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Eiruvin Daf 58

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

The Mishna says that when we measure techum, we use ropes of exactly 50 amos, not more and not less, and each one measures holding it at chest level. If they reach an incline (e.g., valley, fallen fence, or mountain), they subsume it in that leg of measurement and continue. If it is less than 50 amos, they hold the 50 amos rope above it, while if it is more, but it narrows further away, they go to the area where it is less than 50 amos, measure there, and then return to their original path. If the only place it is this small is outside of the techum, they may not go to there to measure. If he can't subsume since it is large, Rabbi Dostai the son of Yannai quotes Rabbi Meir saying that we modify the measurement, akin to boring a hole through the mountain. Instead of using one rope of 50 amos, smaller segments are measured, 4 amos each, with the higher end at the feet of the person, reducing the impact of the slope on the measurement. (57b – 58a)

The *Gemora* asks: From where is this (*that the measuring must be done with a fifty-amah rope*) deduced?

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: It is from that which the verse states: *The length of the courtyard shall be one hundred amos, and the*

width fifty by fifty. The Torah thus ordained: Measure with a rope of the length of fifty amos.

The *Gemora* asks: But isn't this verse required for the ordinance to take away fifty (*the excess of the length – one hundred amos, over the width - fifty amos*), and surround (*the remaining*) fifty (*to form a perfect square, which equals 5,000 square amos, which amounts to 70 and 2/3 amos by 70 and 2/3 amos*)?

The *Gemora* answers: If it was written only for that purpose, the Torah might have said '*fifty, fifty*,' why then did it say '*fifty by fifty*'? Therefore, both laws may be derived.

The *Mishna* had stated: not more and not less.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Neither less, because the measurements are increased (*for a shorter rope is likely to be stretched, and each unit of rope would consequently cover more amos of ground than the standard number it represents; the Shabbos techum would in consequence be greater than the permitted distance*); nor more, because they are reduced (*for a longer rope cannot be so well stretched, and each unit of it would cover less*



ground than the standard number it represents; this would result in a loss in the Shabbos techum).

Rabbi Assi ruled: One must measure only with a rope of *afsakima*.

Rabbi Abba explained: This is *nargila*.

Rabbi Yaakov explained: *Nargila* is a palm tree which has only one vine (*growing from it*).

The *Gemora* cites a different version (*regarding the meaning of afsakima*): Rabbi Abba explained: This is *nargila*, whereas Rabbi Yaakov explained it that it is a palm tree which has only one vine (*growing from it*).

It was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya said: You have nothing more suitable for measuring than iron chains, but what can we do in face of what the Torah said: *With a measuring rope in his hand*.

The *Gemora* asks: Is it not, however, written: *And in the man's hand was a measuring stick*?

The *Gemora* answers: That was used for measuring the (*width of the*) gates. [*Smaller distances are measured with sticks; longer distances are measured with rope.*]

Rav Yosef taught the following *braisa*: There are three kinds of rope. Those made of reeds, of peeled willow branches, and of linen. The ropes made of reeds were used for the red heifer; for we learned in a *Mishna*: They bound it with a rope of

reeds and put it on its pyre. [*Reeds were used, for they cannot become tamei.*] The ropes made from peeled willow branches were used in connection with the *sotah*; for we learned in a *Mishna*: And afterwards, he (*the Kohen*) brings a willow rope and binds it above her breasts. The linen rope was used for measuring purposes.

The *Mishna* had stated: If there is a valley, he can swallow it up in the techum.

The *Mishna* means that if there is a valley that is very steep, he does not have to measure the steep distance of the valley as being part of the techum. Rather, he may measure from the top of the valley to the next part where the valley rises. If it is fifty cubits long, only fifty cubits are counted in the techum, and not the many more cubits that it takes to actually walk the distance from the top of the valley to the next point where the valley rises.

A wall that is usable is measured.

A wall that is upright and not usable (i.e. to climb on) is measured as if the rope goes right through it. However, if the wall is usable (i.e. a pile of earth that slowly ascends and ends up being ten tefachim high), it is measured normally as part of the techum (including its slope, making the techum shorter than if it was measured the other way).

There is an argument regarding the maximum distance one can skip over when measuring a valley.

One opinion is that even if the valley is up to two thousand cubits deep, it can be skipped over if from point to point on top of the valley there are only fifty cubits. Others say that only if the valley is up to one hundred cubits deep can it be skipped over. The Gemora quotes an opinion that these opinions only argue if the valley can be walked across to a certain extent. However if it is not able to be walked across normally, even if it is two thousand cubits deep it can be counted as fifty cubits (if that is the measurement from point to point). (57b – 58b)

a measuring rope,” it is clear that one may also use a rope of flax. According to the Meiri, Rabbi Yehoshua still concludes that a rope of metal can be used.

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Types of Ropes

The Gemora quoted Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya as stating that a chain of metal is good for measuring. However, what can he do, as the prophet states, “And in his hand is a measuring rope.” The Gemora seems to conclude that a linen rope should be used.

The Meiri quotes an argument regarding how to understand the Gemora. He first quotes many Rishonim who hold that our Gemora is saying that one can only use a flax rope while measuring techumin. Nothing else is suitable.

However, the Meiri himself argues that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananya was saying that it would be *preferable* to use a rope of metal, being that it cannot be pulled and stretched out. However, being that the verse says that “And in his hand was