

What is *M'goodeles; Gadeles*

מאי מגודלת גדלת –

Overview

The גמרא explained that the meaning of מגודלת שפחה is not merely a monetary advantage, but rather it means גדלת. There is a dispute between רש"י and the ר"ח as to the meaning of גדלת.

פירש הקונטרס¹ חשובה ומתוך שהיא חשובה בעיני האנשים דבריה מקובלים² - רש"י explained that the word גדלת means prominent, and since she is prominent in the eyes of the people, her words are accepted –

ורבינו חננאל פירש מגדלת שער כמו מגדלא שער נשייא (חגיגה דף ד, ב) -

And the ר"י explained גדלת to mean one who braids hair, like the phrase, the braider of women's hair -

ומתוך שהולכת מבית לבית לקלוע מספרת כל הדברים ממנה :
And since she goes from house to house to braid she gossips all about her.

Summary

גדלת can mean either a prominent person (רש"י) or a hair braider (ר"ח); in either case there is ample opportunity for gossip.

Thinking it over

1. The גמרא writes that the case of מגודלת שפחה is regarded as שבה יוחסין. However, according to the פר"ח, what שבה יוחסין is there in being a hair dresser?³
2. What are the relative advantages of ופר"ח and פרש"י respectively?

¹ בד"ה גדלת (ועיין בד"ה לא)

² 'They will accept her gossip about me and I will be put to ridicule and scorn'. [רש"י does not actually say this but rather since she is חשובה, she frequents her neighbors and talks with them.]

³ See מחלת משה