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Chagigah Daf 18

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The Gemora cites several Scriptural verses illustrating that it is forbidden to perform labor during Chol Hamoed (*Intermediary Days*).

The Gemora concludes: The Torah delegated the authority to the Chachamim to decide which days are Yom Tov (*through their declaration of Rosh Chodesh*) and all types of labor is forbidden and which days are Chol Hamoed when certain types of work is permitted; and it was entrusted to the Chachamim to decide which type of labor is prohibited during Chol Hamoed and which types will be permitted. (18a)

The Mishna had stated: It is permitted to eulogize and fast on the Day of Slaughter in order to counter the opinion of the Sadducees, who claimed that Shavuos is always on a Sunday.

The Gemora asks from a braisa: There was once an incident where Alexa died in the city of Lod and everyone came to eulogize him. Rabbi Tarfon prevented them from doing so because it was the Festival of Shavuos.

The Gemora analyzes the braisa: The braisa cannot be referring to the actual day of Shavuos because they would not have even attempted to eulogize him then; it obviously is referring to the Day of Slaughter

and nevertheless, Rabbi Tarfon ruled that eulogies are forbidden. This contradicts the ruling of our Mishna.

The Gemora answers: The braisa is referring to a case where Shavuos fell out during a weekday and the Day of Slaughter was not on a Sunday; there was no reason to permit eulogizing on that day. The Mishna was referring to a case where Shavuos fell out on Shabbos and the Day of Slaughter was on Sunday; they permitted eulogies on that day to counter the opinion of the Sadducees, who claimed that Shavuos is always on a Sunday. (18a)

The Mishna states: One is required to wash his hands before involving himself with chulin, maaser (*maaser sheini, a tenth of one's produce that he brings to Yerushalayim and eats there in the first, second, fourth and fifth years of the Shemithah cycle*) and terumah. (*The Chachamim declared that unrinsed hands are considered tamei because they probably touched unclean parts of his body. They decreed that only his hands will be rendered tamei, but not the rest of his body.*) If he wants to eat Kodoshim (*sacrifices that are eaten by the owner or the Kohen*); he must immerse his hands in a body of water that contains forty se'ah. Prior to handling the chatas water (*the water and ashes mixture of the parah adumah used*

to purify people and tools that have been contaminated through corpse-tumah).

The Mishna continues: One who immersed himself with the intention of purifying himself for chulin, is prohibited from eating maaser sheini; one who immersed himself with the intention of purifying himself for maaser sheini, is prohibited from eating terumah; one who immersed himself with the intention of purifying himself for terumah, is prohibited from eating kodoshim; one who immersed himself with the intention of purifying himself for kodoshim, is prohibited from handling the chatas water. (*An immersion with the intention of becoming pure for items of lesser stringency will not be effective for items of greater stringency.*) If he immerses himself with the intention of becoming pure for items of a greater stringency, he is permitted to eat items that have a lesser degree of stringency. If he immersed himself with no intention whatsoever (*only to wash himself*); it is regarded as if he didn't immerse himself at all.

The Mishna continues: The clothing of an *am haaretz* (*one who is not particular in regards to the laws of tumah and tahara*) is regarded as *tumas midras* (*objects that become tamei when a zav, zavah or niddah place their weight on them – they are classified as an av hatumah and have the ability to contaminate people or utensils*) for the *perushim* (*people that are meticulous about eating their chulin in a state of tahara*). The clothing of the *perushim* is regarded as *tumas madras* for those that are eating terumah. The clothing of those eating terumah is regarded as *tumas madras* for those that are eating kodoshim. The clothing of those eating kodoshim is

regarded as *tumas madras* for those that are handling the chatas water.

The Mishna concludes: Yosef ben Yoezer was the most devout Kohen, but his napkin was regarded as *tumas madras* for those that are eating kodoshim. Yochanan ben Gudgeda used to eat all his chulin food as if it was kodoshim his entire lifetime and yet his napkin was regarded as *tumas madras* for those that are handling the chatas water. (18b)

The Gemora asks: Do chulin and maaser require the washing of one's hands? The Gemora cites a Mishna in Bikkurim which explicitly states that one must wash his hands for terumah but not for maaser or chulin.

The Gemora answers: There is actually a dispute between Rabbi Meir and the Chachamim if one is required to wash his hands prior to eating maaser.

The Gemora asks: The contradiction regarding maaser has been answered, but not the contradiction pertaining to chulin.

The Gemora answers: Our Mishna is referring to eating bread; one is required to wash his hands prior to eating bread, even if it is only chulin. The Mishna in Bikkurim is discussing the eating of other produce; there it is not necessary to wash one's hands. (18b)



## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### PLACING A STUMBLING BLOCK BY A RABBINIC PROHIBITION

There is a matter of dispute among the Rishonim if the prohibition against performing labor on Chol Hamoed (the intermediate days of Pesach and Sukkos) is Biblical (Rashi) or Rabbinic (Tosfos).

Our Gemora cites Scriptural verses illustrating that it is forbidden to perform labor during Chol Hamoed. Tosfos states that it is implicit from the Gemora that this is a Biblical prohibition.

Tosfos asks: It is permitted to work on Chol Hamoed to prevent an irretrievable loss or various types of labor; this would be understandable if the prohibition would be Rabbinic in nature, however, if it is a Biblical prohibition, where do we find distinctions in the types of work that some will be forbidden and some will be permitted?

Tosfos concludes that the prohibition against working during Chol Hamoed is only a Rabbinic injunction and the verses cited are merely Scriptural supports for this decree.

Tosfos asks from a Gemora in Avodah Zarah (22a) which states that there would be a prohibition of placing a stumbling block before a blind man (*lifnei iver*) by performing labor on Chol Hamoed. (One is forbidden from assisting another fellow to violate a

prohibition, where the sinner could not accomplish the transgression without his aid.)

The Reshash explains Tosfos: The prohibition of *lifnei iver* is only applicable by a Biblical prohibition and not when it pertains to a Rabbinical injunction; accordingly, Tosfos asks why the Gemora states that *lifnei iver* applies by the prohibition of working on Chol Hamoed, when that is only a Rabbinic injunction.

Tosfos in Avodah Zarah (22a) states explicitly that the commandment of *lifnei iver* applies by a Rabbinic prohibition, as well. The Steipler Gaon explains a different Tosfos (Avodah Zarah 15b) that Tosfos is uncertain regarding this principle and it is indeed a dispute among two answers in Tosfos if *lifnei iver* applies by a Rabbinic prohibition or not.

This principle requires an explanation. Why should *lifnei iver* not apply by a Rabbinic prohibition? One is forbidden from providing flawed advice to his fellow (the Minchas Chinuch discusses if giving shoddy counsel violates this prohibition); every Rabbinic decree entails a Biblical prohibition of not swaying from the words of our sages.

What is the logic to differentiate between assisting someone to violate a Biblical prohibition or one that is merely Rabbinic?