

Daf Notes

Insights into the Daily Daf

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Tzvi Gershon ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o"n.
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Daily Daf

Pregnant Woman

The *Mishna* had stated: A pregnant woman refers to one whose fetus can be discerned.

The *Gemora* asks: At what stage is the fetus discernible?

Sumchos said in the name of Rabbi Meir that it is three months. And although there is no actual proof for this statement, there is an allusion to it, for it is written: *And it came to pass about three months after etc. [that Yehudah was told that his daughter-in-law, Tamar, had committed harlotry, and has also conceived].*

The *Gemora* asks: An allusion to it!? Isn't this a Scriptural text and a most reliable proof?

The *Gemora* answers: It can only be regarded as an allusion, because some women give birth after nine months and others after seven months (*but nevertheless, the rule regarding pregnant women only applies after three months*).

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If a woman was in a condition of presumptive pregnancy and after observing a discharge of blood, she miscarried a sac containing air or any other thing which was not viable, she is still deemed to have been in the condition of her presumptive pregnancy and it suffices for her to reckon her period of *tumah* from the time of her

observation of the discharge (*as the law is with a pregnant woman, and she is not tamei retroactively*). And although there is no actual proof for this ruling, there is an allusion to it, for it is written: We have conceived, we have been in pain, we have been as if we gave birth to air.

The *Gemora* asks: An allusion to it!? Doesn't the text provide an actual proof?

The *Gemora* answers: That text was in fact written about males (*in whose case conception and birth are mere metaphorical expression to the Jewish nation*).

The *Gemora* points out a contradiction from the following *braisa*: If a woman (*during the eleven days in which she is susceptible to the tumah of a zavah*) was in difficult labor for two days, and on the third day (*after a further discharge of blood, so that her bleeding extended over three consecutive days*) she miscarried a sac containing air or any other thing which was not viable, she is regarded as giving birth in the condition of a *zavah*. [*This is only because she did not deliver a viable child; however, if she had done so, she would not be regarded as a zavah, since the discharge of blood did not result on its own, but rather, on account of the child. She now must count seven clean days and bring the korban prescribed for a zavah before she can attain taharah.*] Now if you maintain that such a miscarriage is regarded as a proper birth, didn't the Torah ordain that a discharge of blood in difficult labor immediately before

birth is regarded as *tahor* (when occurring in the eleven days of *zivah*)?

Rav Pappi replied: [In truth, such a type of miscarriage cannot be regarded as a proper birth...] Leave alone the question of the twenty-four hours retroactive *tumah*, which only involves a Rabbinical enactment (and could, therefore, be relaxed even when the pregnancy ended in a miscarriage).

Rav Pappa replied: [In truth, such a type of miscarriage cannot be regarded as a proper birth, but a special leniency is not required...] The actual reason (why a pregnant woman reckons her menstrual *tumah* from the very moment she has experienced a discharge and not retroactively) is because she feels a heaviness in her head and limbs (which causes the abeyance of her bloods); well then, here also (when she is pregnant with a non-fetus) she feels a heaviness in her head and in her limbs (and therefore her *tumah* is not reckoned retroactively).

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired of Rabbi Zeira: What is the ruling where a woman found blood (on the day she completed her third month of pregnancy), and immediately afterwards, her pregnancy was discerned? Is she retroactively *tamei*, because her pregnancy was not known at the time she found the blood, or is she not retroactively *tamei*, since she found it immediately before her pregnancy became discernible?

Rabbi Zeira replied: The sole reason (why a pregnant woman reckons her menstrual *tumah* from the very moment she has experienced a discharge and not retroactively) is that she feels a heaviness in her head and limbs (which causes the abeyance of her bloods); but (in this case), at the time she found the blood, she felt no heaviness either in her head or in her limbs (and she cannot, therefore, be regarded as a pregnant woman, and her *tumah* is reckoned retroactively).

A certain old man asked Rabbi Yochanan: What is the ruling if, when the time of her fixed period had come during the days of her pregnancy (after the fetus has become discernible) and she did not examine herself? I am raising this question, he added, on the view of the authority who maintains that 'fixed periods' are an ordinance of the Torah

(a Halachah l'Moshe mi'Sinai that a woman has an obligation to examine herself on the arrival of her fixed period, since the flow may be expected to come, and a woman who did not examine herself at such a period, must be regarded as possibly *tamei*)? What is the ruling? Must she examine herself since 'fixed periods' are a Biblical ordinance, or perhaps, since her menstrual blood is in abeyance, she requires no examination?

Rabbi Yochanan replied: You have learned it in a *Mishna*: Rabbi Meir said that if a woman was in a hiding place (on account of troops or bandits) when the time of her fixed period arrived and she did not examine herself, she is nevertheless *tahor*, because fright suspends the bloods. Now, the reason (that she is declared *tahor*) is that there was fright, but if there had been no fright and the time of her fixed period had arrived and she did not examine herself, she would have been deemed *tamei*. Evidently, 'fixed periods' are a Biblical ordinance (for if the duty to examine herself is merely Rabbinic, she would not be declared *tamei* if she neglected to do so), and that nevertheless, since there was fright, her menstrual blood is suspended and she requires no examination; so also here (when she is pregnant), since her menstrual blood is suspended, she requires no examination. (8b – 9a)

Nursing Woman

The *Mishna* had stated: A nursing woman refers to a woman until she weans etc.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: A nursing mother whose child died within twenty-four months (after birth, which is the normal period a mother is expected to nurse her child) is like all other women, and causes retroactive *tumah* for a period of twenty-four hours or from examination to examination (i.e., she is *tamei* until her last clean examination). If, therefore, she continued to nurse him for four or five years, it suffices for her to reckon her period of *tumah* from the time of her discharge (and not retroactively); these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yehudah, Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Shimon ruled: Their time suffices for them during the twenty-four months after giving birth. Therefore, even if she nursed him for four or five years, she causes *tumah* retroactively for twenty-four hours or from examination to examination.

The *Gemora* notes: Now, if you will carefully consider the opinions just expressed, you will find that according to the opinion of Rabbi Meir, the blood (*during the nursing period*) decomposes and turns into milk, while according to the opinion of Rabbi Yosi, Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Shimon, the woman's limbs are shaky and her natural flow of blood does not return before the lapse of twenty-four months.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* supporting its understanding of the disagreement: The menstrual blood decomposes and turns into milk; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosi stated: Her limbs are shaky and her natural flow of blood does not return before twenty-four months.

Rabbi Ila'i cites a Scriptural verse as Rabbi Meir's source: *Who can bring a pure thing from out of a defiled one? Is it not the One God? [Milk, which is produced from blood is what the verse is referencing.]*

Rabbi Yochanan explains that the Rabbis, however, understand this verse to be in reference to semen, which is *tamei*, while the person who is created from it is *tahor*.

Rabbi Elozar said: The reference is to the sprinkling waters (*which is spring water mixed with ashes from the red heifer, used to purify one who is contaminated with corpse tumah*), in the case of which the man who sprinkles it as well as the man upon whom it is sprinkled is *tahor*, while he who touches it is *tamei*.

The *Gemora* asks: But is the man who sprinkles it *tahor*? Is it not in fact written: *And he that sprinkles the water of sprinkling shall immerse his clothes (meaning that he and his clothing are tamei)*?

The *Gemora* answers: What is meant by 'he that sprinkles' is 'he that touches it.'

The *Gemora* asks: But is it not actually written: *He that sprinkles*, and also: *He that touches*? And furthermore, isn't the one who sprinkles required to immerse his clothes, while the one who touches is not required to do so?

The *Gemora* answers: Rather say that what is meant by 'he that sprinkles' is 'he that touches it.'

The *Gemora* asks: Then why wasn't it written, '*he that carries*'?

The *Gemora* answers: It informs us that *tumah* is not contracted unless one carried the minimum quantity prescribed for sprinkling.

The *Gemora* asks: This is a satisfactory explanation according to the one who holds that sprinkling must be performed with a prescribed minimum amount of the water; what, however, can be said according to the one who holds that no prescribed minimum amount is required?

The *Gemora* answers: Even according to the one who holds that no prescribed quantity is required – that refers only to the quantity applied to the body of the person, but as regards that which is in the vessel, a prescribed quantity is required.

The *Gemora* cites a *Mishna* which proves this: The volume that is necessary in the purification waters to be considered as having contained "the amount needed for sprinkling" is enough water that one can dip the tips of the stalks that are on top of the hyssop stalks into the water and be able to have sufficient water to sprinkle. [*This is because the hyssops can absorb a certain amount of water. Thus, there must be a sufficient amount of water in the vessel so that after the tips of the stems become saturated with water, there will still be enough on the outside of the stems to sprinkle on the tamei.*]

The *Gemora* notes that this is what Shlomo HaMelech was referring to when he wrote (*in the Book of Koheles*): *I said I would become wise; but alas, it is still beyond me. [Although Shlomo HaMelech was exceedingly wise, he was still unable to explain why a mixture that renders one tamei through contact can have the reverse effect on one who is being sprinkled upon, and it will also leave the sprinkler tahor.]* (9a)

Old Woman

The *Mishna* had stated: Who is regarded 'an old woman' (*that the law of "her time suffices for her" applies to*)? It is

referring to any woman over whom three periods have passed near the time of her old age (*without experiencing a discharge*).

The *Gemora* asks: What is to be understood by ‘near the time of her old age’?

Rav Yehudah replied: The age when her women friends speak of her as an old woman.

Rabbi Shimon said: When people call her, “Mother, mother” in her presence, and she does not become embarrassed.

Rabbi Zeira and Rabbi Shmuel bar Yitzchak differ: One says that it is when she is called, “Mother,” and she does not resent it, and the other says that it is when she does not become embarrassed from it.

The *Gemora* notes that the practical difference between them is the case of one who becomes embarrassed, but she does not resent it.

The *Gemora* asks: What is the length of “a period”?

Rish Lakish citing Rabbi Yehudah Nesiah said that it is a normal period, which is thirty days.

Rava, citing Rav Chisda, said that it is twenty days.

The *Gemora* notes that in fact, however, there is no difference of opinion between them, for one is reckoning both the *tahor* and the *tamei* days (the seven days of *niddah*, three days of *zivah*, and twenty days of *taharah*), while the other does not reckon the *tamei* days. [According to both, a total of ninety days is required. If, as an old woman, she doesn’t experience a discharge for ninety days, she is regarded as an old woman, and “her time suffices for her.”]

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: If for an old woman, who has passed three periods (*without experiencing a discharge of blood*), and then she discharged blood, it suffices for her to reckon her period of *tumah* from the time she discharged the blood (*and we do not reckon her tamei retroactively*). If another three periods have passed (*without experiencing a*

discharge of blood), and then she discharged blood, it again suffices for her to reckon her *tumah* from the time of the discharge. If, however, another three periods have passed (*without experiencing a discharge of blood*), and then she discharged blood, she is regarded as all other women and causes *tumah* retroactively for twenty-four hours or from examination to examination. This is the case not only where she discharged blood at perfectly regular intervals (*where each interval was precisely ninety days*), but even where she experienced it at successively decreasing intervals or increasing intervals. (9a – 9b)

DAILY MASHAL

Milchigs on Shavuos

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* supporting its understanding of the disagreement: The menstrual blood decomposes and turns into milk; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosi stated: Her limbs are shaky and her natural flow of blood does not return before twenty-four months.

Rabbi Ila’i cites a Scriptural verse as Rabbi Meir’s source: *Who can bring a pure thing from out of a defiled one? Is it not the One God? [Milk, which is produced from blood is what the verse is referencing.]*

Rabbi Yochanan explains that the Rabbis, however, understand this verse to be in reference to semen, which is *tamei*, while the person who is created from it is *tahor*.

The *Yeshuas Yaakov* says: What is the ultimate representation of transforming something *tamei* into something *tahor*? Milk! With this we understand why we eat milk products on *Shavous*. Just like *Hashem* transforms a *tamei* to a *tahor*, the same is true by the Jewish people. We have to take something that is *tamei* (*ourselves*) and transform it into something *tahor*. How do we accomplish this? The answer is through *Torah*. We eat milk because that represents this transformation. On *Shavous* we were given the *Torah* and through *Torah* we have the ability to transform a *davar gashmi* into a *davar ruchni*.