

29 Tishrei 5776
Oct. 12, 2015



Nazir Daf 51

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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

Rekev

The Mishna had stated: For a ladleful of corpse-dust.

The Gemora asks: And what is its size?

Chizkiyah said: A palmfull. Rabbi Yochanan said: A handfull.

It has been taught in a braisa: The ladleful of corpse-dust mentioned is from the base of the fingers and upwards; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. The Sages say: A handfull. Now, Rabbi Yochanan at least agrees with the Sages; but with whom does Chizkiyah agree, neither with Rabbi Meir, nor with the Sages?

The Gemora answers: They say: A palmfull and from the joints of the fingers and upwards is the same measure.

Rav Shimi bar Adda said to Rav Pappa: How is it known that ‘from the joints of the fingers and upwards’ means towards the tips (of the fingers)? Perhaps it means lower down the hand (towards the wrist),

Which is the measure of a palmfull?

The Gemora notes: This was not resolved. (50b)

The *braisa* asks: To which type of corpse does the law of corpse-dust apply? A corpse that is buried without clothes in a marble casket or on a floor of stone. This is a corpse where the law of corpse-dust applies. If the corpse was buried in a wooden casket or on a floor of bricks, this is a corpse that does not have the law of corpse-dust.

Ulla stated: Corpse-dust is what comes from (*a combination of*) flesh, sinews, and bones.

Rava asked a question on Ulla from a *braisa*. Corpse-dust that comes from flesh is tahor. This implies that if the corpse-dust came from bone alone, it could cause someone to become tamei even if it had no flesh mixed in!

The *Gemora* answers: When the *braisa* says that corpse-dust that comes from flesh is tahor, it means that it becomes tamei only if bone was also mixed in.

The *Gemora* asks: What about sinews? [*Didn't Ulla say that they are also required to form something that has the halachic status of corpse-dust?*]

The *Gemora* answers: It is impossible that there will be both flesh and bones without sinews.

Rav Shmuel bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: Two dead people who are buried together become an admixture to each other (they do not allow each other to become corpse-dust).

Rav Nassan asked a question on this from a *braisa*. Corpse-dust that comes from two people can cause tumah!

Rava answers: The case of the *braisa* is where they were buried separately, and after they decomposed, their corpse-dust were mixed and formed an amount of a ladleful of corpse-dust.

Rabbah bar Chanah says in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If someone's hair was cut and was buried with him, they (*hair and body*) become an admixture to each other (they prevent each other from becoming corpse-dust).

The *Mishna* states there: Whatever was part of a dead person can cause tumah, besides for teeth, hair, and nails. When they are connected to the body, they too can cause tumah.

Chizkiyah inquired: If his hair is going to be cut, or his nails are going to be cut, what is the law? Do we say that whatever is going to be cut is looked at as if it is already cut, or do we say that now they are connected?

The *Gemora* asks: Let us resolve this question from Rabbah bar Chanah's statement earlier, that hair that was shorn prevents the body from becoming

corpse-dust. This implies that if it wasn't shorn, it would become corpse-dust together with the body!

The *Gemora* answers that there is no proof from his statement. It is possible that if it is cut it prevents both of them from being corpse-dust, but if it is not cut, it is a matter of doubt.

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired: What about corpse-dust from a person's heel? Did we learn (the Oral Law) only about corpse-dust from the rest of the body, or not? [*Tosfos explains that there is thick skin on one's heel that is considered somewhat "dead" even during his lifetime. Rabbi Yirmiyah therefore was unsure if this skin should be able to create a status of corpse-dust.*]

The *Gemora* attempts to answer this question from the following *braisa*. Rabbi Nasan son of Rabbi Oshaya taught: Corpse-dust that comes from two dead people is tamei. If you should think that skin from the heel does not (cause tumah), [why should a ladleful of both cause tumah]? When you go here (to the dust of this corpse), perhaps it comes from the heel, and when you go here (to the other corpse), perhaps it came from the heel?

The *Gemora* counters: If the entire corpse decomposed, and the dust comes from the heel (as well), the dust certainly has a law of corpse-dust. The question here is: If a single limb (near the heel) is present, and the dust includes dust from the heel, what is the law?

The *Gemora* leaves this question unresolved.

Rabbi Yirmiyah inquired: What about a fetus in a woman? Do the fetus and the woman become an admixture to each other (and therefore prevent each other from becoming corpse-dust or not)? Do we say that since the master said that a fetus is considered the thigh of its mother, it is part of her body and its dust would not be regarded as an admixture (to its mother, and therefore it would not prevent the other from becoming corpse-dust), or do we say that because the fetus was destined to leave, it is separate from her (and therefore it would be regarded as an admixture with the dust of its mother)?

The Gemora adds: And if we assume that because the fetus was destined to leave, it is separate from her, what would the law be regarding semen inside the womb of a woman? Do we say that because (at the time that she died) it did not develop (into an embryo), it is like her body, or do we say that because it originated from outside her body, it is not (considered part of her body)?

Rav Pappa inquired: What about her excrement (in her intestines)? Do we say that as she would not survive if she did not eat, it is vital to her life (and therefore cannot be regarded as an admixture), or do we say that because it originated from outside her body, it is not (considered part of her body)?

Rav Acha the son of Rav Ikka inquired: What about the skin (of a corpse)?

Rav Huna bar Manoach inquired: What about the phlegm and mucus (of a corpse)?

Rav Shmuel bar Acha asked Rav Papa: If all of the above would be regarded as an admixture (and would prevent a person from becoming corpse-dust), when would we ever have a case of corpse-dust (*as all corpses have either hair, excrement, skin, phlegm or mucus in them*)?

The Gemora answered: The case would be where the person drank palm water (before he died; this would purge his body from all phlegm and mucus), and smeared him with a depilatory (thus removing his hair), and cooked him in the hot springs of Tiberius (*thus removing his skin*).

Abaye said: We hold that a corpse that was grounded (into dust) has no status of corpse-dust (for the law applies only by a corpse that decomposed).

The Gemora inquired: What is the law if the corpse was ground up, and then decomposed? Do we say that the reason corpse-dust contaminates is because it is composed of flesh, sinews, and bones, and these are present here, or do we say that they (the flesh, sinews and bones) must be generated from its natural form?

The Gemora leaves the question unresolved.

Ulla bar Chanina taught the following *braisa*. A corpse that was incomplete (as it was missing a limb) is not governed by the law of corpse-dust, nor (by the law of) surrounding earth (that if the corpse is moved after burial, the surrounding ground must be taken with), nor (by the law of) graveyard zone (*where if there are three bodies buried together they cannot be moved*).

The *Gemora* asks a question from a *Mishna* in *Eiduyos* (6:3). [The *Mishna* there discusses the fact that certain laws of an olive size amount of flesh from a live person that is detached from his body may cause *tumah* are derived from the similar laws regarding a corpse.] The *Mishna* states: No (one cannot derive *tumah* caused by the flesh of a live person from that of a corpse). We say this law regarding a corpse, for it is (also) subject to the laws of majority (of his body or limbs), one quarter-kav (of bones), or a handful of corpse-dust, but will you say this regarding a live person, where the laws of majority, one quarter-kav, or a handful of corpse-dust do not apply?

What are the circumstances in the *Mishna* above? It must be that a single limb (was cut off and) decomposed. Similarly, by a corpse, even if a single limb (was cut off) decomposes, it has a status of corpse-dust. [This shows that even one limb can cause corpse-dust, unlike *Ulla bar Chanina's* teaching above!?

The *Gemora* answers: Does the *Mishna* regarding a corpse (in a similar case has the law of corpse-dust)? The *Mishna* is teaching us that some corpse is subject to the law of corpse-dust (if an entire corpse decomposes), and no living person (even regarding a limb that was cut off) is ever subject to the status of corpse-dust.

Rava inquired: What is the law regarding a limb (that was severed from the body) when he was alive, and then he died (and now his entire body has decomposed in the same place)? Did we learn (the

Oral Law) only about corpse-dust that decomposed after death, or do we say that as long as now he is dead (it can be considered corpse-dust)?

The *Gemora* attempts to answer this question from the *Mishna* cited above: No (one cannot derive *tumah* caused by the flesh of a live person from that of a corpse). We say this law regarding a corpse, for it is (also) subject to the laws of majority (of his body or limbs), one quarter-kav (of bones), or a handful of corpse-dust, but will you say this regarding a live person, where the laws of majority, one quarter-kav, or a handful of corpse-dust do not apply? The reason the law of corpse-dust does not apply is because he is alive, but it (the *Mishna*) implies that if he were dead, the law of corpse-dust may apply (even if the decomposition happened when he was still alive).

The *Gemora* answers: Does the *Mishna* regarding a corpse (in a similar case has the law of corpse-dust)? The *Mishna* is teaching us that some corpse is subject to the law of corpse-dust (if an entire corpse decomposes), and no living person (even regarding a limb that was cut off) is ever subject to the status of corpse-dust. (51a – 51b)