. Rather, the hole is in the corona itself, that is, at the point where the corona meets the rest of the member. It was also stated explicitly that this is the case, as Rav Mari bar Mar said that Mar Ukva said that Shmuel said: If a man’s member had been punctured in the corona itself, and it later healed and the hole closed up with flesh, in any case where if he would emit semen it would tear open again, he is unfit; but if not, he is fit.

With regard to this issue, Rava, son of Rabba, sent the following question to Rav Yosef: Let our teacher teach us, what should we do to verify whether or not the perforation was adequately closed? Rav Yosef said to him: We bring warm barley bread and place it upon his anus [bei pukrei], and owing to the heat it emits semen, and we observe what happens and see whether or not the perforation remains closed.

Abaye said: Is that to say that everyone is like our Patriarch Jacob, with regard to whom it is written: “You, Reuben, my might and the first fruits of my strength” (Genesis 49:3), implying that Jacob never experienced an emission of semen in all his days, so that his eldest son Reuben was conceived from his first drop of seed, i.e., “the first fruits of my strength.” The implication is that there is certainly no need for such measures in order to bring a man to ejaculate.

Rather, Abaye said that a different method is used: We pass before him colorful garments of a woman, and thereby bring him to arousal, so that he will experience an emission. Rava said: Is that to say that everyone is like Barzilai the Gileadite, traditionally known for his licentious character? Not all men are brought to excitement when they merely see such clothes. Rather, the Gemara rejects this proposal and states that it is clear as we initially answered, that we follow the former procedure even though not all men require it.

The Sages taught in baraita: If a man’s member was punctured, he is unfit to enter into the congregation of Israel because his semen is discharged gately and does not fertilize; if the perforation later closed up with flesh, he is fit, because now he can father children. And this is an instance of one who is unfit who returns to his previous state of fitness. The Gemara asks: What does the word this come to exclude? The Gemara explains that it comes to exclude a case involving an entirely different matter, that of a membrane that formed on the lung of an animal in the wake of a wound, which is not considered a proper membrane, as it is likely to rupture. If a puncture in the lung became covered with such a membrane the animal does not regain its former kosher status.

Because you come from truncated [nimmulæi] people — אֶלָּא עַל מַעְרַכְתָּא מִמּוּלָאֵי you are not entirely clear. Reshi explains that mulayat means wretched, or cut off, as Rav Beivai descended from the house of Eli, whose descendants were condemned to premature death (see 1 Samuel 2:53). A slightly different interpretation is attributed to Rabbi Bein Hananel (cited in Tosafot), who asserts that Rav Beivai’s family came from the village of Mamla, whose residents were descendants of Eli. An alternative opinion is that mulayat means important people who speak in a superior manner in other words, since he comes from a distinguished family, Rav Beivai permits himself to speak haughtily, without examining his words carefully (Arukh).

He never experienced an emission of semen – אֲבַיֵי רַבָּא. Tosafot understand that Reuben was born from the very first drop of semen that issued from Jacob’s body. Rabbi Avraham min Ha’ar cites various proofs from the Bible that this was not necessarily the case. Rather, what this means here is that Jacob did not experience a nocturnal emission before marriage, and that Reuben was the product of his first relationship with Leah.

In its place it fertilizes – פּוּקְרֵי קַבּוּקָה This word may mean the place or housing of the hole. Some explain pukrei as an abbreviation of two words, pok re’, which means the place from where excrement exits.

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A puncture in the penis that reaches the urethra may cause the sperm to exit in the wrong place and thereby render fertilization impossible. However, if such a puncture were sealed without having caused any permanent internal damage, the penis could return to its former functioning state.
There are parallels for both readings in Aramaic and Arabic. Cause in serving the same purpose as modern stitches. The advantage of using ants was that it allowed one to avoid the insertion of metal needles into the body that could cause infection, enlarge the wound, and even worsen the injury. The species generally used for this was the army ant of the genus Dorylus, also known as driver ants. After the ant bites the skin its body is severed from its head, which is left behind to hold the wound closed.

With regard to this issue, Rav Ida bar Avin sent the following question to Abaye: What should we do to expedite the healing of such a perforation? Abaye answered: We bring a sharp-edged grain of barley and lacerate the area around the hole with it. We then bring fat and rub it on the spot, and afterward we bring a large ant [shumshena] and let it bite inside the hole. This leads to bleeding and the formation of a scab, which eventually heals as new flesh grows there. We also cut off the ant’s head so that it should remain in place until the wound is fully healed. The Gemara comments: And this procedure must be done specifically with a grain of barley, but an iron tool would cause inflammation [zareif]: The Gemara adds: And this applies only to a small perforation, but a large one will eventually peel off and reopen.

Rabba bar Rav Huna said: One who passes water from two places, so that he appears to have a hole or some other blemish in his member, is unfit to enter into the congregation of Israel, as is a man with crushed testicles. Rava said: With regard to these matters, the halakha is in accordance neither with the opinion of the son nor with that of the father. The son, this refers to that opinion of Rabba bar Rav Huna, which we just stated. As for the ruling of the father, this is referring to that which Rav Huna said: Women who rub against one another motivated by sexual desire are unfit to marry into the priesthood, as such conduct renders a woman a zona, whom a priest is prohibited from marrying. It was about this that Rava said that the halakha is not in accordance with Rav Huna’s opinion.

And even according to the opinion of Rabbi Elazar, who said that an unmarried man who has intercourse with an unmarried woman not for the sake of marriage renders her a zona, a woman who has had sexual relations with a man forbidden to her by the Torah, this applies only to intercourse with a man, but lawful behavior with another woman is mere licentiousness that does not render her a zona, and therefore she is still permitted to marry into the priesthood.

And this applies only to a small perforation. Some understand this term here in its Aramaic sense as meaning to create a wound or a crack.

BACKGROUND

We bring an ant – מימית שמשנאים. Using ants to heal wounds was widespread in different parts of the world, principally in central and east Africa. The ants would hold on to the sides of the wound when they were joined together, essentially serving the same purpose as modern stitches. The advantage of using ants was that it allowed one to avoid the insertion of metal needles into the body that could cause infection, enlarge the wound, and even worsen the injury. The species generally used for this was the army ant of the genus Dorylus, also known as driver ants. After the ant bites the skin its body is severed from its head, which is left behind to hold the wound closed.

LANGUAGE

Ant [shumshena] – שמחניא. The Arukh has a version of the text that reads shumshena, but other texts read shumshlomena. There are parallels for both readings in Aramaic and Arabic, and all of them mean ant, or a particular species of ant.

Cause inflammation [zareif] – זריף. Some understand this term here in its Aramaic sense as meaning to create a wound or a crack.

NOTES

And this applies only to a small perforation – פוגע בץ בד בקמץ. Most commentators explain that a small perforation means one that has been fully sealed, whereas a large perforation refers to one that has not been properly closed. The wording of the Shevillot deRav Abar Gaon indicates that he understood small and large as referring respectively to a minor and an adult. Since a minor does not emit semen his perforation is more likely to become completely sealed.

Women who rub against one another – הולכת עם אדם אחר. According to Rashi, the question is whether a woman who engages in such behavior is considered a zona and therefore disqualified. The Ritva maintains that in the absence of intercourse the issue does not arise. Rather, the question here is whether such women are fit for a High Priest. If they lost their virginity in this manner, are they treated like a woman whose hymen was torn as the result of an injury or like one who engaged in intercourse? See the Ritva for his explanation of the continuation of the passage in the Gemara, as he claims that Rabbi Elazar’s view was cited not as a proof with regard to the matter itself, but in order to demonstrate that even Rabbi Elazar, who is stringent with regard to cohabitation, does not render one unfit if there was no act of intercourse.

HALAKHA

Women who rub against one another – הולכת עם אדם אחר. Women who rub against one another motivated by sexual desire transgress the prohibition against following the conduct of Egypt, and it is appropriate for them to receive lashes for rebelliousness administered by rabbinic decree. Men must take precautions to prevent their wives from engaging in such behavior. However, such conduct does not render a woman forbidden to her husband, nor does it disqualify her from marrying into the priesthood (Rambam Sefer Kesuba, Hilkhot Issurei Bi 21:8, Shulhan Arukh, Even HaZer 202).
This opinion is similar to that of the Rambam, who maintains that a priest with crushed testicles is permitted to marry a female convert or an emancipated maidservant. They are prohibited only from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish, as it is stated: “A man wounded with crushed testicles or a severed penis shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:2).

They raised a dilemma before Rav Sheshet: What is the halakha governing a priest with crushed testicles with regard to this very issue? It appears that according to the Ramban, a priest whose testicles have been severed is prohibited from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish, but it is permitted for him to marry a convert or an emancipated maidservant. In accordance with the opinion of Rav Sheshet, a priest whose testicles have been severed is prohibited from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish, but it is permitted for him to marry a convert or an emancipated maidservant. In accordance with the opinion of Rav Sheshet, Rav Sheshet said to them: You already learned the answer to this question in the following baraita: It is permitted for an ordinary Israelite with crushed testicles to marry a Gibeonite woman. Now, if it enters your mind that he retains his sanctity as a Jew, one should apply here the prohibition stated with regard to Canaanites: “You shall not marry them” (Deuteronomy 17:3). Apparently, then, one of these women, and perhaps he does not retain his state of sanctity and therefore is permitted to marry a convert, like an ordinary Israelite with crushed testicles?

Rava said: This is no proof, as is that to say that the prohibition against marrying Canaanites is due to sanctity or lack of sanctity? Rather, the reason for the prohibition is that perhaps one will father a child from his Canaanite wife and that child will later go off and engage in idolatrous worship. Now, this concern applies only when they are still gentiles, but when they convert, as did the Gibeonites, they are permitted to Jews. And it is the Sages who decreed that Gibeonites are forbidden because mamzerim even after their conversion. And when the Sages decreed that one may not marry them, the decree was limited to those who are capable of having children, but with regard to this one, a man with crushed testicles who is incapable of having children, the Sages did not issue a decree.

A man with crushed testicles or with other wounds to his genitals and one whose penis has been severed are permitted to marry a female convert or an emancipated maidservant, and they are prohibited only from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish, as it is stated: “A man wounded with crushed testicles or a severed penis shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:2).

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Manzerim and Gibeonites are permitted – 

Manzerim and Gibeonites are permitted to marry one another – Ḥakam imprudently writes that it is permitted for a manzer and Gibeonites to marry each other. The child born from such a union has the status of a manzer (Rambam Sefer Kedusho, Hilkhot Issurei Bi 13:15).

When they are gentiles there can be no valid marriage with them – רבי א层出: לאה במלאת היא – But Rava then reconsidered and said that what he had previously argued, that the prohibition against marrying them applies only when they are gentiles, is not correct. The prohibition cannot be referring to gentiles, as when they are gentiles there can be no valid marriage with them at all. It is only after they have converted that there can be a valid marriage with them, and therefore the prohibition against entering into marriage with them applies. Nevertheless, it is permitted for a man with crushed testicles to marry a Gibeonite woman.

Rav Yosef raised an objection from the verse that states: “And Solomon married the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt” (1 Kings 3:1), which indicates that there can, in fact, be valid marriage even with gentiles. The Gemara answers: Before Solomon took Pharaoh’s daughter as his wife, he converted her. The Gemara asks: But isn’t it so that they did not accept converts, neither in the days of David nor in the days of Solomon? The Gemara answers: But isn’t the reason that they did not accept converts during those periods only due to concern that the converts were not acting for the sake of Heaven but in fact desired the power of the table of kings, David and Solomon?

But this one, Pharaoh’s daughter, did not require such things, as she herself was the daughter of royalty, and therefore there would have been no reason to doubt the sincerity of her conversion.

The Gemara asks: But let him derive that Pharaoh’s daughter was forbidden to Solomon for a different reason, as she was a first-generation Egyptian convert. Even if she converted, she would still have been an Egyptian convert of the first generation, and as such neither she nor her children would have been permitted to marry a Jew by birth (Deuteronomy 23:8–9). And if you would say that those whom the Torah rendered forbidden have already left Egypt and are now living elsewhere in the world, and those currently living in Egypt are others, there is a difficulty.

Halakhah

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Notes

Those who have left and are living elsewhere in the world – The Ritva suggests that perhaps Rashi means that after the Egyptians were reduced in number as a result of the plagues they suffered in Egypt and at the Red Sea, many members of other nations entered their country and intermingled with them. The Rashba and most commentators understand the passage in its plain sense: Over the years other nations came to Egypt while the original Egyptians departed for other lands. However, if that is so, then with regard to a manzer, who is capable of having children, so too one would say that he is prohibited from marrying a Gibeonite. But didn’t we learn otherwise in a mishna (Kidushin 69a): Manzerim and Gibeonites are permitted to marry one another. Rather, retract this explanation and replace it with the following: When the Sages decreed that one may not marry a Gibeonite, they limited their decree to those who are fit, so as to prevent them from mingling with Gibeonites, but with regard to those who are unfit to enter into the congregation, the Sages did not issue a decree.
As isn’t it taught in an baraita that Rabbi Yehuda said: Minyamin, an Egyptian convert, was a friend of mine from among the students of Rabbi Akiva, and he said: After I converted I was a first-generation Egyptian convert, and so I married another first-generation Egyptian convert. I will marry off my son, who is a second-generation Egyptian convert, to another second-generation Egyptian convert, so that my grandson will be fit to enter into the congregation. This indicates that first- and second-generation converts of Egyptian extraction were prohibited from entering into the congregation even during the period of the Mishna.

Rav Pappa said: Shall we stand up and raise an objection from Solomon? Solomon did not marry anyone, as it is written in his regard: “Of the nations concerning which the Lord said to the children of Israel, You shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods; Solomon cleaved to these in love” (1 Kings 11:1). Solomon cleaved to these women in love, but was not legally married to them. As Solomon had other forbidden wives, the case of Pharaoh’s daughter presents no special difficulty. In fact, none of these marriages were valid at all. But the phrase “and Solomon married” (1 Kings 3:1) that appears in connection with Pharaoh’s daughter is difficult, as it indicates that this marriage was in fact valid.

The Gemara answers: Due to the extraordinary love that he had for her, the verse relates to him as if he had married her through a legally valid marriage, even though this was not the case.

Ravina said to Rav Ashi: But didn’t we learn in the mishna that a man with crushed testicles and one whose penis has been severed are permitted to marry a female convert and an emancipated maidservant? That indicates that it is only these women whom they are permitted to marry, but they are prohibited from marrying a Gibeonite woman. This appears to contradict the baraita that permits a man with crushed testicles to marry a Gibeonite.

Rav Ashi said to Ravina: And according to your line of reasoning, say the latter clause of the mishna as follows: And they are prohibited only from entering into the congregation, and infer just the opposite, that it is only a woman who was born Jewish whom they are prohibited from marrying, but they are permitted to marry a Gibeonite woman, as she is not part of the congregation of the Lord. Rather, no inference is to be learned from this mishna, as the possible inferences are contradictory, and one must therefore rely on the halakha that was expressly taught.

**HALAKHA**

**MISHNA**

Ammonite and Moabite converts are prohibited from entering into the congregation and marrying a woman who was born Jewish, and their prohibition is eternal, for all generations. However, their female counterparts, even the convert herself, are permitted immediately.

Egyptian and Edomite converts are prohibited from entering into the congregation only for three generations, both males and females. Rabbi Shimon renders permitted Egyptian and Edomite females immediately. Rabbi Shimon said: The matter may be derived by way of an a fortiori inference: If in a place where the Torah rendered prohibited the males with an eternal prohibition, i.e., Ammonites and Moabites, it rendered permitted the females immediately, then in a place where it rendered prohibited the males for only three generations, i.e., Egyptians and Edomites, is it not right that we should render permitted the females immediately?
Rabbi Shimon’s colleagues said to him: If you are reporting a halakha that you received from your teachers, we will accept it from you. But if you merely wish to prove your case with an a fortiori inference based on your own reasoning, there is a refutation of your argument. Rabbi Shimon said to them: That is not so. I disagree with your claim that the a fortiori inference can be refuted, but in any case I am stating a halakha handed down to me by my teachers.

GEMARA The Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived that female Ammonites and Moabites are permitted immediately? Rabbi Yoḥanan said: As the verse states: “And when Saul saw David go forth against the Philistine, he said to Abner, the captain of the host: Abner, whose son is this youth? And Abner said: As your soul lives, O king, I cannot tell” (1 Samuel 17:55). This verse is puzzling: Did Saul really not recognize him? But isn’t it previously written: “And David came to Saul, and stood before him; and he loved him greatly; and he became his armor-bearer” (1 Samuel 16:21)? Rather, it must be that he was asking about David’s father.

The Gemara is still puzzled by this verse: And did Saul not recognize David’s father? But isn’t it written with regard to Jesse, David’s father: “And the man in the days of Saul was old, and came among men” (1 Samuel 17:12), and Rav, and some say Rabbi Abba, said: This is referring to Jesse, father of David, who always entered with multitudes [ukhlas], and left with multitudes. As he was clearly a man of importance, everyone must have known who he was.

Rather, this is what Saul was saying, in his attempt to clarify David’s lineage: Does he come from the descendants of Perez, or does he come from the descendants of Zerah? What is the significance of this question? If he comes from Perez he will be king, as a king may breach [poretz] a way for himself and no one can stop him. And if he comes from Zerah he will be merely a man of importance, but not a king.

The Gemara continues with its explanation: For what reason did Saul say to Abner that he should inquire about David? As it is written: “And Saul clad David” with his apparel [maddav]: (1 Samuel 17:38), which indicates that the clothes were of David’s size [kemiddato]. And it is written with regard to Saul: “From his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people” (1 Samuel 9:2). Upon seeing that his clothes fit David, Saul began to fear that it might be David who was destined for the throne, and he therefore inquired into his background. At that point, Doeg the Edomite said to Saul: Before you inquire as to whether or not he is fit for kingship, inquire as to whether or not he is even fit to enter into the congregation. What is the reason for such doubts? It is that he descends from Ruth the Moabitess, and Moabites are permanently barred from entering the congregation.

Abner said to him: We already learned that there is no room for such concern. As the verse states: “An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord” (Deuteronomy 23:4), teaching that an Ammonite man is barred from entering into the congregation, but not an Ammonite woman; and similarly, a Moabitess man is barred from entering the congregation, but not a Moabitess woman. Doeg said to him: However, if that is so, say that the verse that renders it prohibited for a manmer to enter the congregation renders prohibited only a male manmer, but not a female manmer. Abner replied: It is written: “A manmer,” which should be understood not as a noun but as an adjective, denoting a strange blemish [mum zar], one who is defective due to a forbidden relationship, and this applies to males and females alike.
Doeg retorted: If so, say that it is prohibited for only an Egyptian man to enter into the congregation, but not an Egyptian woman. Abner answered: Here it is different, as the reason for the prohibition recorded in this verse with regard to Ammonites is explicit: “Because they did not meet you with bread and with water on the way, when you came forth out of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 23:5). Since it is the way of a man to go forth to meet guests but it is not the way of a woman to go forth, females were not included in this prohibition. Doeg countered: Still, the men should have gone forth to meet the men, and the women to meet the women. Abner was silent, as he did not know how to respond to this objection.

Immediately: “And the king said, inquire you whose son is this lad” (1 Samuel 17:56). The Gemara comments: There, in the previous verse, Saul calls him youth [na’ar], and here he calls him lad [elem]. This change in the wording hints at the following discussion. Saul said to Doeg as follows: The halakha is hidden [nitalma] from you, and you are ignorant of the law. Go and inquire about the matter in the study hall. He went to the study hall and asked. They said to him: The halakha is: An Ammonite man is forbidden, but not an Ammonite woman; a Moabite man is forbidden, but not a Moabite woman.

The Gemara asks about this incident: And is he trusted to offer such testimony? But didn’t Rabbi Abba say that Rav said: With regard to every Torah scholar who issues a halakhic ruling based on a tradition he claims to have received from his teacher, and that ruling has practical ramifications for himself, if he had already stated the halakha before the personal incident arose, his ruling is accepted; but if not, the ruling is not accepted (Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De’a 242:2, and in the comment of Rema).

A scholar who issues a halakhic ruling – לְאַכְרוּזֵי – as the Gemara explains that the reference is to Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, who girded his sword and killed Gedaliah (see Jeremiah 40–41).

With regard to the incident itself, while it is generally prohibited to bring weapons into the study hall, there were times when this rule was disregarded in order to affirm and establish a particular halakha (see Gilyonei HaShas).

Every Torah scholar who issues a halakhic ruling – כְּיִשְׁמָﬠֵאל – is a bearing on a bearing on a bearing on a bearing...

NOTES

He girded his sword like Ishmael – יִשְׂמָﬠֵאל. The Maharsha raises the following difficulty, citing the Yefei Toar: Why is giding a sword connected here to Ishmael? After all, the sword was traditionally associated with Esau. Several answers have been suggested (see Rif). According to one suggestion, Ishmael is mentioned here because it says about him: “His hand will be against all, and the hand of all against him” (Genesis 16:12), and Amasa maintained his opinion in opposition to all his peers (Yeyun Yisroel). The Arukh LaKov explains that the reference is to Ishmael, son of Nethaniah, who girded his sword and killed Gedaliah (see Jeremiah 40–41).

According to Rashi, there is no concern that one might be allowed to make such a ruling, if he did not actually do so. This ruling then, is a bearing on a bearing on a bearing on a bearing...