Bekhorot 49

Daf Yomi · Friday, November 6, 2026 · כ"ו חשון תשפ"ז · Covers 49a (Mishnah on a son who died) through 50a (R. Yochanan on the Tyrian maneh)

Summary

Bekhorot 49 turns to the timing of a firstborn's redemption and the coins used to pay it. The first Mishnah rules that if the son dies within thirty days, the kohen must return the five *sela'im*, and if he dies after thirty days, the father must pay even if he had not yet done so. The Sages treat the thirtieth day itself like the days before it; R. Akiva leaves it in doubt, so whoever holds the money keeps it. The Gemara traces the Sages' view to a verbal analogy between "a month old" in the redemption verse and "a month old *and upward*" in the census of the firstborn in the wilderness. R. Akiva's doubt is whether two verses that teach the same thing, "two verses that come as one," can teach about themselves even if not about other laws. Rav Ashi adds that all agree on the thirtieth day for mourning, and Shmuel rules leniently in mourning.

The second Mishnah sets presumptions about a father who dies. If he died within thirty days, the son is presumed unredeemed unless there is proof; after thirty days, he is presumed redeemed unless the son is told otherwise. If a man must redeem both himself and his son, he comes first; R. Yehuda says his son comes first. The Gemara records Rav and Shmuel's dispute over a father who redeemed his son before thirty days and the money was spent by the deadline: Rav compares it to betrothal, Shmuel distinguishes it, and the halacha follows Shmuel, an exception to the usual rule. R. Yirmeyah explains that the priority dispute arises only where some of the man's property has been sold: R. Yehuda holds that a debt imposed by the Torah is like a written debt that can be collected from purchasers, so both redemptions can be paid; the Sages hold it is not, so the man's own mitzvah comes first.

The last Mishnah fixes the values: the five *sela'im* of a son, thirty for a slave killed by an ox, fifty for a rapist or seducer, and a hundred for one who slanders his bride, all in the "sacred shekel," measured by the "Tyrian *maneh*." Any of these may be paid in silver or its equivalent, except the annual half-shekels. Four Amoraim define the "Tyrian *maneh*" by comparison with coins of their time: a Tyrian standard, an Arab dinar, a Syrian coin, and R. Yochanan's Hadrianic gold dinar. His calculation continues onto 50a.

Detailed Summary

1. Mishnah: a son who dies around the thirtieth day 49a

Background: the first lines of 49a finish the Gemara on the twins Mishnah (summary of Bekhorot 48). The Torah says, "and its redemption, from a month old you shall redeem" (Bamidbar 18:16): the obligation arises when the son is thirty days old.

MISHNAH (BEKHOROT 49a)

מת הבן בתוך שלשים יום, אע"פ שנתן לכהן יחזיר. לאחר ל' יום, אע"פ שלא נתן יתן. מת ביום שלשים, כיום שלפניו. ר' עקיבא אומר אם נתן לא יטול ואם לא נתן לא יתן.

If the son died within thirty days, even if the father already paid the kohen, the kohen returns it (Rashi: he was a non-viable *nefel*, and the obligation arises only after thirty days). If he died after thirty days, even if he had not paid, he must pay. If he died on the thirtieth day, it is like the day before (Rashi: the kohen returns the money). R. Akiva says: if he paid, he does not take it back; if he did not pay, he need not pay.

Tosafot – ד"ה מת בנו בתוך שלשים יום כו' יחזיר לו ה' סלעים

QUESTION. Rashi gives the reason that the child was a non-viable *nefel*.

ANSWER. That is unnecessary: even if we knew he was carried to full term, the Torah made the obligation depend on reaching a month.

WHY THIS MATTERS. The thirty days are a fixed legal threshold, not merely a test of viability.

2. The thirtieth day: an analogy and R. Akiva's doubt 49a

THE SAGES' REASON. They learn "a month" (חדש, Bamidbar 18:16) from "a month" in the wilderness census, "count every firstborn male from a month old *and upward*" (Bamidbar 3:40). Just as there it says "and upward," so too here: the obligation begins only after the thirtieth day.

R. AKIVA'S DOUBT. Since "and upward" had to be written also for valuations (Rashi: "from sixty years old and upward"; Arakhin 18a teaches there that the sixtieth year counts as the year below), and we did not simply learn it from the wilderness census, the two become שני כתובים הבאים כאחד, "two verses that come as one," and such verses do not teach.

Rashi – ד"ה הוו · ד"ה מספקא ליה

THE ISSUE. Why do the valuation and census verses undermine the analogy?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. In valuations, the Gemara (Arakhin 18a) derives from "year ... year" that the boundary year counts with the years below it, even where that is lenient, and the same would apply to "a month": the thirtieth day would count with the days below. The valuations passage did

not rely on the wilderness census to define "and upward"; it wrote it explicitly. So the census and valuations are two verses teaching the same thing, and such a pair does not teach anything about the redemption of a son.

WHY IT MATTERS. Without the analogy, the thirtieth day has no clear source, which is why R. Akiva is uncertain.

THE OTHER SIDE. Or perhaps two such verses do not teach about other matters, but they do teach about their own subject. Rashi: the census of the firstborn in the wilderness can teach about firstborns in later generations, since both concern firstborns. Because of this uncertainty, R. Akiva rules that whoever holds the money keeps it.

RAV ASHI. All agree that regarding mourning, the thirtieth day is like the day before it (Rashi: if a baby dies within thirty days, the father does not mourn, since perhaps he was a *nefel*). And Shmuel said: the halacha follows the lenient view in mourning.

Tosafot – ד"ה לאחר שלשים אע"פ שלא נתן יתן

QUESTION. Pesachim 121b teaches that the father recites two blessings at a redemption, including *shehecheyanu*. Should he say *shehecheyanu* when the son has died?

ANSWER. It is a question; since he merits fulfilling the mitzvah, perhaps he does. And one should not wonder why *shehecheyanu* is said at every redemption but not at every circumcision, since redemption is uncommon.

WHY THIS MATTERS. Paying for a son who has died is still a mitzvah, which raises a practical question about its blessings.

3. Mishnah: presumptions when the father dies 49a

MISHNAH (BEKHOROT 49a)

מת האב בתוך שלשים, בחזקת שלא נפדה עד שיביא ראיה שנפדה. לאחר שלשים יום, בחזקת שנפדה עד שיאמרו לו שלא נפדה. הוא לפדות ובנו לפדות, הוא קודם לבנו. רבי יהודה אומר בנו קודמו, שמצותו על אביו ומצות בנו עליו.

If the father died within thirty days, the son is presumed unredeemed until he brings proof that he was redeemed. After thirty days, he is presumed redeemed until he is told that he was not. If a man must be redeemed and must also redeem his son, he comes before his son. R. Yehuda says his son comes first, for the mitzvah of his own redemption was on his father, and the mitzvah of his son's is on him.

Rashi – ד"ה עד שיאמרו לו

THE ISSUE. Why different presumptions, and why "told" rather than "proof"?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. (Commenting on the Mishnah's first clause, Rashi notes that people do not redeem before thirty days, so if the father died earlier, the son is presumed unredeemed.) After thirty days, the kohen is the claimant and his position is weaker. And "told" suffices without formal testimony, e.g., if his father instructed him at death that he had not redeemed him, because this presumption is not a strong one: most people do not pay debts the moment they fall due. Proof cannot be demanded here, since the son can say his father gave the money to some other kohen.

WHY IT MATTERS. The burden of proof shifts with the thirty-day mark, but the later presumption is weak enough to be overturned by a simple statement.

4. Redeeming before thirty days: Rav and Shmuel 49a–49b

THE DISPUTE. If one redeems his son within thirty days, Rav says his son is redeemed; Shmuel says he is not. All agree that if he said "from now," the son is not redeemed (Rashi: redemption cannot take effect then, so it is merely a gift). And all agree that if he said "after thirty days" and the coins still exist then, the son is redeemed. They disagree where the coins were consumed by the end of thirty days.

RAV. It is like betrothing a woman: there, too, even though the money was consumed, the betrothal takes effect (Rashi: if he gives her something now and says "be betrothed after thirty days," she is betrothed, Kiddushin 59a). Here too.

SHMUEL. There, he could betroth her immediately; here, he cannot redeem him now.

RULING. Although we hold that wherever Rav and Shmuel disagree, the halacha follows Rav in ritual law and Shmuel in monetary law, here the halacha follows Shmuel.

CHALLENGE FROM THE FIRST MISHNAH. "If he died within thirty days, although he paid, the kohen returns the money": the reason is that he died; if he had not died, the son would be redeemed, against Shmuel! **ANSWER.** The coins still existed.

CHALLENGE FROM THE SECOND MISHNAH. "Presumed unredeemed until he brings proof that he was redeemed" (Rashi: so with proof, a redemption within thirty days counts). **ANSWER.** There too, the coins existed.

CONFIRMATION. A Tanna recited before Rav Yehuda: "one who redeems his son within thirty days, his son is redeemed." Rav Yehuda said: Shmuel said he is not, and you say he is? Although we follow Rav in ritual law and Shmuel in monetary law, here the halacha follows Shmuel.

5. Who comes first: father or son? 49b

BARAITA. If a man must be redeemed and must redeem his son, he comes first; R. Yehuda says his son comes first, since his own redemption was his father's mitzvah and his son's is his.

R. YIRMEYAH. All agree that where there are only five *sela'im*, he comes first, since his own mitzvah takes precedence. They disagree where there are five *sela'im* of mortgaged (sold) property and five of free property.

R. YEHUDA. He holds מלוה הכתובה בתורה ככתובה בשטר דמיא, "a debt written in the Torah is like one written in a document." So the kohen can collect the man's own redemption from the sold property, and he uses the free five *sela'im* to redeem his son.

Rashi – ד"ה ובהנך חמש בני חרי פריק לבניה · ד"ה ודידיה

THE ISSUE. How does this explain R. Yehuda's reason, "his mitzvah was on his father"?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. The kohen's claim for the man's own redemption arose in his father's lifetime, so his father's property was mortgaged to it before it was sold. That is what "his mitzvah was on his father" means. The man should redeem his son with the free money immediately: if he used it for his own redemption instead, his son could not be redeemed from the sold property, since perhaps the purchasers acquired it before his son was born.

WHY IT MATTERS. R. Yehuda's order lets both redemptions be paid, one from each source.

THE SAGES. They hold that a debt written in the Torah is not like one in a document, so the kohen cannot collect from purchasers, and only the free money is available. Therefore his own mitzvah takes precedence (Rashi: if he spent it on his son, he could not be redeemed himself).

Tosafot – ד"ה ודידיה אזיל וטריף ממשעבדי ובהני חמש בני חורין פריק ליה לבריה

QUESTION. A creditor may not collect from sold property while there is free property. Here five *sela'im* are free, so how can the kohen collect from purchasers? And afterward, could the purchasers not reclaim from the five that redeemed the son?

ANSWER. The purchasers bought from his father, so they cannot claim against property the son acquired. Alternatively, it is a case where the purchasers' documents did not include property to be acquired later, and the free money was acquired afterward.

WHY THIS MATTERS. Tosafot fill in the conditions under which R. Yehuda's arrangement is legally sound.

6. Mishnah: the fixed sums and the "Tyrian *maneh*" 49b

MISHNAH (BEKHOROT 49b)

חמש סלעים של בן במנה צורי. שלשים של עבד, חמשים של אונס ושל מפתה, ומאה של מוציא שם רע, כולם בשקל הקדש במנה צורי, וכולן נפדין בכסף ובשוה כסף חוץ משקלים.

The five *sela'im* of a son are by the "Tyrian *maneh*." The thirty of a slave (killed by an ox, Shemot 21:32), the fifty of a rapist and of a seducer (Devarim 22:29), and the hundred of one who defames his bride (Devarim 22:19) are all in the sacred shekel, by the Tyrian *maneh*. All may be paid in silver or anything worth silver, except the shekalim (Rashi: the half-shekels brought to the Temple chamber in Adar, which must be given as half-shekel coins).

Tosafot – ד"ה חמש סלעים של בן (ב') [כו']

QUESTION. Why does the Mishnah not also list the guilt offering's silver, the shekalim and valuations?

ANSWER. For the guilt offering, the Torah explicitly says "in the sacred shekel"; valuations, too, are obviously in the sacred shekel, since it says "every valuation shall be by the sacred shekel" (Vayikra 27:25).

WHY THIS MATTERS. The Mishnah lists only the sums whose standard is not explicit in their own verses.

7. What is the "Tyrian *maneh*"? 49b–50a

R. ASSI. A *maneh* of Tyre, the standard current in the land of Tyre.

R. AMI. An Arab dinar.

Tosafot – ד"ה רבי אמי אמר דינרא ערבא

QUESTION. Rashi explains that a Tyrian *sela* equals an Arab dinar, and cites the Geonim that seven of the ordinary Talmudic dinars equal ten Arab ones. These are contradictory: if an Arab dinar is smaller even than an ordinary dinar, it cannot be a *sela*, which is four Tyrian dinars.

ANSWER. R. Ami means that one Arab gold dinar is worth the five *sela'im* of a son. The Arab gold dinar is smaller than the Tyrian gold dinar: the Tyrian is worth twenty-five silver dinars, the Arab twenty, exactly five *sela'im*.

WHY THIS MATTERS. Tosafot read R. Ami as defining the full redemption sum by a single gold coin, which makes his statement coherent.

R. CHANINA. A Syrian *istera*, eight of which are sold for a dinar: five of them are for the redemption of a son. Tosafot explain that this is a Syrian *sela*, eight of which are worth a Syrian gold dinar, which is larger than the Tyrian gold dinar.

R. YOCHANAN. A gold dinar of Hadrian and Trajan (Rashi: struck by those emperors), which is sold for twenty-five *zuz*. The Gemara works out how much of it goes to redemption:

Subtract a sixth, and the rest is for redemption? That leaves twenty-one less a *danka* (Rashi: a sixth of twenty-four is four, leaving twenty, and a sixth of the extra *zuz*, leaving twenty-one less a sixth). Subtract a sixth and then a *zuz*? That leaves twenty less a *danka*. Rather, subtract a *zuz* and then a sixth: twenty-four less a sixth is twenty, the five *sela'im* of a son (Rashi: four dinars to a *sela*). These twenty are by the weight of a (Tyrian) dinar, which is twenty-eight and a half *zuz* and half a *danka* (Rashi: in Arab dinars).

Rashi – ד"ה דאינון עשרין ותמניא ופלגי ופלגא דנקא · ד"ה דהוו להו עשרין מתקלי במתקלא דינרא

THE ISSUE. How do twenty Tyrian dinars become twenty-eight and a half "and half a *danka*"?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. Seven Tyrian dinars equal ten Arab ones. So fourteen Tyrian dinars make twenty Arab, and the remaining six Tyrian dinars make about eight and a half Arab dinars plus a

small fraction. Rashi gives a detailed conversion through the *pundiyon* and adds frankly that this explanation was written in the texts but not taught to him by his teacher; he found it in a responsum of the Geonim.

WHY IT MATTERS. The calculation translates the Torah's five *sela'im* into a currency the Gemara's audience knew, and Rashi is candid about its source.

The Gemara's discussion of the value of the *sela* continues on 50a with Rava, and is covered in the summary of Bekhorot 50.

The full picture in plain language

Two clocks govern a son's redemption: the thirty days after birth, and the father's lifetime. If the baby dies before the thirtieth day ends, nothing was owed and money already paid is returned. The thirtieth day itself is debated: the Sages derive from the census of the firstborn that the obligation begins only after it, while R. Akiva doubts the derivation because of a rule about two verses that teach the same thing. Rav and Shmuel's dispute over early payment, decided for Shmuel, confirms that redemption cannot take effect before its time.

When the father dies, presumptions fill the gap: before thirty days the son is presumed unredeemed, after thirty days redeemed, though the later presumption is weak. When one man owes both his own redemption and his son's, R. Yirmeyah shows that the Tannaim's dispute depends on whether the Torah's own debts can be collected from property that has been sold. The final Mishnah fixes the Torah's monetary sums in the "sacred shekel," and four Amoraim translate that standard into the coins of their own day.

Glossary

Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning in this sugya
פדיון הבן	*pidyon ha-ben*	Redemption of a firstborn son from a kohen for five *sela'im*, due after thirty days.
מבן חדש ומעלה	*mi-ben chodesh va-ma'lah*	"From a month old and upward": the census phrase from which the Sages derive the thirtieth day.
שני כתובים הבאים כאחד	*shenei ketuvim haba'im ke-echad*	"Two verses that come as one": two verses teaching the same rule, which cannot be extended to other laws.
לגופייהו	*le-gufayhu*	"For their own subject": whether such verses can still teach about their own area of law.
אבילות	*aveilut*	Mourning; not observed for a baby who dies within thirty days.
חזקה	*chazakah*	A legal presumption, such as that a son was or was not redeemed.

נתעכלו המעות	*nit'akhlu ha-ma'ot*	"The money was consumed": spent or gone by the time redemption was due.
קידושין	*kiddushin*	Betrothal, which can take effect at a later date; Rav compares redemption to it.
איסורי ודיני	*issurei ve-dinei*	Ritual law and monetary law; normally Rav prevails in the first, Shmuel in the second.
משועבדות, בני חורין	*meshu'badot, benei chorin*	Mortgaged (sold) property and free property.
מלוה הכתובה בתורה	*milveh ha-ketuvah ba-Torah*	A debt the Torah creates; R. Yehuda treats it like a written debt.
שקל הקדש	*shekel ha-kodesh*	The sacred shekel, the standard for the Torah's fixed sums.
מנה צורי	*maneh tzori*	The "Tyrian *maneh*," the coinage standard defined by the Amoraim.
אונס, מפתה	*ones, mefateh*	A rapist and a seducer, who pay fifty shekels.
מוציא שם רע	*motzi shem ra*	One who falsely defames his bride, who pays a hundred shekels.
שוה כסף	*shaveh kesef*	Anything of monetary value, accepted in place of coins for these payments.
שקלים	*shekalim*	The annual half-shekel for the Temple, which must be paid in coin.
דינרא	*dinara*	A dinar: silver (a *zuz*) or gold (worth twenty-five silver ones).
דנקא	*danka*	A sixth of a *zuz*.

Sources: Gemara with relevant Rashi and Tosafot.