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Pesachim Daf 56

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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 Jewish citizens of Yericho did six things; regarding three of them, the Chachamim reproved the people, and there were they that they did not reprove them. These are those practices that they did not reprove them: they would graft palm trees on the entire day.¹ They would “wrap” the Shema, and they would harvest and pile the grain before the *omer* offering was brought. Regarding the following practices the Chachamim reproved them: they allowed the use of tree branches that were consecrated, they would eat fruit that had fallen under the tree on Shabbos, and they would give *peah* from vegetables. (55b5 - 56a1)

The Rabbis taught: Chizkiyah the king of Judah did six things, three of which the Chachamim agreed with him and three of which the Chachamim did not agree with him. He dragged the bones of his father Achaz on a bed of ropes,² and they agreed with him. He broke the copper snake that Moshe had

fashioned,³ and they agreed with him. He also concealed a book that contained healing remedies,⁴ and they agreed with him. But they did not agree with him on the following three things: He cut down the doors of the Heichal and sent them to Sancheiriv king of Assyria,⁵ and they did not agree with him. He stopped up the Gichon River,⁶ and they did not agree with him. He intercalated (inserted into the calendar) the month of Nissan during the month of Nissan, but the Chachamim did not agree with him.⁷ (56a1 – 56a2)

They grafted palm trees all day. How did they do it? — Said Rav Yehudah: They brought a fresh myrtle, the juice of bay-fruit and barley flour which had been kept in a vessel less than forty days, and boiled them together and injected [the concoction] into the heart of the palm tree; and every [tree] which stands within four cubits of this one, if that is not treated likewise immediately withers. Rav Acha the son of

¹ On the afternoon of the fourteenth of Nissan when everyone agrees that work is forbidden.

² Achaz was the previous king of Judah and he was very wicked, having worshipped idols and leading the Jewish People astray from their service of HaShem. In order that Achaz should receive an atonement for his sins and that the Name of HaShem should be sanctified when people would see the punishment inflicted on the wicked, Chizkiyah dragged the body of Achaz on a bed of ropes as opposed to a bier used for royalty, and although normally a corpse was carried on the people's shoulders, Chizkiyah had the body of Achaz dragged on the ground.

³ During their sojourn in the Wilderness, the Jewish People spoke brazenly against HaShem and Moshe, and they were punished by HaShem with poisonous snakes that caused many Jews to die. Moshe then fashioned a copper snake and anyone who had been harmed by the snakes would gaze at the copper snake and was healed. It was HaShem who healed them, but people began to assume that the snake itself had remedial powers and they began to worship the snake, so Chizkiyah destroyed it.

⁴ Because people would no longer be submissive when they became ill, as following the instructions in this book would bring them an instant cure.

⁵ As a bribe so the Assyrian troops would leave Eretz Yisroel. The Chachamim disagreed with this act because it was a disgrace to the Bais HaMikdash.

⁶ Chizkiyah knew that the Assyrian king would besiege Jerusalem so he planned that the Assyrian army would not have drinking water. The Chachamim disapproved of this act because Chizkiyah should have trusted in HaShem to protect Jerusalem.

⁷ The Torah requires that Pesach occur in the spring, and in order to ensure this, the lunar and solar calendar must correspond. This was accomplished by intercalating a thirteenth month into the calendar every few years. The intercalated month was a second month of Adar, as once the month of Nissan started, they could not add a month. Chizkiyah, however decided to intercalate a month after Nissan had begun, which the Chachamim viewed as a second Nissan. Chizkiyah's intention was that those who had become defiled by following in the ways of his father Achaz needed to purify themselves before Pesach, so he extended the year by a month so everyone would purify themselves and be able to offer the *Korban Pesach*.

Rava said: A male branch was grafted on to a female [palm tree]. (56a2)

They “wrapped” the shema. How did they do it? — Said Rav Yehudah: They would recite the words *hear O Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is One*, but they would not make a separation [between the word *One* and the words *you shall love*].⁸ Rava said that they did indeed separate between the word *One* and the words *you shall love*, but they did not pause when reciting the words *let these matters that I command you today be upon your heart*, and by not pausing between the words *today* and *be*, the recital implied that only today the commandments must be on your heart but not tomorrow.⁹

The Rabbis taught [in a Baraisa]: How would they “wrap” the Shema? They recited the words *hear O Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is One*, and they would not separate [between the word *One* and the words *you shall love*]; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah, however, says that they separated between those words but they would not recite the words *blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity*.¹⁰ And why do we say that? It is as Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish, for Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: It is written: [When Yaakov was approaching death] *Yaakov summoned his sons and said: Gather together and I will tell you* Yaakov desired to reveal to them the end of the exile and the commencement of the Messianic era, but the Divine Presence left him. He said: perhaps, Heaven forbid, there is a blemish in my bed.¹¹ [Yaakov was worried that] perhaps he had a son who was blemished like Yishmael, the son of

Avraham, or like Esav, the son of Yitzchak. His sons [reassured him and] said: *hear O Israel, HaShem is our G-d, HaShem is One*. They said: just like there is only one G-d in your heart, so too there is only one G-d in our heart. Upon hearing this declaration, Yaakov responded *blessed is the Name of His glorious kingdom for all eternity*. The Rabbis [were faced with a dilemma] said: What should we do? Shall we recite it? Moshe did not say it (so how can we incorporate this declaration as a part of the Shema), but on the other hand, shall we not recite it? Yaakov did recite these words! They resolved that one should recite this declaration, albeit quietly. Rabbi Yitzchak said: In the academy of Rabbi Ammi, they said: This is analogous to a princess who smelled the fragrance of cooked food seasoned with spices. To express her desire for the food is not proper for someone bred of royalty, yet if she does not express her desire, she will be in pain. The servants therefore resolved her dilemma by bringing the food to her in secret. Rabbi Avahu said: The Rabbis later instituted that one should recite the declaration aloud because heretics would claim that we are adding an inappropriate recital quietly and this would be consistent with their beliefs. In Nehardea, where there no heretics, they still recite the declaration quietly. (56a2 – 56a3)

Our Rabbis taught: Six things the inhabitants of Yericho did, three with the consent of the Sages, and three without the consent of the Sages. And these were with the consent of the Sages: They grafted palm trees all day [of the fourteenth], they ‘wrapped up’ the shema, and they harvested before the omer.¹² And these were without the consent of the Sages:

⁸ The first part of the Shema is comprised of two parts, the first verse where we declare that HaShem is One, and the second paragraph where we accept upon ourselves the yoke of the mitzvos. In order to draw a distinction between these two concepts, we are instructed to draw out the recital of the word *echod, One*, where we contemplate Hashem’s sovereignty, and this the citizens of Yericho did not do.

⁹ This recital was contradictory to the Torah’s principle that the commandments are binding forever.

¹⁰ Which is recited between the first verse and the subsequent paragraph.

¹¹ Perhaps one of his children did not believe in Hashem’s absolute unity, and that son was not worthy of receiving his prophecy.

¹² Besides the prohibition against eating from the new crop, *chadash*, before the offering of the *omer* on the sixteenth of Nissan, there is an additional prohibition of harvesting the new crop before the offering of the *omer*. This prohibition was said regarding grain that is fit to be brought for the *omer* offering grain that that grew in a valley would not fall under this prohibition, and since the grain of Yericho grew in a valley, it was permitted to harvest the grain of Yericho before the offering of the *omer*. Nonetheless, the Chachamim decreed that even if one is permitted to harvest the new crop before the offering of the *omer*, one cannot make piles of the grain before the *omer* was brought. This decree was instituted to ensure that one would not inadvertently eat from the grain while working with it. The Jewish citizens of Yericho disagreed with the Chachamim regarding this, but since there was no

They stacked [the grain] before the omer,¹³ and they made breaches in their gardens and orchards to permit the poor to eat the fallen fruit in famine years on Sabbaths and Festivals, and they permitted [for use] the branches of carob and sycamore trees belonging to hekdesh; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Said Rabbi Yehudah to him: If they did [these things] with the consent of the Sages, then all people could do so! But they did both without the consent of the Sages, [save that] three they forbade them [to do], and three they did not forbid them [to do]. And it is these which they did not forbid them: They grafted palm trees the whole day, and they ‘wrapped up’ the shema, and they stacked [the grain] before the omer. And it is these which they forbade them to do: They permitted [for use] branches of hekdesh of carob and sycamore trees, and they made breaches in their garden and orchards to permit the poor to eat the fallen fruit in famine years on Sabbaths and Festivals; they gave pe'ah from vegetables; and the Sages forbade them.

Yet does Rabbi Yehudah hold that the reaping was not with the consent of the Sages? Surely we learned: The inhabitants of Yericho reaped before the omer with the consent of the Sages and stacked before the omer without the consent of the Sages, but the Sages did not forbid them to do it. Whom

biblical prohibition involved, the Chachamim did not rebuke them for doing this.

¹³ As it is quite unnecessary, for the produce will not suffer loss if it is left unstacked until after the omer, and while engaged in stacking it, they might come to eat it.

¹⁴ Summary: The custom is to prune the branches of carob and sycamore trees every seven years, as this causes new branches to grow in their place. The early residents of Yericho consecrated the carob and sycamore trees immediately after they were pruned. When the new branches grew, their descendants cut off these branches and benefited from them. The Chachamim disapproved of this practice because they maintained that the new branches are consecrated property which one is forbidden to derive benefit from. The people of Yericho maintained that their forefathers had only consecrated the trunks of the carob and sycamore trees, so they, their descendants, could derive benefit from the branches that belong to *hekdesh*. The people of Yericho held that like the opinion that maintains that growths are not subject to the laws of *meilah*, whereas the Chachamim held that there is no biblical law of *meilah*, but there is a rabbinical prohibition.

¹⁵ During years of famine, the people of Yericho made breaches in the fences of their gardens and orchards, so that the poor people could enter and eat the fallen fruit on Shabbos and Yom Tov. The dispute

do you know to maintain [that] they forbade and did not forbid? Rabbi Yehudah. Yet he teaches: They reaped with the consent of the Sages? — Then according to your reasoning, [surely] these are four! Rather, delete reaping from this. (56a3 – 56b1)

And they permitted the branches of carob and sycamore trees of hekdesh. They said: Our fathers sanctified nothing but tree trunks, hence we will permit [for use] the branches of hekdesh of carob and sycamore trees. Now we discuss the growth which came after that; so that while they held as he who rules: There is no *me'ilah*-offering [due] when [one benefits from] what grows, the Rabbis held: Granted that there is no *me'ilah*-offering [due], there is nevertheless a prohibition.¹⁴ (56b1)

And they made breaches [etc.]. Ulla said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish: The controversy is in respect of [the dates of] the upper branches, for the Rabbis held: We forbid them preventively, lest he go up and cut them off, while the inhabitants of Jericho held: We do not forbid them preventively, lest he go up and cut them off. But as for the dates which are among the lower branches, all agree that it is permitted.¹⁵ Said Rava to him: But they are *muktzeh*?¹⁶ And

between the people of Yericho and the Chachamim was regarding dates that fall on Shabbos and are stuck in the upper branches of the palm tree. These branches form a natural basket, and the dates that fall from the tree get caught in these branches. In order for one to reach the fallen dates, he must climb up the tree. The Chachamim maintain that one is forbidden to climb the tree to retrieve the dates that fell because he might come to pick the dates that are still attached to the tree. The people of Yericho, however, maintained that we do not forbid one to climb a tree on Shabbos to retrieve the fallen dates because of the concern that he might climb the tree to retrieve the dates that are still attached. Regarding dates that fell and got stuck between the lower branches of a palm tree, even the Chachamim permitted one to retrieve the fallen dates. This is because we are not concerned that while picking the dates in the lower branches, one will pick the dates that are higher up in the tree.

¹⁶ This type of *muktzeh* is known as *muktzeh machmas issur*, *muktzeh* by dint of a prohibition, because at the onset of Shabbos the dates were attached to the tree, and one is biblically prohibited from detaching them then because he will violate the prohibition of harvesting. Although the dates fell on Shabbos and there is no longer a prohibition of harvesting, we maintain that once something becomes *muktzeh* at the onset of Shabbos, it will remain *muktzeh* for the entire Shabbos.

should you say, [that is] because they [the dates] were fit for [his] ravens,¹⁷ [I would rejoin], — seeing that that which is ready for man is not ready for dogs, for we learned, Rabbi Yehudah said: If it was not neveilah from the eve of the Shabbos, it is forbidden, because it is not of that which is ready, then shall what is ready for birds be [regarded as] ready for human beings?¹⁸ — Yes, he replied. That which is ready for human beings is not ready for dogs, for whatever is fit for a man, he does not put [it] out of his mind; [but] that which is ready for birds is [also] ready for human beings, [for] his mind is [set] upon it.¹⁹ (56b1 – 56b2)

When Ravin came, he said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish: The controversy is in respect of [the fallen dates] among the lower branches, the Rabbis holding: That which is ready for birds is not ready for man, while the men of Yericho hold: That which is ready for birds is ready for man. But [the

fallen dates] on the upper branches, all agree that they are forbidden; we forbid [them] preventively, lest he ascend and cut off [some dates].²⁰ (56b2)

And they gave pe'ah from vegetables.²¹ Yet didn't the inhabitants agree with what we learned: They stated a general principle in respect to pe'ah: whatever is an eatable, and is guarded, and its growth is from the earth, and is [all] gathered simultaneously, and is collected for storage, is subject to pe'ah. 'Whatever is an eatable' excludes the aftergrowth of safflower and woad;²² 'and is guarded' excludes hefker;²³ 'and its growth is from the earth' excludes mushrooms and truffles;²⁴ 'and is [all] gathered simultaneously' excludes the fig tree;²⁵ 'and is collected for storage excludes vegetables!^{26,27} — Said Rav Yehudah in Rav's name: The reference is to turnip tops, and they differ [in respect to what] one collects for storing by means of

¹⁷ As wealthy people who breeds ravens were allowed to let their birds feed off a date trees on Shabbos and Yom Tov. One could say that that the dates were prepared for the use of a wealthy person at the onset of Shabbos, so if the dates fall later on Shabbos, he would be able to eat them.

¹⁸ Rabbi Yehudah maintains that if the animal was not a carcass prior to Shabbos, one cannot cut it up on Shabbos, because it was not prepared for the use of a dog. Since at the onset of Shabbos the animal was only fit for human consumption and not for the use of a dog, it is deemed to be *muktzeh*. Similarly, something that is prepared for ravens cannot be considered prepared for human consumption. Therefore, even the dates that fell in the lower branches on Shabbos should be *muktzeh*.

¹⁹ The Gemara answers that something that is prepared for human consumption is not considered prepared for dogs, because anything that is suitable for a human one does not set it aside from his own use on Shabbos. Something that is prepared for ravens, however, is considered prepared for human consumption, because anything that is suitable for a human is on someone's mind. The dates, which were suitable for the ravens when Shabbos began, are considered fit for consumption if they fall from the tree later on Shabbos.

²⁰ Summary: Another explanation for the dispute between the Chachamim and the people of Yericho regarding the dates is that their dispute was regarding the dates that got stuck in the lower branches of a palm tree. The Chachamim maintain that something that is prepared for ravens is not considered prepared for human consumption, so the dates are considered *muktzeh*, and the people of Yericho should not have allowed the paupers to eat them on Shabbos. The people of Yericho, however, maintained that something that is prepared for the ravens is considered prepared for humans, so the dates were not considered *muktzeh*, and they could be eaten on Shabbos. Regarding dates that got stuck in the upper branches of a palm tree, however,

even the people of Yericho agreed that one is prohibited to take them, because there is a rabbinical prohibition to climb a tree on Shabbos to retrieve dates that became detached, as one may come to climb the tree and pick dates that are still attached to the tree.

²¹ *Pe'ah* is the corner of the field that a framer must leave for the poor who can then enter the field and take whatever they desire. *Pe'ah* is exempt from *Maaser*, as it is considered *hefker*, ownerless produce. Vegetables are exempt from *pe'ah*. The poor cannot eat the vegetables in the field without first taking *Maaser*, and when the poor would eat the remaining crop from the fields of the Yericho farmers, they thought that the vegetables were *pe'ah*, and they would not take *Maaser*. The people of Yericho thus caused the poor people to eat untithed food, known as *tevel*.

²² Because to be subject to *pe'ah*, the food must be suitable for normal human consumption. The after growths of safflower and woad are hard to eat and one is not obligated to separate them as *pe'ah*. Regular safflower and woad are subject to *pe'ah* because they are suitable for regular consumption.

²³ Crops that are ownerless at the time of harvesting.

²⁴ For they draw their nourishment from the air and not from the ground.

²⁵ Because to be subject to *pe'ah* the whole crop needs to ripen at the same time and be harvested as one, whereas figs ripen at different times of the summer.

²⁶ In order to be obligated in *pe'ah*, the crop needs to be stored for a long time without becoming soiled, whereas most vegetables are perishable.

²⁷ The Gemara thus wonders how the people of Yericho could give *pe'ah* from vegetables if the Mishnah states clearly that vegetables are not subject to *pe'ah*.

something else: one Master holds: If he takes it in for storage by means of something else it is designated storage; while the other Master holds: What he takes in for storage by means of something else is not designated storage.²⁸ (56b2 – 56b3)

Our Rabbis taught: At first they used to leave pe'ah for turnips and cabbages. Rabbi Yosi said: Also for leeks. While another [Baraisa] taught: They used to give pe'ah for turnips and leeks; Rabbi Shimon said: For cabbage too.

Shall we say that there are three Tannaim [in dispute]? — No: there are [only] two Tannaim [in dispute], the first Tanna opposed to Rabbi Shimon being Rabbi Yosi, while the first Tanna opposed to Rabbi Yosi is Rabbi Shimon. And what does 'too' mean? It refers to the first mentioned.

Our Rabbis taught: The son of Bohayon gave pe'ah from vegetables, and his father came and found the poor laden with vegetables and standing at the entrance to the kitchen garden. Said he to them, 'My sons, cast it from you, and I will give you twice as much of tithed [produce]; not because I begrudge it to you, but because the Sages said, You must not give pe'ah from vegetables.' Why had he to say to them, 'Not because I begrudge it to you?' So that they should not say, 'He is merely putting us off.' (56b3 – 57a1)

DAILY MASHAL

Revealing the End of Days

The Gemara states that Yaakov sought to reveal the End of Days when the Divine Presence left him. One must wonder why Yaakov was so insistent on revealing the End of Days. How would this help the Jewish People in the long run?

²⁸ Summary: The Gemara answers that although generally speaking, the people of Yericho agree that vegetables are not subject to the laws of *pe'ah*, here we are discussing the leaves of turnips, and the people of Yericho maintain that since the turnip bulbs can be stored by pickling them and therefore are subject to *pe'ah*, the turnip leaves which are pickled together with the bulbs are also subject to *pe'ah*. This is based on the logic that something that is brought to last via another item is

It is well known that the Rambam had a family tradition to calculate when Moshiach would arrive, although the Rambam himself rules that those who calculate "the ends" should expire. It is a fundamental of Jewish faith to believe in the arrival of Moshiach, and the Gemara states that one of the questions that the Heavenly Tribunal will ask a person after he dies is whether he anticipated the salvation. Yaakov wished to demonstrate to his children that although the End of Days was far off, they should view themselves on that day as if they were experiencing the Ultimate Redemption. Indeed, we are all obligated on Pesach to view ourselves as if we are presently experiencing the Exodus from Egypt.

The Sfas Emes writes that it is one's faith in this concept of redemption that allows him to experience the liberation. Yaakov was teaching his children and subsequently, their descendants, that faith is what allows us to be redeemed from our long and bitter exile.

deemed to be lasting. The Chachamim, however, maintain that this is not considered lasting. The leaves are not stored for their own sake, and they are like other vegetables that are not gathered for storage, so they are not subject to *pe'ah*. The Chachamim therefore protested the actions of the people of Yericho who were causing the poor to eat *tevel* inadvertently.