

CHAVRUTA

SHABBAT – DAF KUF LAMED BET

Translated by: *Chavruta staff of scholars*
Edited by: *R. Shmuel Globus*

[**And furthermore, what** is special about **them,**] about these mitzvot? **That if the time** for the mitzvah **passed, it is null and void.** Therefore, it makes sense that they should supersede the Shabbat. This is not true of circumcision, which can be performed after the eighth day. Therefore, it should not be permitted to do the preparations for the circumcision on Shabbat.

Rather, this is the **reason of Rabbi Eliezer: That the verse said, “And on the eighth day, he [the father] shall circumcise his [the son’s] foreskin.”** The verse is not needed to teach us that circumcision itself should be performed on Shabbat, since that is learned from an oral tradition. Therefore, it must mean to teach us that **even** the preparations may be done **on Shabbat.**

The Gemara asks: **Let the Torah write in** the passage of **circumcision** that the preparations supersede the Shabbat, **and the others** the other mitzvot **will come and be learned from it.** Why does the Torah need to tell us specifically that the other mitzvot supersede the Shabbat, once it has already given us an example in circumcision?

The Gemara answers: **Because it is possible to refute** i.e. to point out that circumcision is not a valid precedent for those other mitzvot, because: **what** do we find in the matter of **circumcision? That thirteen covenants were sealed in regards to it.** In the passage of the Torah discussing the circumcision of Abraham, the word “covenant” appears thirteen times. Thus we could not deduce from here that the other mitzvot, which do not have so many covenants regarding them, supersede Shabbat.

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The Gemara discusses the disagreement between the Rabbis and Rabbi Eliezer. **The Rabbis only differ** with Rabbi Eliezer in the matter of **the preparations of circumcision. But in circumcision itself, everyone agrees that it supersedes Shabbat. What is the source** of this?

Said Ula: It is a **halachah** which we have received in an oral tradition.

And likewise, said Rabbi Yitzchak: It is a **halachah** which we have received in an oral tradition.

They the scholars of the study hall **contradicted this**, from a Baraita. **Rabbi Elazar the son of Azaryah said:** What do we find in the matter of **circumcision, which** benefits only **one of a man's limbs?** That it **supersedes the Shabbat. How much more so does danger to life supersede the Shabbat.**

The Gemara now explains the contradiction. **If you suggest** that it is a **halachah** which we have received in an oral tradition, **how can you apply this *kal vachomer*¹ to a halachah** received by oral tradition? Rather, we should view it as a Divine decree, not given to analysis by the rules of *kal vachomer*.

Did we not learn in a Baraita: Said Rabbi Akiva, “I suggested a *kal vachomer* in the presence of Rabbi Eliezer, that a *revi'it*² of blood from a corpse, if present under the same roof with a Nazirite, ought to render him impure, and cause him to begin his *nezirut* over again. What do we find in regards to a bone the size of a barley kernel? That it does not render a man who is not a Nazirite impure, through being under the same roof as him. But it does render a Nazirite impure, and makes him begin the fulfillment of his Nazirite oath all over again.

¹ A fortiori argument. In this case, that if circumcision overrides Shabbat, danger to life should certainly do so.

² *revi'it*: 86.4 gm or 2.9 fl. oz

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If so, then a *revi'it* of blood from a corpse, which does render an ordinary man impure if he is under the same roof as it, should certainly cause the Nazirite to become impure, and make him start over again. **Said Rabbi Eliezer to him, “Akiva!** The fact that a **bone the size of a barley kernel** causes a Nazirite to become **impure** when it is under the same roof as him is a **halachah** which we have received as an oral tradition. How can you learn the laws of a *revi'it* of blood from it through *kal vachomer*? **We may not use *kal vachomer* to deduce other laws from a halachah received through an oral tradition.”**

We see from Rabbi Eliezer's response to Rabbi Akiva that *kal vachomer* cannot be applied to a **halachah** received through an oral tradition. Therefore the Baraita, which used *kal vachomer* to deduce other laws from the law of circumcision on Shabbat, must not have held this law to be a halachah which we have received by oral tradition.

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Rather, said Rabbi Elazar: The fact that circumcision supersedes Shabbat **comes** from a *gezeirah shavah*³ of the repetition of the word **“sign.”** In the passage discussing Shabbat, the Torah says, “For it is a ‘sign’ between Me and you for your generations.” In the passage regarding circumcision, the Torah says, “And it shall be a ‘sign’ of a covenant between Me and you.” Rabbi Elazar means to say that from this *gezeirah shavah* we learn that circumcision has a special on Shabbat; namely, that it supersedes Shabbat.

The Gemara asks: **But if so, then tefillin, that it is also written regarding them** the word **“sign”** (for this word appears in the passage discussing tefillin) **should also supersede Shabbat.** Since tefillin do not supersede Shabbat, it must be that the *gezeirah shavah* of the repetition of the word “sign” was not received by oral tradition, and we may not make up a *gezeirah shavah*.

³ I.e. when different verses have a similar wording, they are often connected. This is *gezeirah shavah*, one of the means by which Scriptural verses are interpreted. There are many verses with similar wording, and a

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Rather, the law that circumcision supersedes the Shabbat is learned from a *gezeirah shavah* of the repetition of the word “**covenant.**” Just as the word “covenant” appears repeatedly in the passage discussing circumcision, so it appears in the passage regarding Shabbat, as it says, “To make the Shabbat an eternal ‘covenant’ for your generations.”

The Gemara challenges this: If so, then what about an **adult** who was not circumcised at the proper time? **For** the word “**covenant**” is written regarding him, too, in the passage discussing such a person, as it says, “And an uncircumcised male who shall not circumcise...has nullified My ‘covenant.’” **Let** his circumcision also **supersede the Shabbat**. If the *gezeirah shavah* based on the repetition of the word “covenant” is valid, an adult who still needs to be circumcised should also be allowed, and required, to be circumcised even on Shabbat. Since we know that he is not permitted to be circumcised on Shabbat, this *gezeirah shavah* must not have been received as an oral tradition.

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Rather, the fact that circumcision supersedes Shabbat **comes** from a *gezeirah shavah* based on the repetition of the word “**generations.**” In the passage discussing Shabbat, it is written, “...an eternal covenant for your ‘generations.’” In the passage discussing circumcision, it is written, “...every male, for your ‘generations.’”

The Gemara asks: If so, **tzitzit, that it is written in it** i.e. in the passage that discusses tzitzit the word “**generations,**” as it says, “on the edges of their garments for their ‘generations,’” **should** also **supersede Shabbat**. Since in fact it is forbidden to place tzitzit on one’s garment on Shabbat, this *gezeirah shavah* also must be inauthentic.

gezeirah shavah interpretation is only made when there is a tradition of the Oral Torah (as handed down

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Rather, said Rav Nachman the son of Yitzchak: We learn the law of circumcision, which has the words “**sign,**” “**covenant,**” and “**generations,**” **from** Shabbat, which also has the words “**sign,**” “**covenant,**” and “**generations**” — **to the exclusion of these** (tefillin, tzitzit, and the circumcision of an adult), **that** each of them have only **one** of these words **written in them.**

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And Rabbi Yochanan said: The verse says, “**And on the eighth ‘day’** he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin,” not “on the eighth.” The extra word “day” is meant to teach us that we circumcise on the eighth day **even on Shabbat.**

Said Resh Lakish to Rabbi Yochanan: **But if so,** impure people who **lack atonement** i.e. they still have to bring their atoning sacrifices, **that it is written in them** also “**on the eighth day,**” should **likewise supersede Shabbat** and bring their sacrifices then. Since their sacrifices do not actually supersede Shabbat, it must be that we are not meant to learn such a law from the extra word “day.”

Rabbi Yochanan answers: **That** extra use of the word “day”, found in the passage of the impure people, **is needed** to teach that they bring their sacrifices **during the day and not at night.**

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Resh Lakish challenges this: Is not **this** use of the word “day,” written in the passage that discusses circumcision, **also needed** to teach that circumcision must be performed

from Mt. Sinai) that these two verses are indeed linked.

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during the day and not at night? Thus Rabbi Yochanan’s understanding of the two passages appears to be inconsistent.

Rabbi Yochanan answers: We **derive that from “eight ‘days’ old.”** This verse is the source of the law that circumcision must be performed during the day, thus the verse “on the eighth ‘day’” is available to teach us that circumcision supersedes the Shabbat.

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Resh Lakish challenges Rabbi Yochanan’s answer from a different angle: **This** law, that the private sacrifices of impure people must be brought during the day, we can **also** learn **from “on the ‘day’ of his commanding.”** Since this verse tells us that the sacrifices must be brought during the day, apparently we must understand “on the eighth ‘day’” to tell us that the impure people should bring their sacrifices on the eighth day, even if it is Shabbat.

Rabbi Yochanan answers: **Even though it is derived from “on the ‘day’ of his commanding,” it is still needed.** I.e., the verse “on the eighth ‘day’” must still be understood as teaching us that the sacrifices must be brought during the day.

For **I would think** that **since the Torah took pity on him,** on the impure person, by permitting him **to bring** a sacrifice **in poverty** — i.e. if he is poor, he may bring a modest sacrifice of two birds, which is relatively inexpensive — the Torah was further lenient with him, and he may also **bring it at night.** Thus the verse “**on the eighth ‘day’**” **informs us** that in fact, the sacrifices may only be brought during the day.

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Ravina challenged it: If this reasoning is **so,** that we would think that impure people are granted other leniencies as well, were the verse not to inform us otherwise, **let an**

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outsider i.e. a non-*kohen*⁴ **be acceptable** to offer **their** sacrifices. Alternatively, let an *onen*⁵ **be acceptable** to offer **their** sacrifices. Since in fact an outsider or an *onen* may not offer the sacrifices of the impure people, we understand that Rabbi Yochanan's deduction is flawed.

The Gemara answers: **The verse returned it.** The Torah, by writing “on the eighth ‘day’,” and thereby informing us that the sacrifices of the impure people may only be brought during the day, thereby also informed us that all the other laws generally applicable to sacrifices also apply to these sacrifices as well.

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Rav Acha the son of Yaakov said: In the passage dealing with circumcision, the **verse said “on the eighth.”** “**On the eighth**” means to teach us that circumcision must **even** be performed **on Shabbat**.

The Gemara challenges this: Is not **this** word “**eighth**” **needed to exclude** the **seventh** day? Since the Torah needs to teach us that circumcision is on the eighth, and not the seventh, day, how can Rav Acha learn from that word that it must be performed even on Shabbat?

The Gemara answers: That circumcision may not be performed on the **seventh** day is **learned from** the verse which states “**eight days old.**”

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The Gemara raises a further challenge: **Still,** aren't both **needed, one to exclude** the **seventh** day, **and one to exclude** the **ninth** day? **For if** we would learn only **from one**

⁴ Sacrifices may only be brought by a *kohen*, a descendant of Aharon.

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verse, **I would assume** that only the **seventh** day is not acceptable, since **its time has not come**. **But, from the eighth day on, it is its time**, and any day is acceptable.

Rather, it is preferable to explain the source for the law that circumcision supersedes Shabbat **like Rabbi Yochanan** did, from the verse of “And on the eighth ‘day’”.

There is a **Baraita in accordance with** the view of **Rabbi Yochanan, and not in accordance with** the view of **Rav Acha the son of Yaakov**. The Baraita says, “on the **eighth day he shall circumcise**”, which means that he must circumcise **even on Shabbat**. **And in what do I establish** the verse that states: “**And its desecrators shall surely die?**” I.e., when does this verse apply? **In other *melachot*⁶ aside from circumcision**. Or perhaps it is **not so; rather**, perhaps **even circumcision** is included in the prohibition of doing *melachah* on Shabbat? **And in what do I establish** the verse that states “**On the eighth he shall circumcise?**” As referring to all days **except for Shabbat**. This can be resolved by the verse, which **teaches** us the law, **saying “on the day”**—meaning, **even on Shabbat**.

⁵ An *onen* is someone whose close relative—mother, father, brother, unmarried sister, wife, son, or daughter—has died and not yet been buried. If the *onen* is a *kohen*, he may not offer sacrifices, unless he is the *kohen gadol*, the High Priest.

⁶ Actions forbidden on *Shabbat* by Torah law. For example, carrying in a public domain, or sorting out a mixture.

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Said Rava: This Tanna, in the beginning, when he understood that “the eighth” means even on Shabbat, **why was he satisfied with that? And in the end**, when he questioned his assumption, and suggested that it might be forbidden to circumcise on Shabbat, **what was his difficulty?** Why was he not satisfied with his original understanding?

Rava explains: At first, **he said thus: “On the eighth he shall circumcise,” even on Shabbat. And how do I establish “Its desecrators shall surely die?” In other melachot aside from circumcision, but circumcision supersedes Shabbat. Why? It is a kal vachomer. What do we find with tzara’at⁷? That it supersedes the sacrificial service.** If a *kohen* has *tzara’at*, he may not perform the sacrificial service. And anyone with *tzara’at* is forbidden to cut it off. Thus, a *kohen* may not cut off his *tzara’at* in order to perform the sacrificial service. In this way, it supersedes the sacrificial service.

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And the sacrificial service supersedes the Shabbat, for sacrifices offered on behalf of the people as a whole are brought on Shabbat, although this involves forbidden forms of work. Nevertheless, **circumcision supersedes it**. Someone who is uncircumcised, and has *tzara’at* on his foreskin, is permitted and required to circumcise, though in the process he cuts off the *tzara’at*. Thus, we see that circumcision is more important than the prohibition on cutting off *tzara’at*, which is more important than the sacrificial service, which is more important than Shabbat. If so, then **is it not logical that Shabbat, which is overridden by the sacrificial service, should be overridden by circumcision?**

And what underlies the “or perhaps not” which he said later? The Tanna **reconsidered and said: why** should we assume **that *tzara’at* is more stringent** than Shabbat?

⁷ A spiritually caused skin disease. Although often identified with leprosy, this is widely disputed.

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Perhaps Shabbat is more stringent, for it has many punishments and prohibitions. And as for the proof that *tzara'at* is more stringent, for the prohibition of cutting of *tzara'at* supersedes the sacrificial service, which supersedes the Shabbat, why assume that *tzara'at* superseding the sacrificial service is because the prohibition of *tzara'at* is stringent? Perhaps the reason he may not cut off the *tzara'at* in order to become fit to perform the sacrificial service is that the man himself is not fit. Even after he is rid of the *tzara'at*, he will not immediately become fit to perform the service; rather, he must first immerse in a *mikveh*⁸ and wait for sundown.

And so long as the Tanna accepts this reasoning, he can say “and in what do I establish the verse that states ‘On the eighth he shall circumcise?’ As referring to all days except for Shabbat. This can be resolved by the verse, which teaches us the law, saying “on the day”—meaning, even on Shabbat.”

The Rabbis taught in a Baraita: Circumcision supersedes the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at*, whether the circumcision occurs in its correct time, the eighth day, or not in its correct time. Does circumcision supersede Yom Tov? Circumcision does not supersede it unless it is in its correct time.

The Gemara seeks to clarify the source for this law. From where do we learn this? From that which the Rabbis taught in a Baraita: “... he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin” — even though there is a *baheret*⁹ there, he should cut. And in what case should I establish the intent of the verse, “guard regarding the plague of *tzara'at*”, which tells us not to cut it off? In other places on the body aside from the area of circumcision.

⁸ A purifying pool.

⁹ A type of *tzara'at* spot.

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Or perhaps it is **not** so, and we should understand that **even circumcision** is included in the prohibition? **And** in what case should **I establish** the intent of the verse, **“he shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin?”** **In a time where there is not a *baheret* in it** i.e. in the area of the circumcision. This can be resolved by the verse, which **teaches** us the law, **saying** the extra word **“flesh¹⁰”** — **even though there is a *baheret* there.**

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Said Rava: **This Tanna, in the beginning,** when he understood that one is to circumcise even if in so doing he will cut off a *baheret*, **why was he satisfied** with this assumption? **And in the end,** when he considered the possibility that one is not to circumcise, if so doing would cut off a *baheret*, **what was his difficulty?**

Rava explains. At first, **he said thus.** **“He shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin”—** **even though there is a *baheret* there.** **And** in what case do I **establish** the intent of the verse **“guard regarding the plague of *tzara’at*?”** **In other places** in the body, **aside from** the area of **circumcision.** **But circumcision supersedes** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara’at*. **Why? Because of a *kal vachomer.*** **What** do we find in reference to **Shabbat, which is stringent? Circumcision supersedes it.** **How much more so** should this be true in reference to *tzara’at*, which is not as stringent as Shabbat is.

And what underlies the **“perhaps not”** that he said? The Tanna **reconsidered and said:** **Why** should we assume that **Shabbat is stringent? Perhaps** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara’at* **is more stringent, for it supersedes the sacrificial service, and the sacrificial service supersedes Shabbat.** If so, then we can no longer deduce that circumcision should supersede *tzara’at*.

This can be resolved by the verse, which **teaches** us the law, **saying “flesh”** — **even though there is a *baheret* there,** he should circumcise it.

¹⁰ The verse could have said “he shall circumcise his foreskin.” The redundant word “flesh” is understood

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Another version: Circumcision supersedes *tzara'at*. Why? Because the positive mitzvah of circumcision comes and supersedes the prohibition of cutting of *tzara'at*¹¹. And what underlies the “or perhaps not” that he said? The Tanna reconsidered and said: Let me suggest that this which we say, that a positive mitzvah comes and supersedes a prohibition, refers specifically to a regular prohibition. But this, the prohibition against cutting of *tzara'at*, is both a prohibition and a positive mitzvah. The prohibition is in the verse that says, “guard regarding the plague of *tzara'at*,” and the positive mitzvah is in the following verse, which says, “...and to do.” Thus, *tzara'at* is not superseded by circumcision.

And since circumcision does not, according to this, supersede the prohibition against cutting of *tzara'at*, in what case shall I establish the intent of the verse that states, “He shall circumcise the flesh of his foreskin?” In a time where there is no *baheret* there.

This can be resolved by the verse, which teaches us the law, saying, “flesh,” even though there is a *baheret* there, he should circumcise it.

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The Gemara clarifies the intention of the Baraita. **It is alright** to apply this law to the circumcision of an **adult, for it is written in him** i.e. in the passage dealing with the circumcision of an adult, “flesh.” This is also true of the circumcision of an eight-day old **infant**, it is **also written in him**, “flesh.” But the circumcision of **someone in-between**, older than eight days, but not yet old enough to be obligated in mitzvot, concerning whom we do not find the word “flesh” appearing in a verse, **from where do**

to mean any flesh, even flesh which suffers from a *baheret*.

¹¹ In general, when a given act would both fulfill a positive *mitzvah* and violate a prohibition, the prohibition is overridden by the positive *mitzvah*.

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we see that even his circumcision supersedes the prohibition against cutting off a *baheret*?

Said Abaye: It comes from the common denominator **between them**. We derive this law from the combined cases of eight-day old infants and adults.

From the case of **an adult** alone, **it would not come** i.e. it could not be derived, **for** the adult has the unique characteristic that his failure to circumcise is **punishable by *karet***¹². This shows the great severity of his obligation to circumcise, and does not apply to a child over the age of eight days.

And from the case of an eight-day old **infant** alone, **it would not come, for** that is **circumcision in its proper time**. It therefore is of more significance.

But **their common denominator is that they are being circumcised—and they both supersede** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at*. **So too, everyone who is being circumcised supersedes** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at*.

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Rava said: That a **circumcision in its proper time supersedes** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at* **does not need a verse. It comes from a *kal vachomer***.

What do we find regarding **Shabbat, which is stringent?** Circumcision **supersedes** it. The prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at*, which is not stringent, **how much more so** is it true that circumcision will supersede it.

¹²*Karet*: a Divinely inflicted early death.

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Said Rav Safra to Rava: Why should we assume that **Shabbat is stringent?** Perhaps *tzara'at* is more stringent, for *tzara'at* supersedes the sacrificial service, and the sacrificial service supersedes Shabbat.

Rava answers. **There**, that *tzara'at* supersedes the sacrificial service, **it is not because** the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at* is stringent. **Rather, it is because the man himself is not fit to perform the sacrificial service.**

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Why is he not fit? Let him cut off the baheret, and do the sacrificial service.

Rava answers. He cannot do this, because he still **lacks immersion** in a *mikveh*. Until he immerses in a *mikveh* and waits for sundown, he remains unfit to perform the sacrificial service.

This makes sense as far as **impure plagues**¹³ are concerned. But when it comes to **pure plagues**, which even though their bearer is pure, it still may not be cut off, **what is there to say?** Why may not the *kohen* who suffers from such a form of *tzara'at* cut it off and perform the sacrificial service?

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Rather, said Rav Ashi: The reason the prohibition against cutting off *tzara'at* supersedes the sacrificial service is not its great severity. Rather, it is because **when do we say that a positive mitzvah** i.e. the sacrificial service **comes and supersedes a prohibition** i.e. cutting off the *tzara'at*? Only, **for example**, in the case of **circumcision** in a person who has *tzara'at* in that area, **or** another example is **tzitzit**, where the tzitzit

¹³ Some forms of *tzara'at* cause the afflicted person to become impure, and some do not.

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supersede the prohibition of *sha'atnez*¹⁴. In these cases, it is different: **where at the moment that he uproots the prohibition, he fulfills the positive mitzvah.** But here, **at the time he uproots the prohibition** by cutting off the *tzara'at*, **he does not fulfill the positive mitzvah.** He performs the sacrificial service only later. In such a case, the positive mitzvah does not supersede the prohibition.

¹⁴ By Torah law, it is forbidden to wear a garment made of a mixture of wool and linen. However, it is permitted to wear a garment of one type when the *tzitzit* are of the other type, since the positive *mitzvah* of *tzitzit* overrides the prohibition of wearing such a mixture.