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Brachos Daf 53

Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

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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

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: We may say the blessing over a light kindled by a gentile (after Shabbos) from a Jew, or by a Jew from a gentile, but not by a gentile from a gentile.

The *Gemora* asks: What is the reason for barring a light kindled by a gentile from a gentile? It is because it did not rest (on Shabbos, for the gentile used the light for forbidden labor); but a light kindled by a Jew from a gentile also did not rest?

And if you will say that the prohibited flame (from Shabbos) has vanished and the light is now a different one (for, as it burns, the new flame replaces the old one) and is reborn in the hand of the Jew (and is therefore permitted); what then of this which has been taught in a *braisa*: If one carries out a flame (from a private domain) to a public domain (on Shabbos), he is liable (for violating the Shabbos). Why is he liable? That which he picked up (the original flame in the private domain), he did not set down (for a burning flame is not regarded as a continuous existence), and that which he set down he did not pick up (and in order to be liable for transferring from one domain to the other, he must pick the object up in one domain and place it down in the other domain)!

The *Gemora* answers: We must say therefore that (a burning flame is regarded as continuous, and) the prohibited flame is still present, only the blessing which he says (in the case where a light is kindled by a Jew from a gentile) is said over the additional permitted part.

The *Gemora* asks: If so, a light kindled by a gentile from a gentile should also be permitted (for the blessing will be on the permitted part)?

The *Gemora* answers: That is so; but it was as a precaution on account of the first gentile (*against the light kindled by a gentile on Shabbos*) and the first flame (*immediately after Shabbos, when there was no time for a new flame to be created*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If one was walking (*after Shabbos*) outside the town and saw a light, the *halachah* is as follows: If the majority (*of the inhabitants*) are gentiles he should not recite a blessing (*for it is presumed that the fire was lit on Shabbos*), but if the majority are Jews, he may recite the blessing.

The *Gemora* asks: This statement is self-contradictory. You first say that if the majority are gentiles, he may not recite the blessing, which implies that if they are half and half he may recite it, and then it states that if the majority are Jews, he may recite it, which implies that if they are half and half, he may not recite it!?

The *Gemora* answers: The law actually is that even if they are half and half he may recite it, but since in the first clause it says ‘the majority are gentiles,’ in the second clause it says ‘the majority are Jews.’

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If a man (*after Shabbos*) was walking outside the town and saw a child with a torch in



its hands, he makes inquiries about it; if it is a Jew, he may recite the blessing, but if it is a gentile, he may not.

The *Gemora* asks: Why does it speak of a child? The same should apply even to an adult!?

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: We suppose this to happen immediately after sunset. In the case of an adult, it is obvious that he must be a gentile (*for a Jew would not have been carrying a torch so soon after Shabbos*); in the case of a child, I can suppose that it is a Jew child who happened to take hold (*of the light*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If a man (*after Shabbos*) was walking outside the town and saw a light, the *halachah* is that if it is thick like the opening of a furnace (*which illuminates brightly, and therefore, it was most probably lit for illumination purposes*), he may recite the blessing over it; otherwise not.

The *Gemora* asks: It was taught in one *braisa*: A blessing may be recited over the light of a furnace, while another *braisa* taught that it may not!?

The *Gemora* answers: There is no difficulty, as one speaks of the beginning of the fire (*where it was lit for cooking purposes*), and the other is dealing with the end.

The *Gemora* asks: It was taught in one *braisa*: A blessing may be recited over the light of an oven or a stove, while another *braisa* states that it may not!?

The *Gemora* answers: There is no difficulty, as one speaks as one speaks of the beginning of the fire, and the other is dealing with the end.

The *Gemora* asks: It was taught in one *braisa*: The blessing may be recited over the light of the synagogue or the study hall, while another *braisa* states that it may not!?

The *Gemora* answers: There is no difficulty, as one speaks of a case where a prominent man is present (and the light is lit out of respect for him, but not for illumination), whereas the other *braisa* refers to a case where no prominent man is present (and the light was lit for illumination).

Alternatively, I can answer that both speak of a case where a prominent man is present, and there is no difficulty, as one speaks of where there is a sexton (and the light is lit also so he can eat there), whereas the other *braisa* refers to a case where there is no sexton.

Alternatively, I can answer that both speak of a case where there is a sexton, and there is no difficulty, as one speaks of where there is moonlight (and no light is needed for his meal), whereas the other *braisa* refers to a case where there is no moonlight.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If people were sitting in the study hall (*after Shabbos*) and light was brought in, Beis Shammai say that each one recites a blessing over it for himself, while Beis Hillel say that one recites the blessing on behalf of all, because it is written: In the multitude of people is the King's glory.

The *Gemora* asks: Beis Hillel at any rate explain their reason; but what is the reason of Beis Shammai?

The *Gemora* answers: It is probably to avoid an interruption of study (for they would need to concentrate on the words in order to answer "Amen").

It has been taught similarly in a *braisa*: The members of the household of Rabban Gamliel were not in the habit of saying, 'Good health' (when someone sneezed) in the study hall, so as not to interrupt their study.

The *Mishna* had stated: A blessing may not be recited over the lights or the spices of the Dead.



The *Gemora* asks: What is the reason?

The *Gemora* answers: The light is kindled only in honor of the dead, and the spices are to remove the bad smell.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Wherever (the person buried is of such prominence that) a light would be carried before him either by day or by night, we do not recite a blessing over the light (if he is buried on the termination of *Shabbos*, for the light was not lit for illumination); but if he is one before whom a light would be carried only at night, we may recite the blessing.

Rav Huna said: A blessing is not recited over spices used in a latrine or oil used for removing odors (from the hands).

The *Gemora* asks: This implies that wherever (spice) is not used for scent no blessing is recited over it. But it was taught in a *braisa*: If one enters a spice-dealer's shop and smells the fragrance, even though he sits there the entire day, he recites only one blessing, but if he is constantly going in and out he recites a blessing each time he enters. Now here is a case where it is not used for smell, and yet one recites a blessing!?

The *Gemora* answers: In fact it is used for smell - the object being that people should smell and come and make purchases from there.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If one was walking outside the city and smelled an odor (of spices), the *halachah* is that if the majority of the inhabitants are idolaters he does not recite a blessing (for a smell so strong must be coming from a feast, and a gentile's feast usually involves idolatry), but if the majority are Jews, he does recite a blessing. Rabbi Yosi says: Even if the majority are Jews, he does not recite a blessing, because the Jewish daughters burn incense for witchcraft.

The *Gemora* asks: Do all of them use incense for witchcraft?

The *Gemora* answers: The fact is that a minority uses it for witchcraft and a minority use it for scenting garments, with the result that the majority of burned incense is not used for smell, and wherever the majority is not used for smell, a blessing is not recited over it.

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If one was walking on Friday afternoon in Tiberias, or at the conclusion of *Shabbos* in Tzipori, and smelled an odor (of spices), he does not recite a blessing, because the probability is that they are being used only to perfume garments (for that was the custom in that particular city).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If one was walking in a street of idolaters and smelled the spices willingly, he is a sinner (for it is forbidden to derive pleasure from a fragrance of idols).

The *Mishna* had stated: A blessing is not recited over the light until one derives benefit from its illumination.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: This does not mean literally till it has been utilized, but it means a light which can be serviceable if one stands near enough to it, and then even those at a distance [may say the blessing]. So too said Rav Ashi: We have learned that it serves for those at a distance.

An objection was raised: If one had a light hidden in the folds of his dress or in a lamp, or if he could see a flame but could not use its light, or if he could do something by the light but saw no flame, he should not say the blessing; he must both see a flame and be able to use the light. We understand the statement 'he can use its light but sees no flame'; this can happen when the light is in a corner. But how can it happen that he sees the flame and cannot make use of the light? Is it not when he is at a distance? — No; it is when, for instance, the flame keeps on flickering.

Our Rabbis taught: We may say the blessing over glowing coals but not over dying coals. How do you define



‘glowing’? — Rav Chisda replied: This means coals from which a chip, if inserted between them, will catch of itself.

The question was asked: Is the proper form omemos or omemoth?¹ — Come and hear: for Rav Chisda bar Avdimi quoted the verse: The cedars in the garden of God could not dim [umamuhu] His splendor.

Rav, however,² said that [the Mishnah means literally] ‘utilize it’. How near must one be? — Ulla said: Near enough to distinguish between an issar and a pundyon.³ Chizkiyah said: Near enough to distinguish between a meluzma⁴ of Tiberias and one of Tzipori.

Rav Yehudah used to say the blessing over the light in the house of Ada Dayala.⁵ Rava said the blessing over the light in the house of Gurya bar Chama.⁶ Abaye said it over the light in the house of Bar Avuha.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: We do not go looking for a light in the same way as we do in the case of other mitzvos. Rabbi Zeira said: At first I used to go looking for a light. But since hearing this statement of Rav Yehudah reporting Rav, I also do not look for one, but if one comes my way I say the blessing over it.

IF ONE HAS EATEN etc. Rav Zevid, or as some say Rav Dimi bar Abba, said: Opinions differ only in the case where one forgot, but if he omitted willfully he must return to his place and say grace. This is obvious! The Mishnah says ‘has forgotten’? — You might think that the rule is the same even if he did it purposely, and the reason why it says ‘has forgotten’ is to show you how far Beis Shammai are prepared to go. Therefore we are told [that this is not so].

¹ I.e., does the word translated ‘dimming’ commence with an alef or an ayin?

² This goes back to the statement of Rav Yehudah in the name of Rav above.

³ Two small coins.

⁴ A weight.

⁵ Which was some distance away.

It has been taught: Beis Hillel said to Beis Shammai: according to you, if one ate at the top of the Temple Mount and forgot and descended without having said grace, he should return to the top of the Temple Mount and say grace? Beis Shammai replied to Beis Hillel: According to you, if one forgot a purse at the top of the Temple Mount, is he not to go up and get it? And if he will ascend for his own sake, surely he should do so all the more for the honor of Heaven!

There were once two disciples who omitted to say grace. One who did it accidentally followed the rule of Beis Shammai⁷ and found a purse of gold, while the other who did it purposely⁸ followed the rule of Beis Hillel,⁹ and he was eaten by a lion.

Rabbah bar Bar Chanah was once travelling with a caravan, and he took a meal and forgot to say grace. He said to himself: What shall I do? If I say to the others, I have forgotten to say grace, they will say to me, Say it [here]: wherever you say the benediction you are saying it to the Merciful One. I had better tell them that I have forgotten a golden dove. So he said to them: Wait for me, because I have forgotten a golden dove. He went back and said grace and found a golden dove. Why should it have been just a dove? — Because the community of Israel are compared to a dove, as it is written, The wings of the dove are covered with silver, and her pinions with the shimmer of gold. Just as the dove is saved only by her wings, so Israel are saved only by the mitzvos.

The Mishnah had stated: Until when can he say the grace. How long does it take to digest a meal? — Rabbi Yochanan said: Until he becomes hungry again; Rish Lakish said: As long as one is thirsty on account of the meal. Said Rav

⁶ Which was quite near.

⁷ And returned to the place where he forgot, thus following the stricter rule.

⁸ Being in a hurry to go somewhere else.

⁹ Which applies only to accidental omission.



Yeimar bar Shelemya to Mar Zutra, or, according to others Rav Yeimar bar Shizbi to

Mar Zutra: Can Rish Lakish have said this? Hasn't Rav Ammi said in the name of Rish Lakish: How long does it take to digest a meal? Long enough for one to walk four mil? — There is no contradiction: one statement refers to a light meal, the other to a heavy one.¹⁰

The Mishnah had stated: If wine is served etc. This implies, [if] a Jew [says the grace], even though one has not heard the whole of it he responds [Amen]. But if he has not heard how can he have fulfilled his obligation?¹¹ Chiya bar Rav replied: This applies to one who has not joined in the meal. Similarly said Rav Nachman in the name of Rabbah bar Avuha: It refers to one who has not joined in the meal.

Said Rav to his son Chiya: My son, snatch [the cup of wine] and say grace.¹² And so said Rav Huna to his son Rabbah: My son, snatch and say grace. This implies that he who says the grace is superior to one who answers, Amen. But it has been taught: Rabbi Yosi says: Greater is he who answers, Amen than he who says the blessing? — Said Rabbi Nehorai to him: I swear to you by heaven that it is so. The proof is that while the common soldiers advance and open the battle, it is the seasoned warriors who go down to win the victory! — On this point there is a difference between Tannaim, as it has been taught: Both he who says the blessing and he who answers, Amen are equally implied, only he who says the blessing is more quickly [rewarded] than he who answers, Amen.

Shmuel inquired of Rav: Should one respond Amen after [a blessing said by] schoolchildren? — He replied: We respond Amen after everyone except children in school, because they are merely learning. This is the case only when it is not the time for them to say the haftarah;¹³ but

when it is the time for them to say the haftarah, we respond Amen after them.

Our Rabbis taught: The absence of oil¹⁴ is a bar to the saying of grace. So said Rabbi Zilai. Rabbi Ziwai said: It is no bar. Rav Acha said: Good oil is indispensable. Rabbi Zuhamai said: Just as a dirty person is unfit for the Temple service, so dirty hands unfit one for saying grace. Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: I know nothing either of Zilai or Ziwai or Zuhamai, but I do know the following teaching, viz.: Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: some say it was taught in a Baraisa, Sanctify yourselves: this refers to washing of the hands before the meal; And be holy: this refers to washing of the hands after the meal; 'For holy': this refers to the oil; 'I am Hashem your God': this refers to the blessing.

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, EILU DEVARIM

DAILY MASHAL

First Do Good

Beis Shammai and Beis Hilel disagree in our mishnah: "Beis Shammai say: We sweep the house first and then wash our hands. Beis Hillel say: We first wash our hands and then sweep the house." Some say that according to Beis Shammai, we first sweep the house – eliminate evil – and then wash our hands to sanctify and purify ourselves – do good. But Beis Hillel suspect that the preoccupation with eliminating evil will take so long that we won't get to doing good. Therefore they said that we first wash our hands and then sweep the house (*Ma'yanah shel Mishnah*).

¹⁰ It takes the time for walking four mil to digest a heavy meal.

¹¹ He assumes that he is one of the diners, who too must hear the grace.

¹² I.e., seize every opportunity of saying it on behalf of the company.

¹³ The prophetic reading following the public reading of the Torah on Shabbos and festivals and public fasts.

¹⁴ For cleansing the hands after the meal.