

The Weekly Daf



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Yevamot 13 - 19

Week of 4 10 Tevet 5760 / 13 - 19 December 1999

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

Love Peace and Truth

There were many debates between the schools of Shammai and Hillel on issues that affected marital status, ranging from the minimum value of money that can create *kiddushin* (matrimony) to the sort of woman to whom the mitzvah of *yibum* applies. Despite their differences, the members of Beit Shammai did not hesitate to marry into the families of Beit Hillel, and the Beit Hillel people had no qualms about marrying into the Beit Shammai families. This teaches us, says the *gemara*, that despite their differences, these Sages related to each with affection and friendship in the spirit of the prophetic instruction to (*Zecharia* 8:19)

On a practical level, this relationship was possible because if there was a problem in one of the families resulting from the halachic position of the opposing school, the potential suitor would be informed. Thus he would avoid that particular family, leaving them to marry within their own ranks where that problem did not exist thanks to the halachic position of that school.

The application of the above passage from Zecharia is explained by Maharsha in the following manner:

Even though it is impossible for conflicting views to both be the ultimate truth, nevertheless, both are endowed with a dimension of truth from the perspective of their peaceful and loving relationship. This idea is expressed in the *gemara* in *Masechta Chagigah* (3b) which offers advice on how the student of Torah should view the differences of opinion which he encounters among Torah scholars. No scholar bases his position on the teachings of any source other than the Torah. You must therefore respectfully pay attention to the opinions of both (until you are capable of deciding which position must guide you Rashi).

On a metaphysical level both the opinions of Beit Hillel and Beit Shammai are considered as truth. The *gemara* (*Eruvin* 13b) tells us that after three years of debate between the two schools, a voice from Heaven words of the Living G-

Yevamot 14b

Cow-Herder and Shepherd

tzarat habat if a man died childless and left behind two widows, one of whom was the daughter of the surviving brother, who is supposed to perform *yibum* by marrying one of them. The position of Beit Hillel, based on a *gezeirah shavah* deduction, was that just as *yibum* cannot be performed with his daughter, who is forbidden to him, so too *yibum* unaffected by the fact that she shared her first husband with his niece; thus, the surviving brother may perform *yibum* by marrying her, and she is not free to marry outside the family unless he releases her through *chalitzah*.

Yonatan ben Hirkinus was a brilliant member of the Shammai school who had 300 arguments to support its position. Rabbi Akiva and two other leading Sages visited his brother, Rabbi Dossa ben Hirkinus, to investigate rumors that he had ruled like Shammai against the prevailing ruling of the main body of the Sages who held like Hillel. Rabbi D

tzarat habat

and logically challenged his Beit Hillel position on this issue. When the latter failed to refute his

is known throughout the world? How fortunate are you that you have reached such fame without even reaching the level of a cow-

This enigmatic dialogue is thus explained by Maharsha:

mention of a cow-herder was a reference to one of the earlier prophets, Amos, who described himself as such (*Amos* 7:14).
ggai, for

Vayikra Rabbah) says that Amos had d

response was that the information received from a prophet, even one with speech difficulty, was reliable, and that the position of Beit Hillel went back to the earliest prophet, the shepherd Moshe, who also had a speech difficulty, and from whom the *gezeirah shavah* was originally received.

Yevamot 16a

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