

שתי נשים שנשבו למה לי –

Why do I need to mention the case of two women who were captured

OVERVIEW

The גמרא asks¹ why is it necessary for the תנא to teach the ruling regarding two women who were captured. [The גמרא answers, to teach us that we are not חיישינן לגומלים.] explains why the גמרא could not have told us a different reason for the משנה teaching us the rules regarding שני נשים שנשבו.

תוספות responds to an anticipated difficulty:

דאי לאשמעינן² דאחת נאמנת על חברתה –

For if the משנה wants to inform us that one woman is believed to testify regarding her friend that she is טהורה, it is not necessary to teach us the ruling of ב' נשים - שנשבו

הא בהדיא תנן (לקמן כז, א) דאפילו עבד ושפחה נאמנים:

For the משנה explicitly states later that even a slave and a maid are believed to testify that their mistress is טהורה. Therefore the גמרא needs to give the reason that the חידוש of ב' נשים שנשבו is that לא חיישינן לגומלים.

SUMMARY

We can derive the ruling that a woman can testify regarding the טהרה status of another woman from the משנה of נאמנים שפחה ואפילו עבד.

THINKING IT OVER

1. What would be the advantage if the גמרא gave 'תוס' explanation³ that the חידוש is that a woman is believed to testify?

2. According to רב פפא who explains that the משנה of שני נשים שנשבו is where there is an ע"א who testifies the opposite of the woman, then this חידוש that the woman is believed to say טהורתי even against an ע"א cannot be derived from the following משנה (of עבד וכו')!⁴

¹ This question is part of the answer that it is necessary to state the משנה of טהורתי וטהורה אני, since the משנה wanted to teach us the rule of שני נשים שנשבו ב' for some (as of yet) undetermined purpose, which the גמרא is currently questioning.

² See 'Thinking it over' #1.

³ See footnote # 2.

⁴ See (עד"ז) בספר מים עמוקים בד"ה נשבית.