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Shabbos Daf 112

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Tying a Bow on Shabbos

Rabbi Meir stated that one is not liable for tying a knot that he can untie with one hand. The *Gemora* wonders what Rabbi Meir would hold regarding tying a bow. On the one hand, one can untie a bow with one hand so he should not be liable. On the other hand, Rabbi Meir may have been referring to a knot that is not tied tightly, whereas a bow is a tight knot, so he should be liable. The question remains unresolved. (111b)

Biblically Permissible Knots on Shabbos

There are knots that one would not be Biblically liable for but he would be liable Rabbinically. Examples of these knots are a woman tying the straps of her chemise, strings of a hat, a girdle, the straps of a shoe or a sandal, flasks of wine or oil that contain flaps, or a pot of meat that has a cloth to cover it. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov maintains that one is permitted to tie a rope by the stall of an animal so that it does not escape. (111b)

Need to Permit Tying the Straps of the Chemise and Strings of a Hat

The Mishna had to teach that a woman can tie the straps of her chemise, because otherwise we would say that she can leave one of the straps in a knot and she can take off and put on the chemise with difficulty. The Mishna also

taught that she can tie the strings of a hat, because otherwise in a case where her hat is loose, we would say she can remove it without untying the knot. The Mishna therefore had to teach us that because a woman is concerned about pulling out her hair, she will first untie the knot and then remove her hat. (112a)

Resolving Contradiction Regarding Untying Knots of Shoes and Sandals

There are three *braisos* that appear to be contradictory. One *braisa* states that one is liable a chatas for untying the straps of a shoe or a sandal. A second *braisa* teaches that one is exempt Biblically for untying the straps but from the outset he is prohibited from untying the straps. A third *braisa* states that one is permitted even from the outset to untie the straps.

The *Gemora* resolves the contradiction regarding shoes by answering that one is liable a chatas for untying the straps of a shoe fashioned by a shoemaker. The shoemaker ties a permanent knot at one end of the strap so it is deemed to be a permanent knot. One who ties the knot is thus liable a chatas for transgressing a Biblical prohibition. The *braisa* that states that one is Biblically exempt but should not tie the knot from the outset refers to the knots of the Rabbis who would not tie the straps of their shoes tightly around their feet. The rabbis were able to remove the shoe and put the shoe on while they were still tied, so it is Rabinnically prohibited to tie such a knot. One would not be Biblically liable, however, because the



Rabbi would unite the shoes in the muddy season and then retie them tightly so the shoes would not become stuck in the mud and slip off their feet. The *braisa* that states that one could tie the straps from the outset refers to the knots made by citizens of Mechoza, who were particular that their shoes fit snugly, so they tied their shoes tightly. This habit required that they unite the knots in the evening, so these knots were deemed to be temporary, allowing them to untie them on Shabbos.

Regarding the contradiction of the rulings on sandals, the *Gemora* answers that the *braisa* that rules that one is a liable a chatas refers to knots of sandals belonging to Arabian merchants, whose straps were fashioned by professional shoemakers. These knots were deemed to be permanent and one who would untie them on Shabbos would be liable.

The *braisa* that rules that one is Rabbinically forbidden to untie the knot but Biblically exempt refers to knots that the wearer of the sandals made themselves. Given the fact that they were not meant to be tied permanently, one would not be Biblically liable for untying the knot on Shabbos, but because the knots were tied for longer than a day, one would be Rabinnically prohibited from untying the knots. The *braisa* that rules that one is permitted even from the outset to untie the straps refers to a sandal this worn by two different people, each one with a different size foot. This situation necessitates that one will be constantly tying and untying the sandal and given that it is a temporary knot, one can untie such a knot on Shabbos. (112a)

An Example of a Sandal Worn by Two Different People

The *Gemora* cites an example of a sandal worn by two different people. Rav Yehudah the brother of Rav Sala the Devout would alternate wearing a pair of sandals with his child. Abaye informed Rav Yehudah that untying the

knots on such sandals would make him liable a chatas. Rav Yehudah was astounded by this ruling, and he told Abaye that even had Abaye ruled that it is only Rabinnically prohibited untying these knots he would have been perplexed, and all the more so now that Abaye ruled that it was Biblically prohibited. Rav Yehudah then informed Abaye that he would even alternate with his son wearing these sandals during the week, and this would require that he untie the knots, and the knots would be deemed temporary. When Abaye realized that Rav Yehudah would tie the knots daily, he told Rav Yehudah that he was permitted to untie the knots even from the outset. (112a)

When a Sandal is Muktzeh

Rabbi Yirmiyah was walking behind Rabbi Avahu in a karmelis and his sandal strap broke, causing the sandal to fall off his foot. Rabbi Avahu told Rabbi Yirmiyah to take a moist reed fit for animal food (a dry reed would be muktzeh because it is not fit for animal food) and tie it around the sandal in lieu of the strap. Similarly, Abaye was standing in a courtyard before Rav Yosef and Abaye's sandal strap broke off. Rav Yosef told Abaye that he must leave it in the private domain because a broken sandal is muktzeh. The difference between the incident regarding Rabbi Yirmiyah and Abaye was that Rabbi Yirmiyah was in a karmelis where the sandal was not guarded, so Rabbi Avahu allowed Rabbi Yirmiyah to transport the sandal to a private domain. Regarding Abaye, however, because the incident occurred in a courtyard and the sandal was guarded, Rav Yosef did not allow Abaye to move it.

Abaye asked Rav Yosef why his sandal was deemed to be muktzeh, as if he so wished, he could change the sandal from his right foot to his left foot. Given the fact that the strap had broken off on the outside, changing the sandal to the other foot would now transform the strap to being on the inside, and the sandal would still be deemed a utensil.



Rav Yosef responded to Abaye that due to the fact that Rabbi Yochanan explained the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah (see next note) we see that the *halachah* accords with Rabbi Yehudah (112a)

Reconciling R' Yochanan's Statement Regarding Chalitzah according to R' Yehudah

A *braisa* states that if the two fold-over straps of a sandal broke off or if both of its strap-holders broke off or if the entire sole of the sandal came off, the sandal is *tahor* (once the sandal becomes damaged it is no longer deemed to be a utensil and it loses its *tumah* status). If, however, only one of its flaps broke, or if one of its strap-holders broke off, or if most of the sandal's sole came off, the sandal is *tamei* (this would be true even if the outer strap-holder broke off, because he can change the right shoe to the left and what was the outside has now been transformed to being the inside.) Rabbi Yehudah maintains that if the inside strap-holder broke off, the sandal is *tamei*, and if the outside strap-holder broke off, the sandal is *tahor*. And it was said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan that similar to this dispute regarding *tumah*, there is also a dispute regarding *Shabbos*, but there is no disagreement regarding *chalitzah*.

After attempting alternate resolutions as to whom Rabbi Yochanan was referring to with his statement, the *Gemora* concludes that Rabbi Yochanan's statement was said according to Rabbi Yehudah. However, we must emend the statement to read "and similarly regarding *chalitzah*" which means that just like Rabbi Yehudah did not deem a sandal that the outer strap-holder broke off to be a utensil with regard to *tumah* and *Shabbos*, it is not deemed to be a sandal regarding *chalitzah*. When the Mishna stated that if the woman removed the left sandal from the right foot it is a valid *chalitzah*, that is only said when the sandal still has a function, i.e. it is whole. When the left sandal's outer strap-holder broke off, however,

then the sandal is not deemed to be a utensil and the *chalitzah* performed with such a sandal is invalid. (112a-112b)

The Mishna's Discussion of Flaps Breaking Off from the Sandal Accords with Rabbi Yehudah

The Mishna in *Keilim* states that if a flap of a sandal broke off and he fixed it, it is still *tamei midras*.

The *Gemora* initially assumed that there is no distinction whether the flap that broke was the inner or outer flap. Given the fact that Rabbi Yochanan maintains that the *Halacha* follows an anonymous Mishna, we can assume that that the Mishna accords with the opinion of the Rabbis who posit that when the outer flap is damaged it is still deemed to be a utensil because one could fix the sandal and switch it to the other foot.

The *Gemora* rejects this supposition and states that the Mishna refers specifically to a case where the inner flap broke off and the Mishna accords with Rabbi Yehudah.

The *Gemora* challenges this answer from a different section of the Mishna and is forced to answer that the Mishna refers to a case where the sandal has four ears and four strap-holders, which means that each side of the sandal has two ears and two strap-holders. Thus, the Mishna states that when one ear breaks off, the sandal can still be worn and conveys *tumas midras*, whereas when two ears break off, we follow the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah who maintains that when an outer era breaks off, the sandal is no longer deemed to be a utensil. (112b)

Disagreement between the Rabbis and Rabbi Yehudah



Ravin said in the name of Rav Chanan bar Abba who said in the name of Rav that the *halachah* across with Rabbi Yehudah that when the outer strap of the sandal breaks, it is no longer deemed to be a utensil, despite the fact that one can switch the sandal to the other foot. Rabbi Yochanan, however, maintains that the *halachah* does not accord with Rabbi Yehudah, and the *halachah* is like the Rabbis, who posit that the sandal with the broken strap can be switched to the other foot and it is deemed to be a utensil. Although we learned earlier that Rabbi Yochanan was explain the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah and that implies that rabbi Yochanan accords with the opinion of Rabbi Yehudah, in truth there disparate views amongst the Amoraim as to what Rabbi Yochanan's opinion was (112b)

The Mishna in Keilim states that in order for a wooden utensil of a homeowner to lose its status of tumah, it must develop a hole the size of a pomegranate. Chizkiah wondered if the utensil loses its status of tumah of the utensil developed a hole the size of an olive (which is smaller than a pomegranate) and he plugged the hole and this kept occurring until he plugged the size of a pomegranate. Rabbi Yochanan responded to Chizkiah by telling him that Chizkiah had taught the Mishna which can be compared to this case. The Mishna states that if an ear broke off from the sandal and he fixed it, it is still tamei midras. If the second ear broke off and he fixed it, then the sandal is tahor from midras tumah but is still tamei as having touched a midras. Now, the rationale for this ruling is that when the first ear broke and he fixed it, the sandal is still usable and remains tamei midras. One would have thought, then, that when the second ear breaks, it should still be tamei midras, because he had already fixed the first one and the sandal is still deemed to be a utensil. Yet, Chizkiah said that when both ears break off, even though he subsequently fixed them, they are "panim chadashos," a new face," i.e. a new sandal, and the midras tumah has left the sandal. Similarly, regarding the utensil that continued to develop holes and was repaired until the fixed section became the size of a

pomegranate, we will also say that "a new face" has arrived, and the original tumah left the utensil. Chizkiah was so impressed with Rabbi Yochanan's comparison that he declared upon him, "This is no mere mortal!" Alternatively, Chizkiah proclaimed, "this is a great person!" (112b)

Earlier Generations were like Angels or Men and We are like Men or Donkeys

Rabbi Zeira said in the name of Rava bar Zimona: if the rabbis of the previous generations were sons of angels, then we are merely sons of men. If the rabbis of the previous generations were sons of men, then we are like donkeys. However, we are not even like the donkeys of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa or like the donkey of Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair. Rather, we are like ordinary donkeys. (The donkeys of Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair and Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa were righteous donkeys, as explained in *Gemora Chulin 7a-b* and *Gemar Taanis 24a.*) (112b)

DAILY MASHAL

The *Gemora* states that if the rabbis of the previous generations were sons of angels, then we are merely sons of men. If the rabbis of the previous generations were sons of men, then we are like donkeys. However, we are not even like the donkeys of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa or like the donkey of Rabbi Pinchas ben Yair. Rather, we are like ordinary donkeys.

One must wonder what the purpose of this statement was. The *Gemora* seems to be denigrating later generations unnecessarily.

Perhaps the answer to this question can be found in the words of the Aruch, who writes that the *Gemora* (Sanhedrin 108b) states that animals do not have the concept of marriage. Nonetheless, the Torah accorded



the animals in the times of Noach who did not cohabit with other species the status of being married.

Rabbi Yaakov Galinsky Shlita said that this teaches us that someone in our generation who does not become influenced by the outside world could be as great as Rabbi Akiva Eiger in his generation. This, then, can be the explanation of our *Gemora*. While the earlier generations certainly reached great spiritual heights, even we, who may be linked to donkeys, can be granted "higher status" when we put forth our best effort and strive of higher levels of purity and holiness.

If they were like Mortals...

By: Meoros HaDaf HaYomi

The *Gemora* states that if previous generations were like angels then we are like mere mortals. If previous generations were like mortals, then we are like donkeys. This seems to poignantly describe the terrible descent of mankind, generation after generation. Yet the *possuk* from Koheles seems to contradict this, "Do not say that the days that have passed are better than these," (7:10).

The Minchas Elazar explains that the *Gemora* refers to the lofty spiritual heights that the Sages and Prophets of earlier generations attained. These heights are sadly lacking in our own generation. However, in regard to the times themselves, these times are greater than those gone by. Since we must struggle against so many impediments, and serve Hashem without these spiritual powers to assist us, our mitzvos and Torah study in these times are so much more important. Hashem has more nachas from our own service, since He alone recognizes how difficult it is for us to do even the smallest mitzvah, or daven with even the slightest amount of kavana. Hashem does not judge us based on our achievements, but based on the difficulties we must overcome. In this sense, our generation of *ikvesa d'moshicha* is the greatest of them all. (From Divrei Torah: Munkatch, 3:72)