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Shabbos Daf 109

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Evil Spirit and Healing on Shabbos

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rabbi Nassan said: It (*the evil spirit that rest upon the hands before they are washed in the morning*) is a free agent (*which commands respect among the other spirits*), and insists (*on remaining on the hands*) until one washes his hands three times.

Rabbi Yochanan said: *Puch* (*a type of mascara*) removes *bas melech* (*an evil spirit which damages the eye*), stops the tears, and promotes the hair on the eye lids.

It was taught likewise in a *braisa*: Rabbi Yosi said: *Puch* removes *bas melech*, stops the tears, and promotes the hair on the eye lids.

Mar Ukva said in the name of Shmuel: *Alin* has no healing properties (*with regard to the eyes*).

Rav Yosef said: Coriander has no healing properties (*with regard to the eyes*).

Rav Sheishes said: Hops has no healing properties (*with regard to the eyes*).

Rav Yosef (*who was blind*) observed: Coriander is harmful even to me.

R. Sheishes (*who was also blind*) observed: Rocket (*plant*) is beneficial even to me.

Mar Ukva said in the name of Shmuel: All kinds of hops are permitted (*on Shabbos to be used as medicine; this is because they are eaten by people who are healthy as well*), except *teruza* (*which is eaten only by sick people*).

Rav Chisda said: To bast (*with oil and eggs*) a roasted meat (*on Shabbos*) is permitted (*and it is not regarded as fixing*); to make hashed eggs is forbidden (*for it looks like he will place them inside a pot cooking on the fire*).

Ze'iri's wife made it (*a basted roast*) for Chiya bar Ashi, but he did not eat it. She said to him, "I have made this for your teacher (*Ze'iri*) and he ate, yet do you not eat!"

The *Gemora* explains that Ze'iri follows his own view, for Ze'iri said: One may pour clear wine and clear water through a strainer on *Shabbos*, and he need have no concern (*that he is sinning*). This proves that since it can be drunk as it is (*without being strained*), he has done nothing (*of any halachic significance*); so here too, since it can be eaten as it is, he has done nothing (*by basting it*).

And Mar Ukva also said: One who injured his hand or foot on *Shabbos* can use wine to reduce the swelling (*for it does not work so well*), and need have no fear.

The scholars inquired: What about vinegar?

Rav Hillel said to Rav Ashi, When we attended Rav Kahana's academy, they said that vinegar cannot be used (*for it is obvious that it is being used for medicinal purposes*).

Rava said: The people who resided in Mechoza, however, were not permitted to use wine to heal a wound, as the residents of Mechoza were so sensitive that even wine would remedy their wound.

Ravina once visited Rav Ashi's house and saw that a donkey had stepped on the top of Rav Ashi's foot and Rav Ashi was using vinegar (*on Shabbos*) to reduce the swelling. Ravina said to him: Do you not hold of that which Rava said: The people who resided in Mechoza, however, were not permitted to use wine to heal a wound, as the residents of Mechoza were so sensitive that even wine would remedy their wound? And master is sensitive as well!? Rav Ashi told Ravina that a wound on the top of the hand or foot is different (*as they are regarded like an internal wound and are life threatening, and one can even perform a Biblically prohibited act on Shabbos to remedy the injury*).

The *Gemora* cites an alternative version of the episode is that Ravina witnessed Rav Ashi reducing the swelling of his injury with wine, and Ravina questioned this, because the residents of Mechoza who are sensitive are forbidden to even use wine to reduce the swelling. Rav Ashi responded that a wound on the top of the hand or foot is different, for Rav Adda bar Masnah said in the name of Rav: Wounds on the top of the hand or foot are regarded like an internal wound (*and are life threatening*), and one can even perform a Biblically prohibited act on *Shabbos* to remedy the injury. (109a)

One may bathe in the Great Sea on *Shabbos* in its nicer waters, but one may not bathe in the Great Sea in its foul waters.

The *Gemora* asks: One *braisa* states that one may bathe in the waters of Gerar. [*Although they are salty and therefore therapeutic, one may bathe in the waters of Gerar on Shabbos as healthy people also bathe in the waters, and it is not obvious that one is bathing there for medical reasons.*] Similarly, one may bathe in the waters

of Chamsan, in the waters of Asya, and in the waters of Tiberias. One may not, however, bathe in the Yam HaGadol - the Great Sea, nor in water that was used for soaking flax, nor in the Sea of Sodom (*which because of its saltiness, is considered bathing for therapeutic purposes*). A second *braisa* teaches that one may bathe on *Shabbos* in the waters of Tiberias and in the waters of the Great Sea, but one may not bathe in waters used for soaking flax, nor may one bathe in the Sea of Sodom. The rulings regarding the Great Sea contradict each other!?

Rabbi Yochanan said: There is no difficulty, as one (*the first braisa*) agrees with Rabbi Meir, and the other agrees with Rabbi Yehudah, for we learned in a *Mishna*: All seas are like a *mikvah*¹ for it is written: *and the gathering of (mikvah) the waters, He called seas*; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah said: The Great Sea (*alone*) is like a *mikvah*, and 'seas' was stated only because it contains many kinds of waters. [*Many different rivers flow into the sea, and that explains the plural; but actually the verse refers only to the Great Sea. This is why he draws a distinction between the Great Sea and other seas, and so he also forbids bathing in it on Shabbos.*] Rabbi Yosi said: All seas (*including the Great Sea*) purify when running (*for that is its nature*), but they are unfit for *zavim*, *metzoraim*, and to be sanctified as the water of purification.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak asks on this answer: Say that they disagree in respect to *tumah* and *taharah*; but do you know them (*to disagree*) in respect of *Shabbos* as well?

¹ They are like a *mikvah* in all respects, and not like a spring. The difference between these two are: (1) a *zav* can immerse in a spring, but not in a *mikvah*; (2) the water of a spring, but not of a *mikvah*, is fit for sprinkling upon a *metzora*, and for mixing with the ashes of the red heifer; (3) the water of a spring purifies when running, whereas a *mikvah* purifies only when its water is still. Since R' Meir maintains that all seas are alike, he draws no distinction in respect to bathing either, and permits it in the Great Sea as well.



Rather, said Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak: There is no difficulty, for in one case he carries there (*and then it is obvious that his purpose is to effect a cure*), and in the other, he does not tarry (*there*).

The *Gemora* asks: To what have you referred the second *braisa*? It is to where he does not tarry! If he does not tarry, (*it should be permitted*) even in waters used for soaking flax as well!? For it was taught in a *braisa*: One may bathe in the waters of Tiberias and in waters used for soaking flax and in the Sea of Sodom, even if he has scabs on his head. When does this permission apply? It is if he does not tarry (*there*), but if he carries (*there*), it is forbidden!

Rather, the *Gemora* concludes that the *braisa* that states that one is permitted to bathe in the Great Sea refers to the finer waters of the Sea, whereas the *braisa* that states that one is forbidden to bathe in the Great Sea refers to lists foul waters. [*Since one would bathe in the nicer waters even during the week, no one will suspect that he is bathing in the waters on Shabbos for medical purposes. One who sees someone bathing on Shabbos in the foul waters, however, will assume that he is bathing for therapeutic purposes.*]

The *Gemora* continues: The contradiction regarding the water used for soaking flax is also not difficult, for one (*the first two braisos*) refers to a case where he carries, and the other refers to a case where he does not tarry. (109a - 109b)

One cannot eat *eizovyon* on *Shabbos*, but one can eat *yo'ezer* and drink *abuvroeh* on *Shabbos*. A man may eat any kind of food as a remedy, and drink any beverage, except water of palm trees and a potion of sterility, because they are (*a remedy*) for jaundice; but one may drink water of palm trees for his thirst and rub himself with root oil without medical purpose.

One is prohibited from eating *eizovyon*, which is the hyssop of hing, on *Shabbos*. Since healthy people do not eat *eizovyon*, anyone eating it is clearly eating it for medicinal reasons. One would eat *eizovyon* if he had intestinal worms, and it was eaten with seven black dates. Intestinal worms come from eating barley flour that is forty days old. One can eat *yoezer*, which is pennyroyal. *Yoezer* was eaten for worms of the liver, and it was eaten with seven white dates. Worms of the liver comes from eating meat that was raw and drinking water before eating, or from consuming fatty meat on an empty stomach, or from eating the meat of an ox on an empty stomach, or from eating a nut in an empty stomach, or from eating fenugreek stems on an empty stomach, and then drinking water after having consumed any of these foods. (109b)

There are various remedies for one who drank water that was left open.

One may drink *abuvroeh*, which is a tree without branches that was soaked in a liquid that the patient would drink, on *Shabbos*. *Abuvroeh* was used to heal one who drank water that was exposed, and there was the fear that a snake had injected poison into the water. Another remedy for one who drank exposed water was to take five roses and five cups of beer, boil them together until he had a certain measure of the mixture, and then drink the potion. Another remedy is to drink a quarter of a log of milk from a white goat. Another remedy was to take a sweet esrog, carve a hole in it and fill the hole with honey, and after cooking the honey-filled esrog on the coals, he should eat it. (109b)

There is a remedy for one who swallows a snake.

One who swallowed a snake should eat hops together with salt, and then run three miles. Rav Shimi Bar Ashi witnessed a person who had swallowed a snake. Rav Shimi disguised himself like a horseman so the man would fear him, and then Rav Shimi bar Ashi gave him to

eat hops with salt and made him run in front of him three miles. The remedy was effective, and the snake came out of the man in sections. (109b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Taking Vitamins On Shabbos

The *Mishna* states that a person may eat any foods for healing. The reason for this is because it is referred to as food and not medicine. An example of this is *yoezer* that is eaten in conjunction with seven white dates and is effective for one who has worms of the liver, which comes from eating raw meat, etc. Although this food also has medicinal value, one is still permitted to eat the food on *Shabbos*.

The question arises regarding taking vitamins on *Shabbos*. A vitamin in of itself is considered food, as a vitamin is to strengthen one's body. Nonetheless, vitamins are not considered food for the ill, as many healthy people take vitamins on a daily basis, such as Vitamin C and the like. Certainly one who is ill and takes vitamins for medicinal purposes on *Shabbos* has to be concerned that he is violating the *Shabbos*. It requires thought with regard to one who is healthy and takes vitamins on *Shabbos*.

The Mishnah Berurah² writes that one who normally eats something to strengthen his physique is forbidden to consume that substance on *Shabbos*, even if he is perfectly healthy. It would thus appear that one would be forbidden to take vitamins on *Shabbos*, as vitamins are to strengthen a person's body, and the Pri Megadim and Magen Avraham rule that this is forbidden even for one who is healthy.

Shmiras Shabbos Kihilchoso writes that there are those who are lenient if they are in an area where the custom is to take vitamins in conjunction with very meal.

Rav Shlomo Zalman Aurbach zt"l is quoted there as ruling that one is forbidden to take vitamins to strengthen his body. There are vitamins that serve as substitutes for food, like the vitamins that are taken by astronauts and those who travel in the desert. In lieu of food, they take pills that are vitamins and substitute for food. One would be permitted to take such pills on *Shabbos* as they are considered food and not medicinal.

² O. C. 328:20