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Niddah Daf 6

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

[Reverting to] the [above] text, Ze'iri ruled: [A woman during] the twenty-four hours preceding her discovery of a menstrual flow causes couch and seat to convey tumah to a man who in turn conveys it to his clothes’.

The Gemara asks: But, surely, this cannot be correct, for didn't Avimi from Bei Chozai when he came bring with him a Baraisa which stated: During the twenty-four hours preceding the discovery of her menstrual flow a woman's couch and seat are [as tamei] as the object she touches, which means, does it not, that as an object she touches does not convey tumah to a human being¹ so also does not her couch convey tumah to a human being?² — Rava retorted: And do you understand this ruling³ seeing that it [may be refuted] by an inference of a kal vachomer: If an earthen vessel that was covered with a tight fitting lid, which is protected from tumah in a corpse's tent,⁴ is yet not so protected [from the tumah] of the twenty-four hours preceding the discovery of a menstrual flow,⁵ is it not logical that the couches and seats [of a niddah], which are not protected from tumah in a corpse's tent, should not be protected from the tumah of the

twenty-four hours preceding the discovery of a menstrual flow?⁶

The Gemara asks: But didn't Avimi of Bei Chozai quote a Baraisa? — Read: A woman's couch and seat⁷ are [as tamei] as that which touches the body of the niddah herself; just as the touching of her body causes the tumah of a human being who in turn causes the tumah of the clothes he wears so does the touching of her couch or seat cause the tumah of a human being who in turn causes the tumah of the clothes he wears.

It was taught in agreement with Rava: A woman who observed a flow of blood, conveys tumah retroactively for twenty-four hours. And what are the things to which she conveys tumah?⁸ Foodstuffs and drinks,⁹ couches and seats¹⁰ as well as any earthen vessel, though it was covered with a tightly fitting lid,¹¹ her counting¹² is not disturbed and she does not convey tumah to the man who cohabited with her. Rabbi Akiva ruled: She conveys tumah to the man who

¹ Only a primary tumah can do that. An object touched by a niddah assumes only the status of a first grade of tumah which conveys tumah to objects but not to a human being.

² The answer apparently being in the affirmative, the difficulty arises: How could Ze'iri maintain that the woman causes couch and seat to convey tumah to a man who in turn etc.?’

³ Which seems to reduce the tumah of the couch and seat of the niddah in question to a lower degree than that of earthenware.

⁴ Only when uncovered does it contract tumah.

⁵ If it was touched by the woman during the twenty-four hours.

⁶ As the soundness of this argument cannot be questioned Avimi's ruling is obviously untenable and may well be disregarded.

⁷ During the twenty-four hours preceding her discovery of a menstrual flow.

⁸ During the period mentioned.

⁹ Which she touched.

¹⁰ On which she lay and sat.

¹¹ Provided the woman shook the vessel and did not merely touch it.

¹² Of the ‘eleven days’ following the seven days of a menstrual period.

cohabited with her but begins her counting¹³ from the time only of her observing a flow. A woman who observed a bloodstain conveys tumah retroactively.¹⁴ And what are the things to which she conveys the tumah?¹⁵ Foodstuffs and drinks,¹⁶ couches and seats,¹⁷ as well as any earthen vessel, even though it was covered with a tightly fitting lid,¹⁸ and her counting¹⁹ is disturbed,²⁰ and she conveys tumah to the man who cohabited with her retroactively, but begins her counting from the time only of her observing of the flow'. In either case, however, the tumah is held in suspense [and any consecrated foodstuffs touched] must neither be eaten nor burned.²¹

As to Rava, however,²² if he heard of the Baraisa, why did he not say [that his ruling is derived from] a Baraisa? And if he did not hear of the Baraisa, from where did he derive the law [for his inference] akal vachomer? — The fact is that he heard of the Baraisa, but were he to derive his ruling from the Baraisa it could have been objected [that the tumah is conveyed] either to the man or to his clothes²³ but not to the man as well as to the clothes he wears,²⁴ hence he had recourse to his inference a kal vachomer.²⁵

Rav Huna ruled: [The retroactive tumah during] the twenty-four hours [preceding the observation] of a menstrual flow is conveyed only to sanctified things²⁶ but not to terumah.

The Gemara asks: But if so, shouldn't this law have been mentioned together with those of the other grades [of sanctity]?²⁷

The Gemara answers: Only cases that involve definite tumah are enumerated but any in which no definite tumah is involved²⁸ is not mentioned.

An objection was raised: What are the things to which she conveys tumah? Foodstuffs and drinks. Doesn't this mean those that are sanctified as well as those that are terumah? — No, only those that are sanctified.²⁹

Come and hear: Rabbi Yehudah ruled [that the female members of a Kohen's household] must examine their bodies] even after they have concluded a meal of terumah; and the point raised, 'Isn't the consumed meal a matter of the past?'³⁰ [And to this] Rav Chisda replied: This was necessary only for the sake of ensuring the fitness of the

¹³ Of the seven days of menstruation.

¹⁴ From the time the garment was last washed, it being unknown how soon after this the stain was made.

¹⁵ During the period mentioned.

¹⁶ Which she touched.

¹⁷ On which she lay or sat.

¹⁸ Provided the woman shook the vessel and did not merely touch it.

¹⁹ Of the 'eleven days' following the seven days of a menstrual period.

²⁰ Because it is unknown when the flow actually appeared and the limits of the menstruation period cannot consequently be determined.

²¹ Thus it has been shown that, in agreement with Rava, the Baraisa tacitly assumes that the couches and seats under discussion convey tumah not only to the man who came in contact with them but also to the clothes he wears.

²² Who took the law of the tumah of an earthen vessel for granted and deduced from it that of the couch.

²³ Whichever of them came in contact with the tamei object.

²⁴ Which did not come in direct contact with the seat or the couch.

²⁵ From an earthenware vessel.

²⁶ Sacrificial foods.

²⁷ In Tractate Chagigah where are enumerated the restrictions that are applicable to sanctified things and not to terumah and vice versa.

²⁸ Such as that of the twenty-four hours' period under discussion where the tumah is merely a preventive measure.

²⁹ The oil of a meal-offering, for instance, or the wine of libation.

³⁰ Lit., 'what has been, has been', sc. what is the use of an examination after the meal has been consumed when nothing can be done even if the woman were to be found tamei.

remnants before her?³¹ — Rav Huna reads:³² ‘To burn the remnants that were in her hands’,³³ the examination being held immediately after [the meal].³⁴

Come and hear: It once happened that Rebbe acted³⁵ in accordance with the ruling of Rabbi Eliezer,³⁶ and after he reminded himself he observed, ‘Rabbi Eliezer deserves to be relied upon in an emergency’. And the point was raised: What could be the meaning of ‘after he reminded himself’? If it be explained, ‘After he remembered that the halachah was not in agreement with Rabbi Eliezer but in agreement with the Rabbis’, [the difficulty would arise:] How could he act according to the former's ruling³⁷ even in an emergency? Hence, [it means after he recalled] that it was not stated whether the law was in agreement with the one Master or with the other Master, and having recalled that it was not an individual that differed from him³⁸ but that many differ from him he observed, ‘Rabbi Eliezer deserves to be relied upon in an emergency’. Now if it is granted [that retroactive tumah applies also] to terumah³⁹ one can well understand the

incident⁴⁰ since terumah was in existence in the days of Rebbe, but if it is maintained [that retroactive tumah is applicable only] to sanctified things⁴¹ [the objection would arise:] Were there sanctified things in the days of Rebbe?⁴² — [This may be explained] on the lines of a statement of Ulla, as Ulla stated: The chaveirim in Galilee keep their things in taharah⁴³ so they may have done it in the days of Rebbe.

Come and hear: It once happened that Rabban Gamliel's maid was baking bread loaves of terumah and after each she rinsed her hands with water and held an examination. After the last one when she held the examination she found herself to be tamei and she came and asked Rabban Gamliel who told her that they were all tamei.⁴⁴ ‘Master’, she said to him, ‘did I not hold an examination after each one?’ ‘If so’, he told her, ‘the last is tamei⁴⁵ while all the others are tahor’. At any event was it not here stated, ‘bread loaves of terumah’?⁴⁶ — By terumah was meant the bread loaves of a todah-offering.⁴⁷ But how does it come about that the loaves of a

³¹ Should a woman, for instance, discover a flow later in the day the examination after her morning meal would ensure the taharah of the terumah that remained from that meal. Thus it follows that in the absence of an examination the terumah would be deemed to be tamei retroactively. How, then, could Rav Huna maintain that the tumah is conveyed to sanctified things only?

³² In place of Rav Chisda's version of Rabbi Yehudah's meaning.

³³ If she finds herself on examination to be tamei the remnants of her meal, since she touched them, are deemed to be tamei and, as tamei terumah must be burned.

³⁴ So that it may be taken for granted that the terumah she had just handled had come in contact with a confirmed niddah. Where, however, the woman held no examination immediately after her meal, a subsequent discovery of a place causes no retroactive tumah to the terumah she handled.

³⁵ In the case of a young woman who did not suffer a flow during three consecutive periods (of thirty days each).

³⁶ That the period of tumah is to be reckoned from the discovery of the flow and not retroactively. The Rabbis who differ from Rabbi Eliezer hold this ruling to apply to an old woman only (whose

senility might be assumed to be the cause of the irregularity) but not to a young one.

³⁷ Which is contrary to the halachah.

³⁸ Rabbi Eliezer.

³⁹ Contrary to the view of Rav Huna.

⁴⁰ That occurred in Rebbe's time.

⁴¹ As Rav Huna laid down.

⁴² Surely not, since the Temple was no longer in existence at that time!

⁴³ In their hope and expectation that the Temple might at any moment be rebuilt.

⁴⁴ On account of the twenty-four hours of her retroactive tumah.

⁴⁵ Owing to retroactive tumah from the previous examination to the last examination.

⁴⁶ And yet the law of retroactive tumah was applied. How then could Rav Huna maintain that it applies only to sanctified things?

⁴⁷ Sc. the four loaves (one from each of the four kinds) which are given to the Kohen and are subject to the restrictions of sanctified things though they are called terumah.

today-offering should require to be baked?⁴⁸ This is a case where they⁴⁹ were set aside⁵⁰ while they were being kneaded, this being in line with what Rav Tuvi bar Katina ruled: 'If a man baked the loaves of a todah-offering in four loaves⁵¹ he has performed his duty'. [For when] the objection was raised, 'Do we not require forty loaves',⁵² [the reply was that] this⁵³ is just a prescribed procedure.⁵⁴ But, surely, [it was asked,] is it not necessary to separate terumah⁵⁵ from each?⁵⁶ And should you reply that one might break off a piece from each, [it could be retorted that:] The All Merciful said: one,⁵⁷ which implies that one must not break off a piece. [To this] it was replied that 'they were set aside while they were being kneaded';⁵⁸ so here also⁵⁹ it may be explained that they were separated while they were being kneaded.⁶⁰

Come and hear: Another incident took place when Rabban Gamliel's maid was sealing wine jars with clay that after each she rinsed her hands with water and held an examination. After the last one when she held the examination and found herself to be tamei she came and asked Rabban Gamliel who told her that they were all tamei. 'But, surely', she said to him, 'I held an examination after each one'. 'If so', he told her, 'the last is tamei while all the others are tahor'. Now if it is conceded that one incident⁶¹ concerned sanctified things and the other terumah, it can be well understood why she asked a second time, but if it is contended that the former as well as the latter concerned sanctified things, why should she have asked him a second time? — [Each] incident occurred with a different maid.

Another version: Rav Huna ruled, [The retroactive tumah during] the twenty-four hours [preceding the observation] of a menstrual flow is conveyed both to sanctified things and to terumah. From where is this inferred? From its omission in the enumeration of the various grades [of sanctity]. Said Rav Nachman to him: Surely, a Tanna recited [that the retroactive tumah] applies only to sanctified things and not to terumah. Rav Shmuel son of Rav Yitzchak accepted this [teaching] from him [and explained it] as applying to common food that was prepared under conditions of sanctified things and not to common food that was prepared in conditions of terumah.

⁴⁸ The terumah loaves of the todah-offering are not baked when they are terumah; they are set aside as terumah only afterwards!?

⁴⁹ The four loaves.

⁵⁰ For the Kohen.

⁵¹ I.e., of the dough of each of the four kinds he made only one loaf instead of the prescribed ten.

⁵² How then can four suffice?

⁵³ The number of forty.

⁵⁴ But it does not affect the validity of the sacrifice.

⁵⁵ For the Kohen.

⁵⁶ Of the four kinds, one from each.

⁵⁷ 'and . . . shall offer one', 'one' implying a whole one.

⁵⁸ One loaf from each kind was set aside for the Kohen while nine of each were left for the owner, and subsequently each of the four small and the four large (representing nine small) loaves were duly baked.

⁵⁹ In the case of Rabban Gamliel's maid.

⁶⁰ The maid having been engaged in the baking of the Kohen's share.

⁶¹ Of the two in which the maid figured.