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Brachos Daf 40

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

Moshe Raphael ben Yehoshua (Morris Stadtmauer) o”h
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Mav the studing of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and mav their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Interruptions during a Blessing

Rav said: If one (*who recited the Ha-motzi*) said (*to the others who discharged their obligation for the blessing by listening to the blessing*): “Take from the blessed; take from the blessed” (*i.e., take from the piece broken off after the blessing; this, he said, before eating any bread*) he does not need not to recite the blessing again (*for since it was for the purpose of the blessing, it is not regarded as an interruption between the blessing and his eating*). If he said (*between the blessing and the eating*), “Bring salt, bring relish,” he must recite the blessing again (*for this is regarded as an interruption, since the talking was not related to the blessing*). Rabbi Yochanan, however, said that even if he said, “Bring salt, bring relish,” he does not need to recite the blessing again (*for eating the bread with more taste is an honor to the blessing*). If he said, “Knead fodder (*bran with water*) for the oxen, knead for the oxen,” he must recite the blessing again (*for this is regarded as an interruption, since the talking was not related to the blessing*). Rav Sheishes, however, said that even if he said, “Knead fodder for the oxen,” he does not need to recite the blessing again, for Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: It is forbidden for a man to taste anything until he has given food to his animal, as it says: *And I will give grass in your field for your cattle*, and only then does it state: *You shall eat and be satisfied*.

Rava bar Shmuel said in the name of Rabbi Chiya: The one who (*recites the blessing and*) breaks the bread is not permitted to do so before salt or relish is placed before each and every one of them (*so they can all eat the bread*

with a better taste, without waiting after the blessing was recited).

Rava bar Shmuel once visited the house of the Exilarch, and they brought him bread and he (*recited the blessing and*) broke it at once (*without waiting for the salt and relish*). They said to him: Has the master retracted his own teaching? He replied: This requires no waiting (*for since it was made with fine flour, it did not need any condiment to make it tasty*). (40a)

Rava bar Shmuel

And Rava bar Shmuel said in the name of Rabbi Chiya: Urine is never completely discharged except when sitting (*because one who discharges standing is concerned that the drops will fall on his clothes, and therefore, he interrupts the flow prematurely*). Rav Kahana said: If (*he urinates*) over loose earth, even when standing (*it is completely discharged, for the urine absorbs in the ground and doesn't bounce back*). If there is no loose earth, one should stand on a high spot and urinate down a declivity (*which slopes away from him; this way, he will not be concerned that it will bounce back on his garments*).

And Rava bar Shmuel said in the name of Rabbi Chiya: After everything you eat, eat salt, and after everything you drink, drink water, and then you will not be harmed (*by that which you have eaten or drunk*). It has been taught similarly in a *braisa*: After everything you eat, eat salt, and after everything you drink, drink water, and then you will not be harmed. It has been taught in another *braisa*: If one



ate any kind of food without eating salt after it, or drank any kind of beverage without drinking water after it, by day he should be troubled about bad breath, and by night he should be worried about *askerah* (identified with *diphtheria*, a disease that affects the throat). (40a)

Healthy Eating Habits

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: One who floats down his food with plenty of water (to such an extent that the food is “floating” in water) will not suffer with intestinal sickness.

The *Gemora* asks: And how much should he drink?

Rav Chisda says: A flask to a loaf.

Rav Mari said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If one eats lentils regularly once every thirty days, he will keep *askerah* away from his house (for *askerah* comes due to constipation, and lentils are a laxative). He should not, however, eat them every day. Why not? It is because they cause bad breath.

And Rav Mari said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If one regularly eats mustard once every thirty days, he keeps sickness away from his house. He should not, however, eat it every day. Why not? It is because it causes the weakening of the heart.

Rabbi Chiya bar Ashi said in the name of Rav: One who regularly eats small fish will not suffer with stomach sickness. And furthermore, small fish stimulate propagation and make a man’s entire body healthy.

Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said: One who regularly eats fennel will not suffer from heart pains.

The *Gemora* asks from a *braisa*: Rabbi Shimon ben Gamliel says: Fennel is one of the sixty poisons, and if one sleeps on the east side of the place where it is stored, his blood

will be on his own head (for the west wind is moist and heavy and will carry the odor to him and poison him)?

The *Gemora* answers: There is no difficulty, for the latter statement refers to its smell, whereas the former refers to its taste.

The mother of Rabbi Yirmiyah used to bake bread for him and stick fennel on it (so the bread could absorb its taste) and then scrape it off (so he wouldn’t be harmed from its smell). (40a)

Vegetables

The *Mishna* had stated: Rabbi Yehudah said: (On vegetables, one recites:) the One Who creates species of herbs.

Rabbi Zeira, or as some say Rabbi Chinena bar Pappa, said: The *halachah* is not in accordance with Rabbi Yehudah.

Rabbi Zeira, or as some say Rabbi Chinena bar Pappa, said: What is Rabbi Yehudah’s reason? It is written: *Blessed is Hashem day by day*. Can this possibly mean that we are to bless Him by day, and not bless Him by night? Rather, what it means to tell us is that every day we should give Him the blessing appropriate to the day (on *Shabbos*, the blessing about the nature of *Shabbos*, and on the festivals, the blessing about the nature of the festivals). So here too, for every type of species, we should give Him the appropriate blessing.

Rabbi Zeira, or as some say Rabbi Chinena bar Pappa, said: Come and see how the character of the Holy One, Blessed be He, differs from that of flesh and blood. One of flesh and blood can put something into an empty vessel but not into a full one. But the Holy One, Blessed be He, is not so; He puts more (spirituality) into a full vessel (one who is filled with Torah knowledge), but not into an empty one, for it is written: *If listening you will listen*, implying that if you listen at first (when you are young), you will go on



listening (even later), and if not (that you will not listen when you are young), you will not listen later as well. Another explanation is: If you listen to the old (you review that which you have learned) you will listen to the new (by understanding new things in what you are learning), but if your heart turns away (and you do not review), you will not listen any more (for you will not have the chance to learn later). (40a)

Mishna

If one says over fruit of the tree the blessing, '*Borei peri ha'adamah*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the ground,' he has fulfilled his obligation, but if he said over produce of the ground, '*Borei peri ha'eitz*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the tree,' he has not fulfilled his obligation. By all of them, if he says '*she'hakol nih'yeh bid'varo*' -- 'that everything came into being through His word,' he has fulfilled his obligation. (40a)

Incorrect Blessing

The *Gemora* asks: Who is the *Tanna* who maintains that the essence of the tree is the ground (and that is why a '*Borei peri ha'adamah*' on the fruit of a tree would be valid)?

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak replied: It is Rabbi Yehudah, as we have learned in a *Mishna*: If the spring has dried up or the tree has been cut down, he brings the fruits (*bikkurim*¹), but does not read the (Scriptural) passage (for, in there, it is written that one praises Hashem, saying: '*from the ground which You have given me,*' and since the spring has dried up or the tree has been cut down, the land which has produced these fruit has stopped being productive). Rabbi Yehudah, however, says that he both brings them and reads the passage (for he maintains that the land – the soil, is the essence of the tree). [Accordingly,

one can recite a '*Borei peri ha'adamah*' on fruits of a tree, for the primary source for the fruits is the ground.]

The *Mishna* had stated: If he said over produce of the ground, '*Borei peri ha'eitz*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the tree,' he has not fulfilled his obligation.

The *Gemora* asks: Is this not obvious?

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak replied: It is required to be stated in view of the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah, who maintains that wheat is a kind of tree, for it has been taught in a *braisa*: Regarding the tree of which Adam the first man ate, Rabbi Meir says that it was the grapevine, since the thing that most causes wailing upon a man is wine, as it is written: *And he [Noach] drank of the wine and became drunk*. Rabbi Nechemiah says it was the fig tree, for it is logical to assume that they fixed their shame with the very same thing which caused them shame (*to begin with*), as it is written: *And they sewed fig leaves together (to cover themselves up with - when they realized that they were naked after the sin)*. Rabbi Yehudah says it was wheat, since a child does not know how to call 'father' and 'mother' (*his very first words*) until it has had a taste of grain (and since the tree was called "*the Tree of Knowledge,*" it must have been a stalk of wheat). Now you might think that because Rabbi Yehudah says that wheat is a kind of tree, therefore we should say over it the blessing of '*Borei peri ha'eitz*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the tree'; therefore we are informed (*by the Mishna*) that we say the blessing of '*Borei peri ha'eitz*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the tree,' only regarding those cases where if you take away the fruit, the stem (*which produced it*) still remains to produce fruit again, but in cases where if you take the fruit, the stem does not remain to produce fruit again (*such as wheat*), the blessing is not '*Borei peri ha'eitz*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the tree,' but rather, '*Borei peri ha'adamah*' -- 'the One Who creates the fruit of the ground.'

¹ the first ripe fruits of any of the seven species with which the Torah praises Eretz Yisroel, which had to be brought to the Beis Hamikdash in Yerushalayim



The *Mishna* had stated: By all of them, if he says '*She'hakol nih'yeh bid'varo*' -- 'that everything came into being through His word,' he has fulfilled his obligation.

It has been stated: Rav Huna said: Except over bread and wine. [*One who said 'She-hakol' on bread or wine has not fulfilled his obligation.*] Rabbi Yochanan, however, said: Even over bread and wine.

The *Gemora* suggests that the same difference of opinion (*between Rav Huna and R' Yochanan*) is found between the following *Tannaim*, for it was taught in a *braisa*: If a man sees bread and says, "What fine bread this is! Blessed be the Omnipresent Who has created it," he has fulfilled his obligation (*for a blessing before eating*). If he sees a fig and says, "What a fine fig this is! Blessed be the Omnipresent Who has created it," he has fulfilled his obligation; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosi says: If one deviates from the formula laid down by the Sages in blessings, he has not fulfilled his obligation. Let us say that Rav Huna concurs with Rabbi Yosi (*and that is why one who said 'She-hakol' on bread or wine has not fulfilled his obligation*), and Rabbi Yochanan agrees with Rabbi Meir?

The *Gemora* disagrees: Rav Huna can reply to you: I can state my opinion even according to Rabbi Meir, for Rabbi Meir has said (*that an "incorrect" blessing is valid*) only in that case, because the bread is actually mentioned, but where the bread is not actually mentioned (*such as reciting 'She-hakol' on bread*), even Rabbi Meir would admit (*that the blessing is not valid and the obligation has not been fulfilled*). And Rabbi Yochanan can say to you: I can state my opinion even according to Rabbi Yosi, for Rabbi Yosi has said (*that an "incorrect" blessing is invalid*) only in that case, because he made a blessing which was not instituted by the Sages, but if he says, '*She'hakol nih'yeh bid'varo*' -- 'that everything came into being through His word,' which is a blessing that has been

instituted by the Sages, even Rabbi Yosi would admit (*that the blessing is valid and the obligation has been fulfilled*).

The *Gemora* relates that Binyamin the shepherd ate bread, and said (*when he was finished*): "Blessed be the Master of this bread," and Rav said that he had fulfilled his obligation.

The *Gemora* asks: But Rav has ruled that any blessing in which

God's Name is not mentioned is not a (*valid*) blessing?

The *Gemora* answers: He said: "Blessed be the Merciful One, the Master of this bread."

The *Gemora* asks: But three blessings (*of Birchas Hamazon*) are required?

The *Gemora* answers: when Rav said that he had fulfilled his obligation, he meant that he had fulfilled the obligation of the first blessing (*of the three, for he did Thank God for the food*).

The *Gemora* asks: What is Rav teaching us (*by relating this incident that we did not already know*)? Does he mean to teach us that one has fulfilled his blessing obligation even if he says it in a secular language (*such as Aramaic*)? But we have already learned this in the following *Mishna*: The following may be recited in any language (*as long as he understands it*): The *sotah* passage, the confession of the tithes (*before Pesach on the fourth and seventh years of the Shemittah cycle, he must make sure that all tithes from the previous years were given to their proper destination; on the final day of Pesach, he must declare that he has removed all the holy things from his house*), the recitation of the *Shema*, the *Tefillah* (*Shemoneh Esrei*), the Grace after Meals.?

The *Gemora* answers: It is required to be stated, for you might have thought that this is the case only if one recites the Grace in a secular language in the same form as was



instituted by the Rabbis in the holy tongue (*in Hebrew*), but if one does not say it in the secular language in the same form as was instituted by the Rabbis in the holy tongue, he has not fulfilled his obligation; we are therefore informed that this is not so (*and he has fulfilled his obligation of Grace even with a secular language, and even with a different form*).

It was stated above: Rav said that any blessing in which God's Name is not mentioned is not a (*valid*) blessing. Rabbi Yochanan, however, said: Any blessing in which His Kingship is not mentioned is not a blessing.

Abaye said: The opinion of Rav is the more probable, for it has been taught in a *braisa*: *I have not transgressed any of Your commandments, neither have I forgotten*. This means: 'I have not transgressed' so as not to bless You; 'neither have I forgotten' to mention Your Name in it. Of kingship, however, there is no mention here.

Rabbi Yochanan, however, reads the *braisa* as follows: 'Neither have I forgotten' to mention Your Name and Your Kingship in it. (40a – 40b)

DAILY MASHAL

Review that which you Study

The *Gemora* states that if one listens to the old by constantly reviewing what he has studied, he will be able to gain new insight into what he has previously learned. If, however, one abandons his learning by not reviewing his studies, then he will not be able to gain new insight into what he has studied.

The *Gemora* elsewhere states that Torah study is akin to fish in the sea, who always ascend to the surface to drink in the new drops of rain, despite the fact that the fish are surrounded by water at all times. Torah study is not a subject where one can assimilate information from a text and then carry on with life.

The *Gemora* in Kiddushin 30a teaches us that the mitzvah of Torah study, derived from the words *vishinantam levonecho*, you shall teach them thoroughly to your children, necessitates that one constantly delve deeper into Torah. The word *vishinantam* can also imply review, as the root word is *shoneh*, which means reputation. One must constantly review his studies, and only then can he be assured that he will gain new insight into Torah.