



My Weight in Gold

The *Mishnah* (5:1) teaches that if one declared that they wanted to give their weight as a dedication to the *Beit HaMikdash*, they are obligated to do so. If they stipulated that they wanted to give their weight in silver, then it would be their weight in silver. If they stated it would be gold, then they would give gold. The *Mishnah* then continues with the incident of *Yirmatya's* mother, who promised to give the weight of her daughter. They went to *Yerushalaim*, weighed her and then gave her weight in gold. We shall try to understand this *Mishnah*.

The *Bartenura* notes that the *Mishnah* stressed that the person is required to provide the material that they specified. The *Gemara* explains that this implies that if he did not express any material, then he could satisfy his obligation by providing an substance of that weight, provided it is something that is normally weighed in his area.

The *Gemara* continues however that the incident with the mother of *Yirmatya* is cited to teach a different law. That is that if the individual that made the *neder* was an important or wealthy individual, then the material that must be supplied should be appropriate to his stature.

It would seem that what the person must provide is based on a sliding scale and proportional to his wealth. The *Rambam* however in his commentary to the *Mishnah* explains that if the person is very wealthy and well known, then his intent is to provide the best possible donation. That would be gold, as in the case the mother of *Yirmatya*. For everyone else, then the even the cheapest material would satisfy. According to this understanding, the assessment is binary.

The *Rambam* (*Arachin* 2:7) similarly rules that it is only if the person is very wealthy, “and intended to give a large gift”, that he is obligated to provide his weight in gold. The *Kesef Mishnah* comments that the *vav* – the “and” – is a copy mistake. In other words, if the person is very wealthy it is

clear that his intent is to give a large gift. The *Griz* (*Arachin* 19a) understands the *Rambam* similarly, yet explains that the meaning is not that he intended to give gold, but rather that he wanted to provide a optimal gift. Now considering that we have a principle in *nedarim* that *stam nedarim le'hachmir* – when an ambiguous *neder* is made, it is interpreted stringently (unless the person explained his intent) – he therefore must bring gold.

The *Kesef Mishnah* however provides an additional explanation, that follows the text of the *Rambam* without any modifications. He explains that the *Rambam* is adding an additional requirement. Not only if the person is wealthy, but also if we know he is very generous, only then must he bring his weight in gold. See the *Aruch HaShulchan* (*Arachin* 35:16).

The explanation of the *Griz* however leads to another question. The *Lechem Mishneh* asks that if, *stam nedarim le'hachmir*, why can everyone else satisfy their obligation with the cheapest of materials? The *Lechem Mishneh* suggests that perhaps our *Mishnah* is where one expressed that that was his original intent.

The *Maaseh Choshev* however finds this difficult. If the *Mishnah* is dealing with a case where the person stated that at the time when he made the *neder*, he had in mind a material of little value, then why must the very wealthy person nevertheless provide gold?

The *Maaseh Choshev* explains therefore that the case is where the person said had nothing specific in mind – *stam*. Much like the *Griz*, he understands that the straightforward meaning for everyone else is that that they can provide whatever they like. The *Griz* continues that it is only with a very wealthy person, where the meaning is that they want to be bring an optimal gift, that the ambiguity is introduced.

Revision Questions

ערכין ד' בי – ג' ה'

- In what way is the calculation of an *erech*-vow different to one that vowed to bring a *korban* obligated to be brought by another (a *metzorah*)? (ד' בי)
- About which case is there a debate about *heseg yad* for one whose financial status changed in between the time of making an *erech*-vow and fulfilling it? (ד' בי)
- What is the law in the other cases? (ד' בי)
- How does the law in the previous question differ compared to the law of *heseg yad* by *korbanot*? (ג' י)
- What is the law if someone made an *erech*-vow and the subject's age then changed before it was fulfilled, placing the subject in a different age bracket? (ד' י)
- What age bracket does an exactly twenty year old fit into: 5-20 or 20-60? (ד' י)
- What is the objection to the ruling in the previous question and based on what is the ruling confirmed? (ד' י)
- What is the law if the person vows to volunteer his "weight" to the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*? (ה' יא)
- If a person volunteers to donate the weight of his hand how is it determined? (Provide both opinions.) (ה' יא)
- If someone volunteers to donate the value of their hand how is the value determined? (ה' יב)
- In what way are the laws of *erchin* stricter than *nedarim* and in what way are they more lenient? (ה' יב)
- What is the law if someone volunteers to donate the *erech* of their head? (ה' יב)
- What is the difference if the person volunteers to donate using the following language: (ה' יג)
 - "Half my *erech*" or "the *erech* of half of me"?
 - "Half my value" or "the value of half of me"?
- If someone made an *erech*-vow to donate the *erech* of another person, and both he and that person died, do the heirs need to pay? (ה' יד)
- If someone volunteered to donate the value of another person, in what case would the *neder* not be paid? (ה' יד)
- If a person made a *neder* and stated that "this house is a *korban*" and the house collapsed, when would they need to donate the value of the house and when would they be exempt? (ה' יד)
- As opposed to sin offerings, why do *Beit Din* not forcefully take a collateral until one offers a *korban olah* as they promised to do? (ה' יו)
- With respect to which three areas of law can *Beit Din* force one to act? (ה' יז)
- For how long is the sale of property announced for the following cases: (ה' יז)
 - When collecting a debt from the property of orphans?
 - For the sale of a field of *hekdesht*?
- Explain the debate regard one who sanctifies his field, but must pay his wife her *ketubah*. (ה' יז)
- What other case is debated in a similar manner? (ה' יז)
- How are the previous two cases dealt with in practice? (ה' יז)
- When *Beit Din* forcibly takes a collateral to ensure payment of an *erech*-vow, what must the leave behind? (ג' י)
- If one sanctifies his possessions, does this include his *tefillin*? (ד' י)
- What items are not included such a *neder*? (ה' י)
- If an item made *hekdesht* would improve in value with time, do we wait? (What three examples are brought?) (ה' י)

Shiurim

ONLINE SHIURIM

Yisrael Bankier
mishnahyomit.com/shiurim

Rabbi Reuven Spolter
mishnah.co

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calend
ars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm

APPS

Mishnah Yomit
mishnahyomit.com

All Mishnah
Orthodox Union

Mishna Yomi
Our Somayach, South Africa

Kehati

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
18 January כ"ט טבת	19 January א' שבט	20 January ב' שבט	21 January ג' שבט	22 January ד' שבט	23 January ה' שבט	24 January ו' שבט
Erchin 7:1-2	Erchin 7:3-4	Erchin 7:5-8:1	Erchin 8:2-3	Erchin 8:4-5	Erchin 8:6-7	Erchin 9:1-2

