

04 Berachot 3b

Source Sheet by Nasanayl Braun

Berachot 3b

The Gemara answers: This *halakha* applies even **in** the case of a **new**, sturdy ruin, where there is no danger of collapse. Therefore, the reason because of suspicion is cited in order to warn one not to enter a new ruin as well. The Gemara continues to object: **And let this halakha be derived because of demons?** The Gemara answers: Demons are only a threat to individuals, so because of demons would not apply to a case **where two** people enter a ruin together. The Gemara objects: But **if there are two** people entering a ruin together, then **there is no suspicion either**. There is no prohibition against two men to be alone with a woman as, in that case, there is no suspicion of untoward behavior. Consequently, if two men enter a ruin together, there is no room for suspicion. The Gemara answers: If **two individuals** known to be **immoral** enter together, there is suspicion even though there are two of them. The Gemara considers why **because of collapse** is necessary. **Let the prohibition be derived from**

ברכות ג' ב

בְּחֻדָּתִי. וְתִפּוּק לִיָּה מְשׁוּם
מִזִּיקִין? בְּתֵרִי. אִי בְּתֵרִי — חָשָׁד
נָמִי לִיכָא! בְּתֵרִי וּפְרִיצִי. "מִפְּנֵי
הַמְּפֹלֶת", וְתִפּוּק לִיָּה מְשׁוּם
חָשָׁד וּמִזִּיקִין! בְּתֵרִי וּכְשֵׁרִי.
"מִפְּנֵי הַמִּזִּיקִין", וְתִפּוּק לִיָּה
מִפְּנֵי חָשָׁד וּמְפֹלֶת! בְּחֻרְבָּה
חֻדָּתִי, וּבְתֵרִי וּכְשֵׁרִי. אִי בְּתֵרִי,
מִזִּיקִין נָמִי לִיכָא! בְּמִקּוֹמָן
חֵיִשְׁיָנָן. וְאִיבָעִית אִימָא: לְעוֹלָם
בְּחֵד, וּבְחֻרְבָּה חֻדָּתִי דִּקְאִי
בְּדַבְרָא, דְּהֵתָם מְשׁוּם חָשָׁד
לִיכָא דְּהָא אִשָּׁה בְּדַבְרָא לָא
שְׂכִיחָא, וּמְשׁוּם מִזִּיקִין אִיכָא.
תְּנוּ רַבָּנִן: אַרְבַּע מְשֻׁמְרוֹת הָיִי
הַלֵּילָה, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי. רַבִּי נָתַן
אוֹמֵר: שְׁלֹשׁ. מֵאֵי טַעְמִיָּה דְּרַבִּי
נָתַן — דְּכִתִּיב: "וַיָּבֹא גִדְעוֹן
וּמֵאָה אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בְּקֶצֶה
הַמַּחֲנֶה רֹאשׁ הָאֲשָׁמֶרֶת
הַתִּיכּוֹנָה", תֵּנָא: אֵין "תִּיכּוֹנָה"
אַלָּא שְׁיֵשׁ לְפָנֶיהָ וּלְאַחֶרֶיהָ.
וְרַבִּי, מֵאֵי "תִּיכּוֹנָה" — אַחַת מִן
הַתִּיכּוֹנָה שֶׁבְּתִיכּוֹנוֹת. וְרַבִּי נָתַן

suspicion and demons. The Gemara responds: There are times when this reason is necessary, e.g., when **two upstanding individuals** enter a ruin together. Although there is neither concern of suspicion nor of demons, there remains concern lest the ruin collapse. The Gemara considers the third reason, **because of demons**. Why is it necessary to include: Because of demons? **Let** the prohibition **be derived from suspicion and collapse.** The Gemara responds: There are cases where this is the only concern, for example where it is a **new** ruin into which **two upstanding** individuals enter, so there is neither concern lest it collapse nor of suspicion. The Gemara points out, however, that **if there are two people, there is also no** concern of **demons**. As such, the question remains: In what case can demons be the sole cause not to enter a ruin? The Gemara responds: Generally speaking, two individuals need not be concerned about demons; but, if they are **in their place**, i.e., a place known to be haunted by demons (see Isaiah 13:21), **we are concerned** about demons even with two people. **And if you wish, say** instead: **Actually**, this refers **to** the case of **an individual** entering **a new ruin located in a field**. **There, there is**

מי כתיב "תיכונה
שבתיכונות"? "תיכונה" כתיב!
מאי טעמיה דרבי? אמר רבי
זריקא, אמר רבי אמי, אמר רבי
יהושע בן לוי: כתוב אחד אומר:
"חצות לילה אקום להודות לך"
על משפטי צדקך, וכתוב אחד
אומר: "קדמו עיני אשמורות"
הא כיצד, ארבע משמרות הוי'
הלילה. ורבי נתן, סבר לה כרבי
יהושע. דתנן, רבי יהושע אומר:
עד שלש שעות, שכן דרך
מלכים לעמוד בשלש שעות.
שית דליליא, ותיתי דימא, הווי
להו שתי משמרות. רב אשי
אמר: משמרה ופלגא נמי
"משמרות" קרו להו. ואמר רבי
זריקא, אמר רבי אמי, אמר רבי
יהושע בן לוי: אין אומרין בפני
המת אלא דבריו של מת. אמר
רבי אבא בר כהנא: לא אמרין
אלא בדברי תורה, אבל מילי
דעלמא לית לן בה. ואיכא
דאמרי: אמר רבי אבא בר כהנא
לא אמרין אלא [אפילו] בדברי
תורה וכל שכן מילי דעלמא.
ודוד בפלגא דליליא הוה קאי?
מאורתא הוה קאי! דכתיב:
"קדמתי בנשף ואשועה",

no suspicion, as finding a woman in the field is uncommon; and since it is a new ruin, there is no danger of collapse. **However, there is still concern of demons.** The Sages taught in a *Tosefta*: **The night is comprised of four watches;** this is the statement of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. **Rabbi Natan says:** The night is comprised of **three** watches. The Gemara explains: **What is Rabbi Natan's reasoning? As it is written: "And Gideon, and the one hundred men who were with him, came to the edge of camp at the beginning of the middle watch"** (Judges 7:19). **It was taught** in the *Tosefta*: **Middle means nothing other than that there is one before it and one after it.** From the fact that the verse refers to a middle watch, the fact that the night is comprised of three watches may be inferred. **And** what does **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi** say about this proof? He argues that it is inconclusive, as one could say: To **what** does **middle** refer? It refers to **one of the two middle** watches. **And** how would **Rabbi Natan** respond? He would say: Despite Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's objection, **is: One of the middle watches, written** in the verse? **The middle watch is written.** This indicates that the night is comprised of only three watches. **What is**

וממאי דהאי "נֶשֶׁף" אורתא הוא? — דכתיב: "בְּנֶשֶׁף בְּעָרָב יוֹם בְּאִישׁוֹן לַיְלָה וְאַפְלָה!" אָמַר רַב אוֹשְׁעִיא, אָמַר רַבִּי אֲחָא: הֲכִי קָאָמַר (דָּוִד): מַעוֹלָם לֹא עָבַר עָלַי חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה בְּשִׁינָה. רַבִּי זִירָא אָמַר: עַד חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה הִיא מִתְנַמְנֵם כְּסוּס, מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ הִיא מִתְגַּבֵּר כְּאָרִי. רַב אֲשִׁי אָמַר: עַד חֲצוֹת לַיְלָה הִיא עוֹסֵק בְּדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה, מִכָּאן וְאֵילָךְ בְּשִׁירוֹת וְתַשְׁבְּחוֹת. וְ"נֶשֶׁף" אורתא הוא? הֵא "נֶשֶׁף" צִפְרָא הוא! דְּכִתִּיב: "וַיֵּכֶם דָּוִד מִהַנֶּשֶׁף וְעַד הָעָרֶב לְמַחֲרָתָם". מַאי לָאו — מִצִּפְרָא וְעַד לַיְלִיא? לֹא, מֵאוֹרְתָא וְעַד אוֹרְתָא. אִי הֲכִי, לְכַתוּב "מִהַנֶּשֶׁף וְעַד הַנֶּשֶׁף" או "מִהָעָרֶב וְעַד הָעָרֶב"! אֵלָּא אָמַר רַבָּא: תְּרֵי נֶשֶׁפִּי הֵווּ — נֶשֶׁף לַיְלִיא וְאַתִּי יִמָּא, נֶשֶׁף יִמָּא וְאַתִּי לַיְלִיא. וְדוּד מִי הָוָה יָדַע פְּלָגָא דְּלַיְלִיא אֵימַת? הַשְׁתָּא מִשָּׁה רִבִּינוּ לֹא הָוָה יָדַע, דְּכִתִּיב "כְּחֲצוֹת הַלַּיְלָה אָנִי יוֹצֵא בְּתוֹךְ מִצְרַיִם". מַאי "כְּחֲצוֹת"? אֵילִימָא דְּאָמַר לִיה קוּדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא "כְּחֲצוֹת" — מִי אֵיכָא סְפִיקָא קָמִי שְׁמִיא!? אֵלָּא:

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's reasoning? **Rabbi Zerika said** that **Rabbi Ami said** that **Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said:** **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's** opinion is based on a comparison of two verses. **One verse says: "At midnight I rise to give thanks for Your righteous laws"** (Psalms 119:62), **and the other verse says: "My eyes forestall the watches,** that I will speak of Your word" (Psalms 119:148). Taken together, these verses indicate that their author, King David, rose at midnight, two watches before dawn, in order to study Torah. **How is it** possible to reconcile these two verses? Only if **there are four watches in the night** does one who rises two watches before dawn rise at midnight. **And** how does **Rabbi Natan** reconcile these two verses? He **holds in accordance with** the opinion of **Rabbi Yehoshua, for we learned** in a mishna that **Rabbi Yehoshua says:** One is permitted to recite the morning *Shema* during the time when people rise, **until the third hour** of the day, **as it is the custom of kings to rise during the third hour.** Since it is customary for kings to rise during the third hour of the day, if David rose at midnight, he would be awake for **six hours of the night and two hours of the day,** which amounts to **two watches.**

דָּאָמַר לִיה (לְמַחֲר) "בְּחֻצוֹת" (כִּי הִשְׁתָּא), וְאַתָּא אִיהוּ וְאָמַר "בְּחֻצוֹת", אֲלֵמָא: מְסַפֵּקָא לִיה, וְדוּד הָוָה יָדַע! דּוּד, סִימְנָא הָוָה לִיה, דָּאָמַר רַב אַחָא בַר בִּיזְנָא, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן חֲסִידָא: כְּנוּר הָיָה תְלוּי לְמַעְלָה מִמַּטָּתוֹ שֶׁל דּוּד, וְכִיּוֹן שֶׁהִגִּיעַ חֻצוֹת לִילָה, בָּא רוּחַ צְפוֹנִית וְנוֹשְׁבֶת בּוֹ וּמְנַגֵּן מֵאֲלִיו, מִיד הָיָה עוֹמֵד וְעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה עַד שֶׁעָלָה עֲמוּד הַשַּׁחַר. כִּיּוֹן שֶׁעָלָה עֲמוּד הַשַּׁחַר נִכְנָסוּ חֲכָמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶצְלוֹ. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אֲדוּנֵינוּ הַמֶּלֶךְ, עִמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל צְרִיכִין פְּרֻנְסָה. אָמַר לָהֶם: לָכוּ וְהִתְפְּרֻנְסוּ זֶה מִזֶּה. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אֵין הַקּוֹמֵץ מִשְׁבִּיעַ אֶת הָאָרֶץ, וְאֵין הַבּוֹר מִתְמַלֵּא מַחוּלֵיתוֹ. אָמַר לָהֶם: לָכוּ וּפְשְׁטוּ יְדֵיכֶם בְּגִדְדוּד. מִיד יוֹעֲצִים בְּאַחִיתוּפָל, וְנִמְלָכִין בְּסִנְהֶדְרִין, וְשׁוֹאֲלִין בְּאוּרִים וְתוֹמִים. אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: מֵאֵי קָרָא? דְּכָתִיב "וְאַחֲרֵי אַחִיתוּפָל בְּנִיָּהּ בֶּן יְהוֹיָדָע וְאַבְיָתָר וְשָׂר צָבָא לְמֶלֶךְ יוֹאָב". אַחִיתוּפָל — זֶה יוֹעֵץ, וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר: "וְעֵצַת אַחִיתוּפָל אֲשֶׁר יַעַן בְּיָמִים הָהֵם כְּאֲשֶׁר יִשְׁאֹל אִישׁ בְּדָבָר הָאֱלֹהִים".

Therefore King David could say that he “forestalls the watches,” as he rose two watches before the rest of the kings in the world. **Rav Ashi**

said that the verses can be reconciled in accordance with Rabbi Natan’s opinion in another way:

One and one-half watches are still called watches in plural. Therefore King David could rise at midnight yet maintain that he “forestalls the watches.” Following this discussion, another *halakha* that **Rabbi Zerika said** that **Rabbi Ami said** that **Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said** is cited:

Before the dead, one may speak only of matters relating to the dead, as speaking of other matters appears to be contemptuous of the deceased, underscoring that he is unable to talk while those around him can. Therefore, one must remain fully engaged in matters relating to him. Two traditions exist with regard to the details of this *halakha* in the name of Rabbi Abba bar Kahana. According to one version, **Rabbi Abba bar Kahana said**: This *halakha* was only said with regard to matters of Torah.

Speaking of **other matters, however, is not** prohibited, since no contempt is expressed for the deceased by the fact that he is unable to speak of such topics.

Others say another version of this

halakha in the name of Rabbi Abba bar Kahana: This *halakha* **was said even with regard to matters of Torah, and all the more so with regard to other matters.** If one must refrain from speaking of matters of Torah, regarding which one is commanded to speak, and limit himself to matters concerning the deceased, all the more so should he refrain from speaking of other matters, regarding which one is not commanded to speak. Incidental to the Gemara's mention of King David, other sources are cited that describe his actions. Regarding that which was cited above, that he would rise in the middle of the night in order to serve his Creator, the Gemara asks: **Did David rise at midnight? He rose in the evening. As it is written: "I rose with the *neshef* and cried, I hoped for Your word" (Psalms 119:147). And how do we know that this *neshef* is the evening? As it is written: "In the *neshef*, in the evening of the day, in the blackness of night and the darkness" (Proverbs 7:9).** Apparently, King David did indeed rise when it was still evening. The Gemara suggests several ways to resolve this contradiction. **Rabbi Oshaya said that Rabbi Aḥa said: David said as follows: Midnight never passed me by in my sleep.**

Sometimes I fulfilled the verse, “I rose with the *neshef* and cried,” but I always, at least, fulfilled the verse, “At midnight I rise to give thanks for Your righteous laws.” **Rabbi Zeira said: Until midnight, David would doze like a horse,** as a horse dozes, but never sleeps deeply. **From midnight on, he would gain the strength of a lion. Rav Ashi said: Until midnight, he would study Torah,** as it is written: “I rose with the *neshef* and cried, I hoped for Your word,” **and from midnight on,** he would engage in **songs and praise,** as it is written: “At midnight I rise to give thanks.” To this point, the discussion has been based on the assumption that *neshef* means evening. The Gemara asks: **Does *neshef* really mean evening? Doesn’t *neshef* mean morning? As it is written: “And David slew them from the *neshef* until the evening of the next day” (I Samuel 30:17). Doesn’t this verse mean from the morning until the night,** in which case *neshef* must mean morning? The Gemara responds: **No,** this verse means that David slew them **from one evening until the next evening.** The Gemara rejects this response: **If so, let the verse be written: From the *neshef* until the *neshef*, or from the evening until the evening.** Why would the verse

employ two different terms for a single concept? **Rather, Rava said: There are two** times referred to as *neshef*, and the word can refer to either evening or morning. *Neshef* must be understood in accordance with its Aramaic root: **The night moves past [neshaf] and the day arrives, and the day moves past [neshaf] and the night arrives.** When King David said: At midnight I rise, the assumption is that he rose precisely at midnight. The Gemara asks: **Did David know exactly when it was midnight? Even Moses our teacher did not know** exactly when it was midnight. How do we know this about Moses? **As it is written** that he said to Pharaoh: “Thus said the Lord: **About midnight, I will go out into the midst of Egypt**” (Exodus 11:4). The word about indicates that it was only an approximation. The Gemara clarifies: **What** is the meaning of the expression: **About midnight?** Did Moses say it or did God say it? **If we say that the Holy One, Blessed be He, Himself, said: About midnight, to Moses, is there doubt before God in heaven? Rather,** this must be understood as follows: **God told Moses: At midnight, but** from the fact that **when** Moses **came** to Pharaoh **he said: About midnight; apparently, Moses was uncertain**

about the exact moment of midnight. Moses, the greatest of all the prophets, was uncertain, and **David knew?** The Gemara offers several answers to this question: **David had a sign** indicating when it was midnight. As Rav Aḥa bar Bizna said that Rabbi Shimon Ḥasida said: A lyre hung over David's bed, and once midnight arrived, the northern midnight wind would come and cause the lyre to play on its own.

David would immediately rise from his bed and study Torah until the first rays of dawn. Once dawn arrived, the Sages of Israel entered to advise him with regard to the various concerns of the nation and the economy. They said to him: **Our master, the king, your nation requires sustenance. He said: Go and sustain one another,** provide each other with whatever is lacking. The Sages of Israel responded to him with a parable: **A single handful of food does not satisfy a lion, and a pit will not be filled** merely from the rain that falls directly into its mouth, but other water must be piped in (*ge'onim*). So too, the nation cannot sustain itself using its own resources. King David told them: **Go and take up arms with the troops** in battle in order to expand our borders and provide our

people with the opportunity to earn a livelihood. The Sages **immediately seek advice from Ahitophel** to determine whether or not it was appropriate to go to war at that time and how they should conduct themselves, **and they consult the Sanhedrin** in order to receive the requisite license to wage a war under those circumstances (*Tosefot HaRosh*). **And they ask the Urim VeTummim** whether or not they should go to war, and whether or not they would be successful. **Rav Yosef said:** Upon **what verse** is this *aggada* based? **As it is written:** “**And after Ahitophel was Benayahu son of Yehoyada and Evyatar, and the general of the king’s army, Yoav**” (I Chronicles 27:34). The individuals named in this verse correspond with the roles in the *aggada* as follows: **Ahitophel is the adviser** whose advice they sought first with regard to going to war, **and so it says:** “**Now the counsel of Ahitophel, which he counseled in those days, was as a man who inquires of the word of God;** so was the counsel of Ahitophel both with David and with Absalom” (II Samuel 16:23).