Bekhorot 61

Daf Yomi · Wednesday, November 18, 2026 · ח׳ כסלו תשפ״ז · Covers 61a (the three baraitot explained) through the end of tractate Bekhorot

Summary

Bekhorot 61, the last daf of the tractate, finishes explaining three baraitot about two animals that went out of the pen together as the tenth. One says they graze, following the Sages, who do not bring consecrated animals to possible disqualification. One says they are offered, following R. Shimon, who allows it. The third says they die, which the Gemara first attributes to R. Yehuda's view that a mistaken tithe is a substitute. That attribution is refuted from the Mishnah, from a baraita, and from an anonymous teaching in the Sifra, all of which show that R. Yehuda holds the eleventh is offered.

R. Shimon son of R. Abba explains instead, before R. Yochanan, that the baraita speaks of tithe in the present era, when the animals are left to die to prevent misuse, and the Gemara explains why it mentions two animals. The tractate closes with an agent sent to tithe: according to Rav Pappi in Rava's name, his mistake on the ninth takes effect but his mistake on the eleventh does not, while Rav Pappa says neither does, since the owner sent him "to repair, not to damage." The Gemara distinguishes this from an agent who separates *terumah*, whose estimate stands even if it is somewhat more or less than intended.

Detailed Summary

1. Offered or left to die 61a

The preceding lines of 60b present the three baraitot on two animals that went out tenth, and attribute the one that says they graze to the Sages (summary of Bekhorot 60).

R. SHIMON. The one that teaches they are offered is R. Shimon, who says one may bring consecrated animals to a place of disqualification.

Tosafot – ד"ה והא דתניא יקריבו ר' שמעון דאמר מביאין קדשים לבית הפסול

QUESTION. A peace offering requires the owner to lean his hands on it, and tithe does not. How can one offer an animal that may be either?

ANSWER. Since leaning does not invalidate an offering if omitted, we are not concerned. Tosafot cites other cases where offerings are brought conditionally despite such differences.

WHY THIS MATTERS. R. Shimon's view is workable because the differing requirement is not essential.

R. YEHUDA. The one that teaches they die is R. Yehuda, who says a mistaken tithe is a substitute. R. Yehuda holds that a substitute of tithe dies (Rashi: it is not offered).

2. Does R. Yehuda say the eleventh dies? 61a

FROM THE MISHNAH. Does R. Yehuda hold that a substitute of tithe dies? But we learned: "they said in the name of R. Meir: were it a substitute, it would not be offered," which implies R. Yehuda holds it is offered.

FROM A BARAITA. If you say R. Meir was speaking according to his own view, it was taught: the only difference between the eleventh and a peace offering is that this one makes holiness to be offered and that one does not; these are the words of R. Yehuda. It does not make holiness to be offered, but it itself is offered.

Rashi – ד"ה אין בין אחד עשר

THE ISSUE. What is the one difference?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. A peace offering makes a substitute that is offered, but the eleventh does not, since R. Yehuda holds a mistaken tithe is a substitute and a substitute cannot make a substitute. The words "to be offered" are added only for the inference: the eleventh itself is offered as a peace offering.

WHY IT MATTERS. R. Yehuda treats the eleventh as offered, not left to die.

FROM THE SIFRA. Moreover, it was taught: "if from the herd" (Vayikra 3:1) includes the eleventh as a peace offering. One might think I include the ninth too. You said: does consecrated status sanctify what comes before it or after it? Say: after it (Rashi: it is reasonable that it makes a substitute only after it is itself holy). The anonymous Sifra is R. Yehuda, and it teaches that "from the herd" includes the eleventh as a peace offering.

3. Tithe in the present era 61a

R. SHIMON SON OF R. ABBA. Rather, R. Shimon son of R. Abba explained it before R. Yochanan: we deal with tithe in the present era, and because of a stumbling block.

Rashi – ד"ה בזמן הזה

THE ISSUE. Why would tithed animals die today?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. This baraita does not accept Rav Huna's statement at the beginning of the chapter that animal tithe is not practiced today. Since they cannot be offered, they are not left to graze until blemished, lest he come to shear or work them, or slaughter them without a blemish. So he brings them into a chamber and they die there on their own.

WHY IT MATTERS. Without a Temple, the safest course is to prevent any misuse of the animals.

WHY TWO? If so, why mention two? Even one! It speaks in the style of "not only": not only one, where there is no great loss, but even two, where since the loss is greater one might say let him keep them until they become blemished and eat them; it teaches us otherwise.

4. An agent sent to tithe 61a

THE DISPUTE. It was stated: one who tells his agent, go out and tithe for me: Rav Pappi said in the name of Rava, if he called the ninth "tenth," it is holy; if he called the eleventh "tenth," it is not holy. Rav Pappa said: even if he called the ninth "tenth," it is not holy, for the owner tells him: I sent you to repair, not to damage.

Rashi – ד"ה אינו קדוש

THE ISSUE. Why is the agent's mistake on the eleventh void?

RASHI'S EXPLANATION. Since the eleventh would become a peace offering, the owner loses the breast and thigh, which go to the kohanim. He can say: I did not make you my agent to cause me a loss.

WHY IT MATTERS. An agent's authority ends where his error harms the one who sent him.

Tosafot – ד"ה לתשיעי י' קדוש

CLARIFICATION. Rav Pappi holds that "to repair, not to damage" does not apply to the ninth, since it is eaten once blemished, even though he must wait for a blemish and may not shear or work it.

Alternatively, regarding the eleventh, from the moment the tenth went out, the agent completed his task, since the tenth is holy by itself.

WHY THIS MATTERS. Rav Pappi's distinction can rest on either the size of the loss or the end of the agency.

TERUMAH. How is this different from what we learned: one who tells his agent, go out and separate *terumah*, he separates according to the owner's intent. If he does not know the owner's intent, he separates a middle measure, one in fifty. If he reduced by ten or added ten, his *terumah* is *terumah* (Rashi: for example, one in forty, generously).

THE ANSWER. They said: there, since some separate generously and some stingily, he can say, this is how I estimated you (Rashi: I judged that this was what you wanted). Here it is a mistake; he can tell him, you should not have erred (Rashi: so the mistake is nothing).

With this the chapter *Ma'aser Behemah* ends, and with it tractate Bekhorot (הדרן עלך מעשר בהמה וסליקא ליה מסכת בכורות).

The full picture in plain language

The tractate ends with the last unresolved cases of animal tithe. When two animals leave the pen together as tenth, they cannot be told apart, and three baraitot give three outcomes. The Sages let them graze, R. Shimon lets them be offered, and the third baraita, which leaves them to die, turns out to describe tithing after the Temple's destruction, when animals that cannot be offered are kept from any misuse.

The final question is about an agent sent to tithe. If his mistake costs the owner nothing, it may stand; but the owner can disown an error that harms him, since he sent the agent "to repair, not to damage." An agent separating *terumah* is different, because there is no single right amount, and a reasonable estimate binds the owner. With this, tractate Bekhorot, which began with the firstborn of a donkey, closes with the tithe of the flock.

Glossary

Hebrew	Transliteration	Meaning in this sugya
ירעו	*yir'u*	They graze until blemished.
ימותו	*yamutu*	They are left to die.
בזמן הזה	*bi-zman ha-zeh*	In the present era, without a Temple.

Sources: Gemara with relevant Rashi and Tosafot.