

שבעה¹ שלא שלטה בהן רמה –

Seven; over whom the worms had no dominion

OVERVIEW

The ברייתא states that there seven people over whom the worms had no dominion after they passed on. גמרא reconciles our גמרא with a seemingly contradictory גמרא elsewhere.

תוספות asks:

תימה לרבינו שמשון בן אברהם דכולהו צדיקי נמי דאמר בשבת בפרק שואל (דף קנב,ב) –
The רשב"א is astounded! For this also applies regarding all צדיקים, as the גמרא states in מסכת שבת in פרק שואל regarding the פסוק of -

ורקב עצמות קנאה² מי שיש לו קנאה בלבו עצמותיו נרקבין –
(and the rotting of bones is caused by jealousy); he who has jealousy in his heart, his bones rot -

ושאין קנאה בלבו אין עצמותיו מרקבין –

And if there is no jealousy in heart his bones do not rot. Seemingly this applies to more than the seven mentioned here, but rather to all those that אין קנאה בלבו.

תוספות answers:

ויש לומר דיכול להיות שלא ירקב וישלוט בו רמה –

And one can say that it is possible that he should not rot, but nevertheless the worms have dominion over him -

כדאמר במעשה דרבי אלעזר³ בן שמעון בהשוכר את הפועלים (בבא מציעא דף פד,ב) –

- פרק השוכר את הפועלים in ראב"ש states regarding the episode with ש"ש
דנפיק ריחשא מאודניה⁴:

That a worm came out from his ear (however his body was whole and did not rot).

SUMMARY

Anyone who has no jealousy will not rot (but his body may become wormy);

¹ תוס' ד"ה שלשה לא follows after the following תוספות.

² משלי יד,ל.

³ אלעזר ברבי שמעון; הגהות הב"ח amends this to read: ברבי שמעון.

⁴ ראב"ש initially worked as a detective for the king to ferret out robbers. Before he passed on he told his wife to place him in the attic (he was concerned that some of those he reported as robbers would want to take revenge and mishandle his body). She kept him there for many years. Once she went up to the attic and noticed a worm going out from his ear (she was told in a dream that this was on account that he once heard a ת"ח being shamed and he did not protest).

however the seven mentioned here, did not even have any worms.

THINKING IT OVER

Why did not תוספות distinguish between the rotting of bones ([which applies to those who have no jealousy] which however is a lesser miracle) and the rotting of flesh (which is a greater miracle and applies only to these seven)?!⁵

⁵ See מהרש"א ח"א ד"ה ז'.