



Adapted from the sefer חמין במוצאי שבת and חדוותא דזעיר אנפין collections of
maamarim

given by the Tolner Rebbe shlita at Seuda Shlishis and Melave Malka

Melave Malka Parshas Emor - Lag BaOmer 5764

Tonight, *Lag BaOmer* is certainly the time to learn from רבי שמעון בר יוחאי

In *Maseches Keilim* (כ"ז:י"ב) the *Mishna* teaches us that to become *tamei*, a piece of fabric must measure at least three *tefachim* by three *tefachim*. This is the minimal *shiur* for the fabric to be considered a *begged* - garment. The *Mishna* then examines a scenario where someone finds a piece of fabric that is larger than the minimal *shiur* but has been thrown into the garbage. Does it still maintain its status as a *begged*?

The *Tana Kama* says that the fabric is *tahor*. Since it has been discarded and thrown into the rubbish, it loses its status of *begged*. Despite being the requisite size needed to become *tamei*, it will remain *tahor*, because it was thrown into the garbage. However, if someone retrieves the fabric from the rubbish and takes it home, it regains its status of *begged* and can once again become *tamei*.

The *Tana Kama* notes that there is an exception to this rule, valuable fabrics, such as those dyed with *argaman* or with *zehorit tova*. Because of their value, these fabrics will retain their status of *begged* even if found in the garbage.

R. Shimon Bar Yochai disagrees and says that even such valuable garments lose their *begged* status when discarded and thrown into the trash. However, there is another area of *halacha* where the distinction between valuable and non-valuable fabric is an important factor. If someone finds some simple fabric in the garbage, he is not required to



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fulfill the *mitzva* of *Hashavas Aveida* - announcing that he found a lost object in order to return it to the owner. The very fact that it was thrown away in that manner means that it can be viewed as “ownerless” and the finder may keep it.

However, if the fabric found in the trash is valuable cloth such as that dyed with *argaman* or *zehorit tova*, one must assume that the owners didn't intentionally throw in the garbage. Therefore, one who finds such fabric must announce that he has found it, in the hope that the owners will claim their lost object.

This *halacha* can be applied to the way we treat our fellow Jews. Sometimes, we encounter precious *neshamos*, pure *neshamos* who have been thrown out like refuse. One who finds such a *neshama* is obligated to return it to its owner, Hakadosh Baruch Hu. Those who threw those *neshamos* into the garbage didn't realize or understand that these *neshamos* are more precious than fabric dyed with *argaman* or *zehoris tova*. Their ignorance and blindness led them to throw such treasures out with the rubbish.

(תהילים קי"ט:ח) - מאיבי תחכמי - we must learn from our enemies. If *rachmana litzlan*, a cruel, bloodthirsty *Yishmaeli*, kidnaps someone, and the victim can prove that he is not Jewish, his life will be spared. However, if the victim is Jewish, no matter how desperately he pleads for his life, his entreaties will fall on deaf ears.

If he tries to tell his abductor that he has been thrown out of *yeshiva*, and that in terms of *kedusha* and *tahara*, he has descended to the depths, it will make no difference. The murderer wants to kill a Jew. He doesn't care if the victim is Ashkenazi or Sepharadi, Chasid or Litvak. It makes no difference if the Jew he has abducted keeps Shabbos or not. The power of *tumah* that motivates him detects and feels the radiant Jewish soul that has fallen into his hands.



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And so, during these days of R. Shimon Bar Yochai, we must fulfill those words of David Hamelech, the *Baal Haseuda* of *Melave Malka* who said, **מֵאֵיבֵי תַחֲכַמֶּנִי** - Let me learn from my enemies. We can learn from them that even if a Jew is in the gutter, his *neshama* is still in the heights of the heavens. This obligates us to follow in the ways of Hakadosh Baruch Hu - **מֵאֲשַׁפֵּת יָרִים אֲבִיוֹן** - who raises the needy up from the dung heap.

Of course, this obligates us **להקדים רפואה למכה** - to apply the cure before the wound. We take so much care to never give our children or our students the feeling that they belong in the garbage or are even close to such a state. We must never belittle them, and certainly never embarrass them. Each and every one of them has a precious *neshama* that shines with a heavenly illumination. Each of them has a great destiny, and no matter where they may be at the moment, each of them can achieve **כתר תורה, וכתר שם טוב**.

However, if we have already thrown someone into the garbage, or if we find someone who has been rejected and discarded into the trash, we must run and extricate him from that tragic state. Each day we say, **נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא** - The *neshama* that you placed in me is pure. That statement remains true for each and every Jew, no matter what.

If we truly desire to see the good in every Jew, we will succeed.

ונראה כל אחד מעלת חברו ולא חסרונו אכי"ר



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