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Pesachim Daf 18

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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

Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Shimon said: It is *tamei* regarding foods (*that might have come into contact with tamei liquids*), and it is *tahor* regarding any objects (*that might have come into contact with tamei liquids*). [Evidently, they maintain that *tamei liquids can contaminate food on a Biblical level, but they can only contaminate objects on a Rabbinical level.*]

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rish Lakish: Rabbi Yosi stated this in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva his teacher, who interprets ‘*yitma*’ (*it shall be tamei*) as ‘*yetamei*’ (*it, i.e., food, shall contaminate other things on a Biblical level; and R’ Yosi expounds the word ‘yitma’ written by liquids in a similar vein*). For we learned in a *Mishna*: [Throughout the *Mishna*, the phrase “on that same day” refers to the day on which Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah was appointed as the *Nasi* of the *Yeshiva* in *Yavneh*. Beforehand, *Rabban Gamliel* insisted that any scholar who was not completely sincere should be kept out of the *Beis Medrash*. When *Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah* was appointed *Nasi*, all students were granted permission to enter. The *Torah* flourished on that day and *halachic* issues that were previously unresolved were settled on that day. *Rabbi Akiva’s* exposition of the *sotah* passage was said on that day. Accordingly, the *Mishna* continues with other expositions of *Rabbi Akiva* that he expounded on that same day.] On that same day, *Rabbi Akiva* expounded the following verse [Vayikra 11:33]: *And any earthenware vessel, where into any of them (a dead sheretz) falls, whatever is in it, shall be tamei*. It doesn’t say “it is *tamei*,” but rather, it says “*yitma*,” it can render other things *tamei*. This teaches us that a loaf of bread, which is a *sheini* (*if it was inside an earthenware oven when a sheretz fell in*), can make other things *tamei* and render them a *shlishi*.

He continues: And how does he interpret the verse here? *And any drink that may be drunk in every such vessel [yitma] shall be tamei*. It shall contaminate [*yetamei*] foods. You say, ‘in respect of contaminating foods’; yet perhaps it is not so, but rather in respect of contaminating liquids? You can answer: It was not [*the intention*].

The *Gemora* asks: What does ‘it was not [*the intention*]’ mean?

Rav Pappa said: We do not find that *tumah* renders that which is similar to itself *tamei*.

Ravina said: From the verse itself as well, you cannot say ‘*it shall contaminate*’ is in respect of contaminating liquids, for if you should think that ‘*it shall contaminate*’ of the second part of the verse is in respect of contaminating liquids, then it shall follow that ‘*it shall contaminate*’ of the first part is also in respect of contaminating liquids; then let the *Torah* combine them and write them together, as follows: *Of any food which may be eaten, that on which water comes, and all drink that may be drunk, in every such vessel, shall be tamei*. What is the purpose of (writing) ‘*shall be tamei*’ twice? Therefore, ‘*shall be tamei*’ of the first part is in respect of contaminating liquids, while ‘*shall be tamei*’ of the second part is in respect of contaminating food.

The *Gemora* asks: Yet perhaps it is in respect of contaminating vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: Is there not a *kal vachomer*: If a vessel, which contaminates liquids, cannot contaminate another vessel, then liquids, which become *tamei* on account of a

vessel (*and are therefore on a lower level of tumah*), how much more so should they not contaminate vessels!

The *Gemora* asks: Yet perhaps, they do not contaminate vessels when they are liquids which become *tamei* on account of a vessel, but liquids which became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, do indeed contaminate vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: Are then liquids which are *tamei* through a *sheretz* written in the Torah? [They are not.] Are they not rather inferred through a *kal vachomer*: If liquids, which become *tamei* through (*containment in*) a vessel, contaminate, then liquids which are *tamei* through (*touching*) a *sheretz*, how much more so, should they contaminate! And therefore, it is sufficient that that which is deduced by this argument shall be as its source law. [Accordingly, we rule as follows: just as the rule is by the source law that liquids which became *tamei* through a vessel that came into contact with a *sheretz* can contaminate foods but not vessels, so too the derived law regarding liquids that became *tamei* through contact with a *sheretz*, can contaminate only foods but not vessels.] (18a1 – 18b1)

The *Gemora* asks: How does he (*R' Akiva*) interpret '*shall be tamei*' of the first part?

The *Gemora* answers: *Of any food which may be eaten, that on which water comes, [yitma] shall be tamei. It shall contaminate [yetamei] liquids.*

The *Gemora* asks: You say it is to contaminate liquids; yet perhaps it is not so, but rather to contaminate vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: It follows with a *kal vachomer*: If a liquid, which contaminates a food, cannot contaminate a vessel, then a food, which cannot contaminate a food, surely cannot contaminate a vessel! How then do I interpret the verse, '*shall be tamei*'? It teaches that it contaminates liquids, which are prone to contract *tumah*.

The *Gemora* asks: Why does the verse apply to liquids, because they are prone to contract *tumah*; deduce it from the fact that there is nothing else left (*for we have proven that a food cannot contaminate vessels, and we will state that food cannot contaminate another food*)?

The *Gemora* answers: This is what he means: And should you argue that a food is more stringent than a liquid, since it contaminates liquids (*but a liquid cannot contaminate another liquid*), and therefore let it contaminate vessels as well (*even though a liquid cannot*); therefore we are told that that is on account of a stringency due to the nature of liquids, because liquids are prone to contract *tumah*.

The *Gemora* explains: They are prone to contract *tumah* because they contract *tumah* without being prepared. [*This is in contrast to food, which are susceptible to become tamei only after moisture has fallen upon them.*]

The *Gemora* continues expounding the verse: '*Yitma*' teaches us that it cannot render something similar to itself *tamei*.

The *Gemora* asks: But is it derived from here? Surely it is derived from elsewhere: *but if water has been placed on a seed and then their carcass falls upon it, it is tamei*. The words *it is tamei* teaches us by inference that the seed is *tamei* but the seed, i.e. food, cannot make another food *tamei*.

The *Gemora* answers: One refers to liquids that became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, and the other refers to liquids that became *tamei* through (*containment in*) a vessel; and both are necessary, for if we were informed this (*that cannot contaminate other liquids*) of liquid which is *tamei* through a vessel, I would say that this is because it is not stringent (*for it is only a second degree of tumah*), but in the case of liquid that became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, which is stringent, I might argue that it creates *tumah* similar to its own.



The *Gemora* asks: Then let us be told this about liquid contaminated by a *sheretz*, and certainly liquid that became *tamei* through a vessel?

The *Gemora* answers: That which may be inferred through a *kal vachomer*, the Torah takes the trouble of writing it explicitly. (18b1 – 18b2)

Ravina said to Rav Ashi: But Rava said: Rabbi Yosi does not agree with Rabbi Akiva, nor does Rabbi Akiva agree with Rabbi Yosi?

He replied: Rabbi Yosi stated it in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva his teacher, but he himself does not hold like that. (18b2)

DAILY MASHAL

Kal vachomer

The *Gemora* states that something which may be derived through a *kal vachomer* (*literally translated as light and heavy, or lenient and stringent; an a fortiori argument; it is one of the thirteen principles of biblical hermeneutics; it employs the following reasoning: if a specific stringency applies in a usually lenient case, it must certainly apply in a more serious case*), the Torah may anyway take the trouble to write it explicitly.

The Bnei Yissoschar explains the reasoning for this: A *kal vachomer* is based upon logic. One might say that the reason this *halacha* (*derived through a kal vachomer*) is correct is because it is understandable to me; it makes sense. The Torah therefore goes out of its way to write it explicitly in order to teach us that the *halacha* is correct because the Torah said so; regardless of whether it is understood or not.

The Ra"n in *Nedarim* (3a) notes that this concept is applicable by a *hekesh* (*when the halachos from one topic are derived from another one*) as well. The *Gemora* in *Bava Metzia* (61a) states that it also applies to a *gezeirah shavah* (*one of the*

thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics; it links two similar words from dissimilar verses in the Torah).

According to the explanation of the Bnei Yissoschar, we could say that the concept should only apply to a *kal vachomer*, for that is based upon logic. The Torah would not find it necessary to state explicitly a *halacha* which is derived through a *hekesh* or *gezeirah shavah*, for they are not based upon logic at all, and it would be superfluous to write it.

The *Yad Malachei* writes that if the Torah does explicitly write a *halacha* which was derived through one of the thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics, we must treat it more stringently than an ordinary *halacha*. This is comparable to a Rabbinical prohibition, which has a slight support from something written in the Torah. *Tosfos* in *Eruvin* (31b) rules that such a prohibition is stricter than an ordinary one, which does not have any Scriptural support. (17b3 – 18a1)