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Pesachim Daf 2

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**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

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### Checking for Chametz

The *Mishna* says that one must check for *chametz* (leavened bread) by candlelight at the light of the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan. Any place where *chametz* doesn't enter need not be checked, and when the Sages required one to check a wine cellar, this refers to one where *chametz* enters. Beis Shammai say that you must check two rows across the whole cellar, while Beis Hillel say that you must the two outer rows which are at the top.

### What's "Light"?

The *Gemora* cites a dispute about the meaning of the word *or* – *light* in the *Mishna*. Rav Huna says that it means the time of light, i.e., morning, while Rav Yehuda says it means night time.

The *Gemora* assumes that Rav Huna actually means that the *Mishna* is saying that one checks for *chametz* in the morning, and proceeds to try to resolve the dispute.

The *Gemora* cites the verse about Yosef's brothers which states that *haboker or – the morning [was] light*, and they were sent, implying that *light* means the morning.

The *Gemora* deflects this, as the verse doesn't say the light [was] the morning, but the morning "or." In this form, the word *or* is a verb, and the verse means that the morning illuminated.

The verse is consistent with Rav Yehuda's statement in the name of Rav that one should always enter and exit a city while it is still light outside.

The *Gemora* cites the verse which states that the sun will shine *ch'or boker – like light [which is] morning*, implying that *light* means morning.

The *Gemora* deflects this, as the verse doesn't say *or boker*, but adds *like*, making the word *or* a verb. The verse therefore means that like the *illumination* at the morning in this world will be the sunshine time for the righteous in the World to Come.

The *Gemora* cites the verse which states that Hashem called the *or - light* day, implying that *light* is daytime.

The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that the verse means that Hashem called *the time when it starts getting* light day.

The *Gemora* challenges this, as the verse continues to say that He called the dark night, which would therefore mean that He called the time when *it starts getting dark* night, yet night only begins when it is totally dark, not when it begins to get dark.

Rather, the *Gemora* deflects this by saying that the verse means that Hashem summoned the *entity which produces* light, i.e., the sun, and appointed it to serve in the daytime, and he summoned the darkness and appointed it to serve in the nighttime.

The *Gemora* cites the verse which call on the stars of the *or – light* to praise Hashem, implying that *light* is night, when stars are visible.



The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that the verse means that the stars which illuminate should praise Hashem.

The *Gemora* challenges this, as this implies that other stars need not praise Hashem, yet another verse states that all of His legions (including all stars) should praise Him.

The *Gemora* answers that the verse means all stars, as they all illuminate, and it is teaching that the light of stars is considered bona fide light, and would therefore be prohibited to one who forswore all light.

The *Gemora* cites the verse which states that *l'or – at [the time of] light*, the murderer will rise up and kill a poor person, while at night he will be like a thief. Since the end of the verse discusses night, this implies that *light* at the start of the verse refers to day.

The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that the verse is a metaphor about one who breaks and enters someone's house. The verse is stating that if it is clear *as light* that he is ready to kill the owner if necessary, he is considered a murderer, and the owner may kill him to defend himself. Otherwise, he must be considered only a thief, and may not be killed.

The *Gemora* cites the verse in *Iyov* which describes troubles as being a time when the stars go dark, and a person will look forward to *or – light*, and not find it, and he will not see the rays of the morning light, implying that *light* is morning.

The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that *Iyov* was not referring to a specific time of day, but simply cursing his lot, saying that he will look forward to a situation of illumination, and not find it.

The *Gemora* cites the verse in *Tehillim* in which Dovid says that "I said darkness would surround me, but night was *or – light* for me," implying that *light* is day.

The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that this verse is a metaphor. Dovid is saying that he had thought that he would be surrounded by darkness even in the world to come, which

is a world of light. Instead, even this world, which is a world of darkness, became illuminated for him.

The *Gemora* cites a *Mishna* in which Rabbi Yehudah says that one checks for *chametz* three times: at the light of the 14<sup>th</sup>, the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup>, and at the time of destroying the *chametz*, proving that *light* means night, as the morning is listed separately.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which cites a dispute when the prohibition of work on the eve of Pesach begins. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov says it is at the time of *or – light*, while Rabbi Yehudah says it is at sunrise. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov asks Rabbi Yehudah where else we find that only part of a day is prohibited, and Rabbi Yehudah answered that we find this with the eating *chametz*, which is only prohibited on part of the eve of Pesach. The *Gemora* says that this implies that *light* is night, as opposed to sunrise.

The *Gemora* deflects this by saying that *light* may mean dawn, which is before sunrise.

The *Gemora* challenges this, as this would mean that even Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov says that only part of the day is prohibited, undermining his challenge to Rabbi Yehudah.

The *Gemora* answers that we find cases where the Sages instituted a prohibition which begins at dawn, such as a fast day, but none which begins at sunrise.

The *Gemora* says that Rabbi Yehudah's answer seems valid, and explains that Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov's response is that we can't learn from a Torah prohibition of eating *chametz* to a Rabbinic one on work. Rabbi Yehudah would argue that the Rabbinic prohibition of eating *chametz* also applies for only part of the eve of Pesach, while Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov would say that that's simply an extension of the Torah prohibition.

The *Gemora* cites a *Mishna* about the bonfire signals used to communicate the date of Rosh Chodesh. The *Mishna* says that they were only used for Rosh Chodesh that occurred on



the 30<sup>th</sup> day, and were lit on *or* – *light* of the next day, proving that *or* is nighttime.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa* which states that if one was standing and offering sacrifices on the altar all night, *l'orah* – *at light*, he must wash his hands and feet, implying that light means daytime.

The *Gemora* deflects this, saying that the word *orah* is different than *or*.

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### *Introduction to Maseches Pesachim*

Over the last nine months, we have had the privilege of learning the two Masechtos Shabbos and Eiruvin, in which we have become familiar with the numerous and intricate laws of Shabbos. Now, we turn our attention to the laws of Pesach. Over the next four months (including the Yom Tov of Pesach itself) Daf Yomi will study Maseches Pesachim, b'ezras Hashem.

**Pesachim and not Pesach:** Many have noted that the title of this masechta is in the plural form, “Pesachim,” rather than the singular, “Pesach.” This is in contrast to the titles of other masechtos such as Shabbos, Rosh Hashana, Chagiga, etc. which are all in the singular.

The Tosefos Yom Tov (1:1) explains that Pesachim refers to the two times of the holiday of Pesach, *Pesach Rishon* which we all celebrate in Nissan, and *Pesach Sheini*. When the *Beis HaMikdash* stood, people who were unable to offer the Korban Pesach in Nissan, offered it one month later on the 14th of Iyar, *Pesach Sheini*. Since the masechta discusses the halachos relevant to both of these holidays, the most appropriate title is Pesachim, in the plural.

**Erev Pesach Sheini:** In the beginning of the last *perek*, the Mishna states that it is forbidden to eat on the afternoon preceding Pesachim (in the plural), in order that people will be able to eat matza with an appetite. Why is Pesach here referred to in the plural? Most simply, we can explain that

Pesach recurs each year, and on every erev Pesach it is forbidden to eat (see Mordechai). However, according to the Tosefos Yom Tov's understanding of the title of our masechta, Pesachim refers to the two holidays of Pesach: Pesach Rishon and *Pesach Sheini*. The Mishna comes to teach us that the prohibition against eating on the afternoon of erev Pesach applies both to Pesach Rishon and to Pesach *Sheini* (see Tosefos 99b s.v. *Erev Pesachim*).

**Two Masechtos of Pesach:** Another explanation offered by the Tosefos Yom Tov is that the title Pesachim refers to two separate masechtos. The first masechta of Pesachim includes chapter 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10, which discuss the practical halachos of chametz and matza and the halachos of Seder night. The second masechta includes chapter 5 through 9, which discuss the offering of the Korban Pesach. In some printings of Shas, the title page actually says “Maseches Pesachim - Pesach Rishon and Pesach Sheini.” (Here we refer not to the Yom Tov of Pesach Sheini, but to the second volume of Maseches Pesachim).

In the Meiri's commentary, *Beis HaBechira*, he explains that when the Mishnayos were originally compiled, Maseches Pesachim followed the order we now recognize. During the times of the Gaonim, the chapters were rearranged. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10 were grouped together as Pesach Rishon, and 5 through 9 were grouped together as Pesach Sheini. This was the order most prevalent during the times of the Meiri, and he arranged his commentary accordingly. Since then, the Masechta has somehow been returned to its original order.

**“This concludes Pesach Rishon”:** In the Vilna edition of Shas, which is most commonly used today, some reminders can be found of the Gaonim's two Masechtos. For example, at the end of Chapter Four (57b), a note is found, “This concludes Pesach Rishon.” At the end of Chapter Nine (99a), a note is found, “This concludes Pesach Sheini.”

**General Outline of Maseches Pesachim:** Before beginning our commentary on Maseches Pesachim, we present here a general outline of the chapters and their contents.



The first chapter discusses the halachos of searching for and destroying chametz on erev Pesach. The chapter concludes with a lengthy and fundamental examination of the laws of *tumah* and *tahara* (ritual purity).

The second chapter discusses the prohibition against eating or deriving benefit from chametz. It then continues to examine other such prohibitions from which it is forbidden to derive any benefit, such as *orla* (fruits grown within the first three years of a tree's life). Also discussed in this chapter are the mitzvos of matza and maror.

The third chapter differentiates between the three categories of pure chametz, mixtures of chametz, and inedible chametz.

The fourth chapter begins with a discussion of the *minhag* not to perform melacha on erev Pesach, and proceeds to discuss minhagim in general. As such, it is one of the most fundamental sources in understanding the development of customs and their authority.

From the fifth to the ninth chapter, the Gemara discusses how the *Korban* Pesach was offered in the *Beis HaMikdash*.

The fifth chapter deals with the particular halachos of how and when it was offered, and how even improper thoughts contemplated during its offering may render it unfit.

The sixth chapter discusses how the *Korban* Pesach, and the accompanying *Chagiga* offering, were offered when erev Pesach fell out on Shabbos.

The seventh chapter discusses the mitzva of eating *Korban* Pesach, and the restrictions of *tumah* that apply to offering and eating it.

The eighth chapter discusses how the *Korban* Pesach may only be eaten by the group for which it had been designated.

The ninth chapter discusses the Pesach Sheini korban, offered by those who were unable to offer the Pesach Rishon.

The tenth chapter discusses the mitzvos of Seder night, including matza, maror, the four cups, and relating the story of *Yetzias Mitzraim*. Also included here are the halachos of changing one's place during a seuda, kiddush, havdala, and whether one must have intention while performing a mitzva.

May the merit of our study of the laws of Pesach stand for all of Klal Yisrael, that we may see the fulfillment of Micha's words, "As in the days when you left Egypt, I will show you wonders" (7:15), speedily in our days, Amen.

#### DAILY MASHAL

##### *Is Darkness More than the Absence of Light?*

The *possuk* written in regard to the creation of light and darkness is generally translated as, "Hashem called the light 'day,' and the darkness He called 'night'" (Breishis 1:5). The Gemara also understood it this way at first, and then reinterpreted it to mean, "Hashem summoned the light and commanded it to serve during the day. The darkness He summoned and commanded it to serve at night." This seems to imply that darkness is not merely the absence of light, but an entity unto itself, which was created to function at night.

**Primordial fire:** In *Maseches Chagiga* (12a) the Gemara lists the ten things that were created on the first day of creation. Among them, the Gemara lists darkness, as we find in the *possuk*, "In the beginning, Hashem created... and the land was waste and emptiness, and darkness was over the face of the deep" (Breishis 1:2).

The Ramban (*ibid*) and Rambam (*Moreh Nevuchim* II, 30) explain that this does not refer to the absence of light, but to a primordial fire that emanated tremendous heat, but no light.

The darkness we experience at night is referred to in a later *possuk*, "Hashem separated between the light and the darkness" (1:4). The Ramban here explains that this is not the dark fire discussed above, but simply the absence of light. Nevertheless, the Vilna Gaon writes that the absence of light

must also be considered a creation, as we find in the *possuk*, “And He created darkness” (Yeshaya 45:7). When day breaks, and the sun light appears, it pushes back the darkness past the reaches of “where its rays of glorious light can reach” (Aderes Eliyahu, Bereishis 1:1). In attempting to define this darkness, the Vilna Gaon writes, “It is an entity unto itself, which the powers of our understanding cannot comprehend.” The Maharsha (Tamid 32a) also follows this view.

**Neither day nor night:** With this, the Brisker Rav *zt”l* explained the song from the end of the Haggada, “Draw near the day which is neither day nor night,” which is based on the *possuk* in Zecharia (14:7) “There will be one day, which is known to Hashem, which will be neither day nor night. And it will be towards the time of nightfall, there will be light.” If night is nothing more than the absence of daylight, how could there possibly be a time of neither day nor night? If it is not day, then by definition it is night? Rather, we must explain that the darkness of night is also a creation, and on that prophesized day we will see a wondrous time of neither day nor night.

If we accept the premise that the darkness of night is an entity unto itself, we can apply this to explain the plague of darkness that struck the Egyptians. The *possuk* states, “And the darkness will be tangible” (Shemos 10:21). The darkness that normally settles at night was increased to such a terrible degree that light could not cut through it, and the Egyptians could not even move.

**A candle by day:** R’ Naftali Tzvi Yehuda Berlin (HaEmek Davar, Bereishis 1:5) cites our Gemara that “darkness was summoned to serve at night,” and asks why this was necessary? If the simple absence of light makes it impossible to see, why was it necessary to add the darkness, which is an element unto itself? What difference does the darkness make? He answers by citing the Talmud Yerushalmi, in regard to our sugya of *bedikas chametz*. The Talmud Bavli (8a) states that *bedikas chametz* must be performed at night, when candlelight is most potent. One might suggest that if he shuts his windows tightly such that no daylight can be seen, perhaps *bedikas chametz* may also be performed by

day? In answer to this, the Rishonim cite the Yerushalmi, in which R’ Huna tells that during the times of the Chashmonaem, they hid from the Romans in underground caves where no daylight entered. In order to tell the difference between day and night, they would light a candle. If it glowed only faintly, they knew it was day. If it glowed brightly, they knew it was night. From here we see that the darkness of night causes candles to glow brighter. For this reason, *bedikas chametz* must be performed only at night. It is not the mere absence of light that causes candles to glow brighter. If so, they would glow with equal brightness in a dark place, both by day and by night. Rather, it is the unique creation of darkness that functions only at night, which causes the candles to glow brightly.