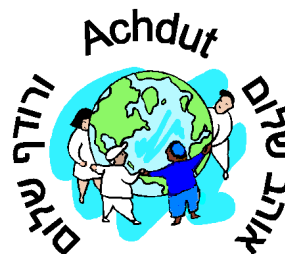


Parshas Behar

"He shall Return to his Family"

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Regarding a Jewish person who sold himself as a slave to a non-Jew and was not redeemed by a relative, the Torah concludes: "If he has not been redeemed by these means, then he shall go out in the Jubilee Year, he and his children with him." (Vayikra 25:54)

Maharil Diskin zt"l asks why the above pasuk does not conclude with the words "**he shall return to his family**," whereas the earlier pasuk (25:41), which talks about slavery to a Jew, does?

He resolves this difference in the verses by bringing the Gemara in Kiddushin (21b), where the Chachamim say that a kohen who is an *eved ivri* cannot have his ear lobe pierced, as this would result in his becoming a *ba'al mum* (blemished person). Rabbah bar Rav Sheilah says there that the verse, "he shall return to his family," means that the kohen has to be able to return to his family, i.e., the kohanim, in a fit state to continue to serve with Avodah in the Beit Hamikdash. Since a *ba'al mum* cannot serve in the Beit Hamikdash – therefore, we do not pierce his ear, as this would disqualify him.

He also quotes the Gemara in Menachot (109a) which discusses the case of a kohen who slaughtered an animal for idolatry (but did not offer it), and later repents and wants to serve in the Beit Hamikdash – whether he can serve or not. Rav Sheishet and Rav Nachman argue there. Rav Sheishet said that he cannot serve, while Rav Nachman holds that he can. Tosfot explains that even Rav Sheishet holds that if he had done it unintentionally he can serve.

Maharil Diskin zt"l explains Rav Sheishet's opinion that if the animal were slaughtered unintentionally for Avodah Zorah, it would be considered an Avodah without any service (**sheirut**), and therefore the kohen would be allowed to continue to serve in the Beit Hamikdash. However, according to Rav Nachman, even unintentionally, the Avodah is considered a service and the kohen may not continue to serve. However, everyone would agree that the kohen would no longer be able to serve if he slaughtered intentionally, as this would be considered **sheirut** to idolatry.

Based on these Gemaras, we can now answer our difficulty. The Gemara in Menachot tells us that as a result of the kohen's past actions to serve idolatry, we should no longer allow him to serve in the Beit Hamikdash. Similarly, here, the person intentionally decided to sell himself to the non-Jew, and the Torah even talks of one who sells himself to a house of idolatry. While there, he presumably slaughtered animals, and then a kohen would not be allowed to continue to serve in the Beit Hamikdash. Therefore, the Torah doesn't write "he shall return to his family" in pasuk 54, since a kohen who sold himself to a house of idolatry is "blemished," and we can't allow him to return to his family– i.e., the kohanim.