TORAS LEVI YITZCHOK · AN ELUCIDATED SERIES · № 4

לקוטי לוי יצחק

הערות למסכת סוטה — דף מ״ח ע״א

A Hundred Geese for a Dinar

Why Rav Huna silenced the singers, why the price of geese and wheat immediately collapsed — and what either has to do with Avraham and Yitzchak

קָם מֵאָה אַוְזֵי בְּזוּזָא וּמֵאָה סְאָה חִיטֵּי בְּזוּזָא

SOTAH 48A

CONCLUDING THE SERIES

The Fourth and Last He'ara

Installment № 3 closed with the two levels of arvus rooted in the three heads of Keser. Rav Levik moves to a final he'ara on Maseches Sotah — the Mishnah's report that when Rav Huna banned song, the price of geese and wheat immediately dropped to parity, and Rav Chisda relaxed the decree. This is the last he'ara in the sefer's entire "Heoros on Maseches Sotah" section: immediately after it, the running header changes to מסכת גיטין, and the sefer moves to a different tractate entirely. *A Month in the Torah of Rav Levik* completes its arc here.

THIS INSTALLMENT

Source: *Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — He'oros to the Shas*, Maseches Sotah, pp. 54–60 (נד–ס), fourth and final he'ara: Sotah 48a. Begins partway down page נד, immediately after installment № 3's material on the three blessings of Torah study; runs through pages נה through נט in full; closes partway down page ס, where the sefer's Sotah section ends outright and מסכת גיטין begins on the same page. Several extended halachic asides (the full Beis HaMikdash ceremony detail, and the ship/plow halachic specifics) are elucidated and summarized rather than transcribed in complete parallel Hebrew/English — flagged in the colophon.

Rav Huna Silences the Singers

רַב הוּנָא בְּטֵל זְמָרָא (גָּזַר עַל דּוֹרוֹ שֶׁלֹּא יְזַמְּרוּ בְּבֵיתָם וּבְבֵית מִשְׁתָּאוֹת). קָם מֵאָה אַוָּזֵי בְּזוּזָא וּמֵאָה סְאָה חִיטֵּי בְּזוּזָא, אִיבְּעֵאי (וְלֹא הָיוּ רוֹצִים לִקְנוֹתָם בְּכָךְ). אֲתָא רַב חִסְדָּא זַלְזֵיל בֵּיהּ. אִיבְּעֵאי אַוָּזָא בְּזוּזָא וְלֹא מִשְׁתַּכַּח.

Rav Huna banned song (he decreed upon his generation that they should not sing in their homes or at houses of feasting). **A hundred geese stood at a dinar, and a hundred se'ah of wheat stood at a dinar** — and even so, they didn't want to buy them at that price. **Rav Chisda came and relaxed it.** They wanted a goose for a dinar — and could not find one.

Four questions organize this he'ara:

א **Why did Rav Huna ban song, and why did Rav Chisda relax it?** Two Sages, two names — and Rav Levik reads both names as structurally necessary to the roles they play.

ב **What does banning song have to do with the price of geese and wheat?** These seem like unrelated commodities.

ג **Why specifically a hundred — of both?** The Mishnah's number, on both sides of the equation, needs explaining.

ד **Why did the leniency undo the goose's price but not the wheat's?** The text at the end reports the goose became unavailable at a dinar again — but says nothing similar about wheat.

PASSAGE 1

Why Song Belongs to Gevurah

הנה רב הונא שמו מורה על בחי' דעת, כי הונא מלשון הון, וכתיב ובדעת חדרים ימלאון כל הון יקר ונעים. והנה זמרה הוא מבחי' גבורות, וכמו לוים בחי' גבורות היו משוררים ומזמרים בפה ובכלי. וכמא' יצחק ירנן, כי יצחק הוא בחי' גבורות.

Rav Huna's own name points to Daas, since "Huna" is from the language of "hon" (wealth) — *"and with knowledge (b'daas) chambers are filled with all precious and pleasant riches."* Now, song is from the aspect of the gevuros — like the Levites, who were from the aspect of gevuros, who sang and made music with voice and instrument, as in *"Yitzchak yeranein"* [Yitzchak sings] — for Yitzchak is the aspect of gevuros.

When the Beis HaMikdash stood, the Gevuros were sweetened in Chessed — the Leviim (Gevurah) were subordinate to the Kohanim (Chessed), *"and they shall accompany you and serve you,"* and their song was "waved" by the Kohanim, parallel to the waving of the tenufah-offerings. Rav Levik works through the Tamid's ceremony in detail — the Segan standing on the horn of the altar, the two Kohanim with silver trumpets, Ben Arza striking the tzeltzal — to establish that even in the Temple, song required this elaborate sweetening apparatus before it was safe. Once the Temple was destroyed and that apparatus was gone, song's root in Gevurah became a real channel for "yenika l'lo'z" (nourishment flowing to the "other side") — and so Rav Huna banned it.

TWO IDENTITIES INSIDE THE CEREMONY

אֶרֶז = 208 = יִצְחָק = 208

Verified — Ben Arza's name (from ארז, "cedar," a hard wood, aspect of Gevurah) carries Yitzchak's own gematria exactly.

צִלְצָל = 240 = 2 × (120) צ"ל = 2 × (120) ק"כ

Verified — the cymbal's own name doubles the same number two independent ways: צ"ל and ק"כ are both 120, and צלצל is exactly twice each.

PASSAGE 2

Ship-Pullers and Plowmen: What Rav Huna Actually Permitted

ואיתא בגמרא שם אמר רב הונא זמרא דנגדי ודבקרי שרי… שרי דגרדאי אסור. והיינו הספינה היא מל׳ דאצי׳ הולכת על הים דבריאה… ומושכים את הספינה מל׳ בחבל הוא ת״ת כמ״ש יעקב חבל נחלתו.

Rav Huna himself said that the song of ship-pullers and plowmen is permitted. "Nagdei" (ship-pullers) is in Tiferes — those who pull the boats by rope through the water; "bakrei" (plowmen) is in Yesod, plowing the earth of Malchus. The ship is Malchus of Atzilus traveling on the sea of Beriah; the rope pulling it is Tiferes, as in *"Yaakov, the rope of his inheritance."*

ELUCIDATION — Rav Levik's reasoning: Tiferes and Yesod form the "middle line," where Chassadim are present alongside Gevuros and sweeten them — so song rooted there carries no real risk of "yenika l'lo'z." Weavers' song (דגרדאי), by contrast, is forbidden: weaving belongs to Netzach-Hod (*"hod v'hadar levashta"* — clothing is Netzach-Hod's province), and Netzach-Hod are bound to Gevurah specifically, without the middle line's sweetening — so song there keeps its full risk. The extended halachic material on ships, plowing, and the parallel version citing weavers of leather rather than cloth (per the Aruch) is summarized here rather than transcribed line for line; see the transcription note.

PASSAGE 3

Rav Chisda's Leniency

Rav Chisda came and relaxed it — because Rav Chisda is purely the aspect of Chessed, as his name says. Since there is Chessed, and moreover *abundant* Chessed, it does no harm and there is no need to fear regarding song at all — for the song, then, becomes like *"and Your devoted ones will sing joyously."* And it is written *"Elokim, in Your abundant Chessed [answer me],"* that from the side of Your abundant Chessed, even the Name Elokim of the Gevuros is sweetened.

אתא רב חסדא זלזיל בי'. מה שזלזיל ר"ח, היא כי רב חסדא הוא בחי' חסד בלבד כשמו חסדא... והוא רב חסדא בחי' ורב חסד, הוא זלזיל בזמרא שלא בטלו, כי מאחר שיש חסד ומה גם רב חסד לא יזיק ואין חשש בזמרא כלל. כי הזמרא אז תהי' ע"ד וחסידיך ירננו. וכתיב אלקים ברב חסדך, שמצד רב חסדיך נמתק גם שם אלקים דגבורות.

RAV CHISDA'S OWN NAME, VERIFIED

וְרַב חֶסֶד = 280 = מְנַצְּפַ"ךְ (280)

Verified — the same identity installment № 1 used for tikkun 6. ורב חסד is "Gevurah encompassing, Hod inner" of Chochmah Stimaah — its number is the five sofit-letters, doubled, the encompassing structure of the Gevuros it comes to sweeten.

PASSAGE 4

A Hundred Geese, a Hundred Se'ah — the Lock

Once song, which is from the aspect of the Gevuros of Binah and the Gevurah of Zeir Anpin, was banned, the Chassadim from the right side were revealed — Chochmah and Chessed — namely geese and wheat. For "avaz" (goose) alludes to Chochmah, as the Sages taught: *one who sees a goose in his dream should look forward to wisdom.* And wheat alludes to the attribute of Chessed, as is known of the species by which the Land is praised.

הנה מאחר שבטל זמרא שמבחי' גבורות דבינה ומדת הגבורה דז"א, אז נתגלו בחי' חסדים שמימין, והוא חכמה וחסד, והיינו אווזי וחיטי, כי אוח רומז על חכ', כמארז"ל הרואה אווז בחלומו יצפה לחכ'. וחטה רומז על מדת החסד כידוע בהד מינים שנשתבחה בהן הארץ.

AVAZ AND CHITAH, VERIFIED

אַוָּזָא = 21	=	זוּזָא = 21
חִטָּה = 22	=	זוּזָא + 1

Both verified exactly. "Avaz" matches the price-word "zuza" itself letter for letter; "chitah" is one more — Rav Levik reads this single-point gap as wheat's slight edge, resolved differently in Passage 5.

A hundred geese, Rav Levik explains, because Chochmah is the יו"ד of the Name — and "ten times vav-dalet" (the last two letters of יו"ד spelled out) makes a hundred; also because the Name Ayin-Bet, whose milui totals 72, is elsewhere called "kesser mah" — read not as "mah" (45) but "meah" (100). A hundred se'ah of wheat, correspondingly, because Chessed carries the same Ayin-Bet structure on its own side.

FLAGGED, NOT FORCED

The text also offers a second route to the same hundred: *"the achorayim of yud — that is,* י י"ו יו"ד *— is the number a hundred."* Computed directly (10 + 16 + 20), this sums to 46, not 100. UNVERIFIED. This may reflect a specific achorayim-construction convention beyond simple cumulative letter-values — the same category of difficulty as installment № 2's achorayim-of-Sag question — and is transcribed as printed rather than resolved by assumption.

PASSAGE 5

Why the Leniency Undid the Goose, Not the Wheat

וטעמא דהא מילתא למה קם ק' אוחי בזוזא וק' סאה חיטי בזוזא, דלא קם בטל זמרא לגמרי, כי הרי הלא רב הונא בטל זמרא, הוא כי רב הונא הוא גופא אמר שזמרא דנגדי ודבקרי שרי... לכן בזוזא דת"ת שהוא ע"ד נגדי היו יכולין לקנות רק מאה אוחי... ובזוזא דיסוד שהוא ע"ד בקרי היו יכולין לקנות רק ק' סאה חיטי.

The reason a hundred geese stood at a dinar and a hundred se'ah of wheat stood at a dinar — Rav Huna did not entirely ban song, for he himself said that the song of ship-pullers and plowmen is permitted; so song remained, in Tiferes and Yesod. Therefore in the "dinar" of Tiferes, aspect of ship-pullers, they could buy only a hundred geese — geese swim in water, and ships too are in water; and in the "dinar" of Yesod, aspect of plowmen, they could buy only a hundred se'ah of wheat, since the growth of wheat comes through the plowing of plowmen in the ground.

ELUCIDATION — This closes the loop from Passage 2: because Rav Huna's ban had a real exception (the middle line's permitted song), the market never fully corrected — geese and wheat only reached parity with a dinar, capped at a hundred, rather than becoming genuinely worthless. When the text later reports that a goose could no longer be found for a dinar at all, once Rav Chisda's leniency restored some measure of song's original risk and rebalanced the market, Rav Levik reads this as the geese/Chochmah side snapping back precisely because Chochmah — the single point, without Binah's expansion — has no stable "middle price": it is either fully available or effectively gone. Wheat, rooted in Chessed's steadier expansiveness, holds its value instead of vanishing.

> ONE NUMBER, CHECKED AND FLAGGED, SIDE BY SIDE
>
> This he'ara is a good closing snapshot of the whole series' method: dense wordplay carries real, checkable arithmetic (avaz=zuza, arz=Yitzchak, tzeltzal=2×tzal=2×kaf, chorev=gevurah, sevach=2×aleph-mem, kest=2×mnutzpach, v'rav chesed=mnutzpach — seven independent identities, all confirmed by script) sitting directly alongside at least one claim (achorayim of yud = 100) that does not close under ordinary computation, and is reported as such rather than smoothed over.

Glossary

יניקה ללעו"ז	"Nourishment for the other side" — the Kabbalistic concern that an unguarded expression of Gevurah (severity/judgment energy) can become a channel feeding negative forces, rather than holiness.
נגדי / בקרי	Ship-pullers and plowmen — the two permitted categories of work-song, mapped to Tiferes and Yesod, the "middle line" where Chassadim sweeten the Gevuros directly.
אבגית"ץ	One of several classical acronym-groupings of the Hebrew alphabet used in gematria wordplay (here applied to "shor," an ox) — grouping letters by position rather than value.
בן ארזא	The Levite appointed to strike the cymbal (tzeltzal) in the Temple service — his name read as "son of cedar," a hard wood standing for Gevurah, and shown to share Yitzchak's own gematria.
מנצפ"ך	The five Hebrew letters with distinct final (sofit) forms — used throughout this series as a recurring numeric signature (280) for structures built from Gevurah sweetened by abundant Chessed.

Citation Index

REFERENCE	STATUS
סוטה מח, א	VERIFIED — the Gemara under discussion
בטל זמרא = רפ"ט = (289) י"ז²	VERIFIED — printed as דפ״ט; corrected ד→ר, confirmed two independent ways (letter-sum and 17^2)
ארז = יצחק (208)	VERIFIED — checked by script
צלצל = 2×צ"ל = 2×ק"כ (240)	VERIFIED — checked by script
חורב = גבורה (216)	VERIFIED — checked by script
סבך = 2×א"ם (82)	VERIFIED — checked by script
קסת = 2×מנצפ"ך (560)	VERIFIED — checked by script
ורב חסד = מנצפ"ך (280)	VERIFIED — checked by script; same identity as installment № 1
אווזא = זוזא (21); חטה = 22	VERIFIED — checked by script
אחוריים דיו"ד = מאה (100)	UNVERIFIED — direct computation (י+ו+יוד) gives 46, not 100; see Passage 4
בן ארזא = ס"ר + kollel (261)	VERIFIED — checked by script; a further clause reading "ע״ה" alongside it is not independently resolved

שם ע"ב, מלואו = מא"ה	AS CITED — the classical milui value of Shem Ayin-Bet is reported as Rav Levik gives it, not independently re-derived here
קדושין פב, א / שבת טו, א	AS CITED — sailors and weavers' occupational character

לעילוי נשמת

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Transcription note

The Hebrew text was transcribed from photographs and screenshots of the printed page (*Likkutei Levi Yitzchak — He'oros LeShas*, Sotah, pp. נד–ס) and cross-checked against the HebrewBooks 31637 scan. This he'ara contains the series' densest single cluster of checkable gematria — eight independent identities were verified by script (see the citation index), against one that does not close under direct computation (אחוריים דיו״ד = 100) and is flagged UNVERIFIED rather than assumed. One printed letter — בטל זמרא's numeric value, printed as דפ״ט — is corrected to רפ״ט (289) on strong independent grounds: both the plain letter-sum of בטל זמרא and the text's own statement that the number is 17 multiplied by itself agree exactly on 289, while 489 has no such support. Extended halachic material on the Temple ceremony (Passage 1) and on the permitted/forbidden categories of work-song (Passage 2) is elucidated and summarized rather than transcribed in complete parallel Hebrew/English; readers checking against the physical page should expect more material there than appears here in full. All gematria identifications, sefirah-mappings, and cross-references within the he'ara are Rav Levik's own; passages marked ELUCIDATION or ELUCIDATOR'S INFERENCE are the editor's scaffolding and should be judged accordingly.

On the series as a whole: this is the fourth and final installment of the sefer's complete "Heoros on Maseches Sotah" — immediately following this he'ara, the running header changes to מסכת גיטין and the sefer moves to a new tractate. Installments № 1–4 together cover this section end to end.

TORAS LEVI YITZCHOK · AN ELUCIDATED SERIES · № 4 OF A MONTH OF LEARNING TOWARD CHOF AV 5786
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COMPILED BY AI, GUIDED BY SHIMON ROSENBERG · OPENCHASSIDUS

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Sacred text — please do not discard.