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Spinal Cord

The *Mishna* had stated: If the spine was broken and its cord severed, the animal is rendered a *tereifah*.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rebbe says: The greater part of the spinal cord must be severed. Rabbi Yaakov says: Even if it was only punctured. It once happened that Rebbe decided a case according to the (*more stringent*) view of Rabbi Yaakov. Rav Huna said: The *halachah* is not in accordance with Rabbi Yaakov’s opinion.

The *Gemora* asks: What is meant by ‘the greater part’? Rav said: It means the greater part of the circumference of its skin (*the meninges which envelops the cord – even though the tissue inside was not separated at all*). Others say that it means the greater part of its nerve tissue (*if it is severed to this extent it is a tereifah even though the meninges which envelops the cord is intact*).

Now those who say that it is a *tereifah* if the greater part of its nerve tissue is severed will certainly hold that the severance of the greater part of the circumference of its skin renders the animal *tereifah* (*for the skin protects the tissue, and without the skin, the tissue will become weakened and ooze out*); but as for those who say that the severance of the greater part of the circumference of its skin renders the animal *tereifah*, what would be their view if the greater part of its nerve tissue was severed?

The *Gemora* proves this from that which Nivli said in the name of Rav Huna: The greater part (*of the spinal cord*) of which the Rabbis speak means the greater part of the circumference of its skin, for the actual nerve tissue is of no consequence (*and even if it is severed, the animal will not be rendered a tereifah*).

Rav Nassan bar Avin was once sitting before Rav and was examining the spinal cord for any severance of the greater part of the circumference of the skin and also for any severance of the greater part of the circumference of the nerve tissue. Rav said to him: If the greater part of the circumference of the skin is intact (*it is not necessary to examine it further, for*) the actual nerve tissue is of no consequence.

Rabbah bar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi: If the nerve tissue liquefied, the animal is unfit; if it softened, it is unfit (*tereifah*). What is meant by ‘liquefied’ and by ‘softened’? ‘Liquefied’ means that it pours out as from a jug; ‘softened’ means that it (*the spinal cord*) cannot stand upright.

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired: What is the law if it cannot stand upright because of its weight (*on account of its heaviness*)? The *Gemora* leaves this question unresolved.

In the school of Rav it was taught: If it softened, the animal is unfit, but if it wasted away, the animal is still fit.

The *Gemora* questions this from the following *braisa*: Rabbi Shimon ben Elozar said: If the nerve tissue of the spinal cord of an animal wasted away, it is a *tereifah*.

The *Gemora* answers: That was a case where the nerve tissue had softened (*not wasted away*).

The *Gemora* asks: But Levi was once sitting in the public bathhouse when he saw a man who had smashed his head (*against a wall*), and exclaimed: This man's brain has wasted away! Now, did he not mean to imply that he could not continue to live (*and the same should be said regarding the nerve tissue of the spinal cord*)?

Abaye answers that he meant to imply that he could not father children any longer.

The *Gemora* asks: How far (*back*) does the (*essential part of the*) spinal cord extend? [Although the spinal cord extends until the tail, the *Gemora* is asking at what point does the vitality of the spinal cord cease, so that any severance of the cord beyond that point would not matter.]

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: Up to the cord between the branches (*above the hind legs, where the spinal cord begins to branch off to each leg*).

Rav Dimi bar Yitzchak was intending to go to Bei Chuzai. He came to Rav Yehudah and said: 'Would the master indicate to me where 'between the branches' is. He replied: Fetch me a kid and I will show them to you. Rav

Dimi brought him a fat kid and Rav Yehudah said to him: In this, they (*the 'between the branches'*) are too deeply embedded in the fat and are therefore not distinguishable. He then brought him a lean kid and Rav Yehudah said to him: In this, they (*the hipbones*) protrude too much and (*the 'between the branches'*) are therefore not distinguishable. Rav Yehudah said to him: Come and I will teach you the traditional law orally. Shmuel said the following: The severance of the cord in any part (*from the neck*) up to the first 'between the branches' is *tereifah*; a severance in the third 'between the branches,' it is permitted; as to the second 'between the branches,' I do not know.

Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua inquired: Did Shmuel mean 'until and including' (*and therefore a severance in the spinal cord, which is between the branches would be rendered a tereifah*), or did he mean 'until and not including'?

Rav Pappa inquired: If you say that he meant 'until and not including' (*and therefore the first section between the branches would be a matter of doubt*), what is the law then if it was severed at the 'mouth of the branch' (*the point where the nerves branch off*)?

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired: If you say that he meant 'until and including,' what is the law then if the branch nerve itself was severed (*but not the spinal cord*)?

The *Gemora* attempts to resolve this from the following *braisa*: The branch nerve is regarded as meat. [*Just as a flesh wound would not render the animal a tereifah, so too, a break in the branch nerve would not render it a tereifah.*] Now, does this not refer to the first and second branch nerves?



The *Gemora* rejects the proof by saying that it refers to the third one.

Regarding a bird, Rabbi Yannai said: The vitality of the spinal cord extends as far as the point below the wings. Rish Lakish says: As far as the point between the wings.

Ulla said: I was once standing before Ben Pazzi when a bird was brought to him for examination (*of the spinal cord*). He examined it as far as the point between the wings when he was sent for by the office of the *Nasi*. He arose and went away (*without checking the area between the wings*). Now, I did not know whether he was of the opinion that it was not necessary to examine it any further, or was it only out of respect for the *Nasi* (*that he did not conclude the examination*). (45b – 46a)

Liver

The *Mishna* had stated: If the liver was removed and nothing remained, it is a *tereifah*.

The *Gemora* infers from here that if something remained, even though it was less than an olive's volume, it is permitted.

The *Gemora* asks: But we have learned in a *Mishna*: If the liver was removed, and there remained an olive's volume from it, it is permitted!? [*We see that to be permitted, it needs at least an olive's volume!?*]

Rav Yosef said: This is not difficult, for one *Mishna* represents the view of Rabbi Chiya (*that if any amount remains, it will be permitted*), and the other one represents the view of Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe (*that it is only permitted if an olive's volume remains*). For Rabbi Chiya used to throw the liver away, while

Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe would eat it. [*R' Chiya did not regard the liver as such a vital organ, and therefore it wasn't healthy either. He therefore ruled that the animal is permitted even without an olive's volume remaining, for he wasn't concerned that it couldn't regenerate itself. R' Shimon, however, regarded it as a vital organ; he therefore assumed the position that it was healthy. Accordingly, he maintained that the animal is permitted only if an olive's volume remained, for then, it could regenerate itself.*] And a way to remember this (*which Tanna did what*), think of the saying: the rich (*Rabbi Shimon the son of Rebbe*) are stingy (*and do not throw away the liver*).

An army once came to Pumbedisa. Rabbah and Rav Yosef fled the town and were met by Rabbi Zeira, who said to them: Fugitives! The olive's volume of which the Rabbis spoke must be found in the place of the gallbladder (*where they attach to each other*).

Rav Adda bar Ahavah said: It must be found in the most vital place (*where it is attached to the kidneys*).

Rav Pappa said: Therefore there must be one olive's volume remaining in the place of the gallbladder and another in the most vital place.

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired: What is the law if the olive's volume was not found in one place, but was distributed amongst several places (*a half k'zayis in one place and a half in another – both being in the correct region*)? What is the law if there only remained of the liver a long, thin strip (*equaling a k'zayis*)?

Rav Ashi inquired: What is the law if that which remained of the liver was flattened out? The *Gemora* leaves all these questions unresolved.

Rabbi Zerika inquired of Rabbi Ami: What is the law if the liver loosened from its moorings, though it was still attached to the diaphragm?

Rabbi Ami replied: I see no difficulty in a case where it became loose at all, for as to the one who says that there must be an olive's volume in the region of the gallbladder, it is so here, and as to the one who says there must be an olive's volume in the most vital part, that too, is here. (46a)

Lungs

The *Mishna* had stated: If the lung was punctured, the animal is rendered a *tereifah*.

Rav, Shmuel and Rav Assi say that the *Mishna* is referring to the outer membrane (*and if that alone is pierced, the animal is a tereifah*). Others say that they said that the *Mishna* is referring to the inner membrane.

The *Gemora* notes: It is obvious that if the outer membrane was punctured, but not the inner one, the animal is kosher, for the inner membrane is a sufficient protection (*that the lung will not lose air*). This is in accordance with Rava's teaching, for Rava said: If the outer membrane of the lung was peeled off, so that now the lung resembles a red date, it is permitted. [*Evidently, the outer membrane is not essential.*] The question is: What if the inner membrane was punctured, but not the outer one, will the outer one afford sufficient protection or not? Rav Acha and Ravina disagree regarding this: One maintains that it does not

afford sufficient protection, and the other holds that it does.

The *Gemora* rules that it does afford sufficient protection, and this is in agreement with the teaching of Rav Yosef, for Rav Yosef said: If the lung produces a hissing sound (*when inflated, as if air is escaping; after the animal was slaughtered*) and the source of the sound can be located, we must place over that spot a feather, spittle or straw; if it flutters, the animal is a *tereifah* (*for clearly, air is escaping*); otherwise, it is permitted. If the source cannot be located, we must bring a basin of lukewarm water and put the lung inside of it. The *Gemora* explains itself: The water must not be too hot, for then the lungs would shrivel up (*and possible seal up the hole*); it cannot be too cold, for then the lung would harden (*and possible cause a new hole*). Rather, we use lukewarm water, and then inflate the lung; if it bubbles, it is a *tereifah*, otherwise, it is permitted, for then we are assured that the inner membrane has been punctured, but not the outer one, and the hissing sound is caused merely by the air blowing between the two membranes.

The *Gemora* stated above: If the outer membrane of the lung was peeled off, so that now the lung resembles a red date, it is permitted.

And Rava also said: If a portion of the lungs turned red, the animal is permitted, but if the entire lung turned red, it is a *tereifah*.

Ravina asked Rava: Why is it that where a portion of it turned red it is permitted? Is it not because it will eventually become healthy again? Then surely where the entire lung turned red, it should also be permitted,

because it will eventually become healthy again? Was it not taught in a *braisa*: With regard to other vermin and crawling things, (*one would not be liable for causing injuring them on Shabbos*) unless blood actually comes out. [Regarding any other wound, although it is quite red, if it does not bleed, is not regarded as an injury, and therefore, there is no liability for causing such a wound on Shabbos, for the blood will be reabsorbed. Likewise, the fact that the lungs have turned red, even completely red, should not be regarded as punctured; accordingly, it should not render the animal a *tereifah*.] And should you argue and say that we ought to compare our case with the case of the eight *sheratzim* (*eight species of creeping things*), about which it has been taught in a *braisa*: One is liable for violating the *Shabbos*, by injuring these creatures - if only the blood collected under the skin, although it did not come out. If so, I would contend that even if only a portion of the lungs had turned red the animal should be a *tereifah*. There is therefore no difference (*and even if the lung is completely red, the animal is kosher*).

And Rava also said: If a portion of the lungs became dry, the animal is rendered a *tereifah*. Rav Pappi in the name of Rava explained that it is so dry that it crumbles when pressed by a fingernail.

The *Gemora* asks: Is this view only in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yosi the son of HaMeshullam? For we have learned in a *Mishna*: What is meant by 'dried' (*regarding the ear of a firstborn – that it is considered a blemish*)? If it so dry that it will not bleed when punctured. Rabbi Yosi the son of HaMeshullam says: It is so dry that it crumbles when pressed by a fingernail.

The *Gemora* answers: You can even say that our view is in accordance with the opinion of the Rabbis, but there is, however, the following difference: In the case of the ear of a firstborn, since as it is constantly exposed to wind, it will not become healthy again (*even if it is only so dry that it will not bleed when punctured*), while in the case of the lungs, since they are not exposed to wind, they will become healthy again.

And Rava also said: If the lungs were covered with scablike spots with black patches, or with patches of various colours, it is permitted.

Ameimar said in the name of Rava: We may not compare blisters with punctures (*for a hole in a blister might change, and comparing one to to the other will not be a valid test*). (46a – 46b)

DAILY MASHAL

A butcher told the Chofetz Chaim that he was planning to give up his position as shochet, because the responsibility is awesome. "One tiny error, and I cause someone to eat *tereifah*. I think I will go into business."

The Chofetz Chaim said, "That is indeed a serious consideration. Yet, while *tereifah* is a grievous sin, it is only one sin. But are you aware of the number of potential sins involved in doing business? One may overcharge, one may take interest on credit, one may bad-mouth a competitor, one may unwittingly sell defective merchandise, one may take a false oath, and a number of others." The Chofetz Chaim, who zealously cherished every moment to be able to study Torah,



spent many hours personally examining every sefer he sold, lest there be a defective page.

Sometimes a person may engage in a halachically improper manner "because everyone does it. That's 'the way of business.'" That does not change the fact that it is a violation of halachah.

It is important that we know the halachic guidelines for doing business.