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Pesachim Daf 18

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of  
**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Rabbi Yosi and Rabbi Shimon said: It is *tamei* regarding foods (that might have come into contact with *tamei* liquids), and it is *tahor* regarding any objects (that might have come into contact with *tamei* liquids). [Evidently, they maintain that *tamei* liquids can contaminate food on a Biblical level, but they can only contaminate objects on a Rabbinical level.]

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said in the name of Rish Lakish: Rabbi Yosi stated this in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva his teacher, who interprets ‘*yitma*’ (it shall be *tamei*) as ‘*yetamei*’ (it, i.e., food, shall contaminate other things on a Biblical level; and R’ Yosi expounds the word ‘*yitma*’ written by liquids in a similar vein). For we learned in a Mishna: [Throughout the Mishna, the phrase “on that same day” refers to the day on which Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah was appointed as the Nasi of the Yeshiva in Yavneh. Beforehand, Rabban Gamliel insisted that any scholar who was not completely sincere should be kept out of the Beis Medrash. When Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah was appointed Nasi, all students were granted permission to enter. The Torah flourished on that day and halachic issues that were previously unresolved were settled on that day. Rabbi Akiva’s exposition of the sotah passage was said on that day. Accordingly, the Mishna continues with other expositions of Rabbi Akiva that he expounded on that same day.] On that same day, Rabbi Akiva expounded the following verse [Vayikra 11:33]: *And any earthenware vessel, where into any of them (a dead sheretz) falls, whatever is in it, shall be tamei.* It doesn’t say “it is *tamei*,” but rather, it says “*yitma*,” it can render other things *tamei*. This teaches us that a loaf of bread, which is a *sheini* (if it was inside an earthenware oven when a *sheretz* fell in), can make other things *tamei* and render them a *shlishi*.

He continues: And how does he interpret the verse here? *And any drink that may be drunk in every such vessel [yitma] shall be tamei.* It shall contaminate [*yetamei*] foods. You say, ‘in respect of contaminating foods’; yet perhaps it is not so, but rather in respect of contaminating liquids? You can answer: It was not [*the intention*].

The *Gemora* asks: What does ‘it was not [*the intention*]’ mean?

Rav Pappa said: We do not find that *tumah* renders that which is similar to itself *tamei*.

Ravina said: From the verse itself as well, you cannot say ‘*it shall contaminate*’ is in respect of contaminating liquids, for if you should think that ‘*it shall contaminate*’ of the second part of the verse is in respect of contaminating liquids, then it shall follow that ‘*it shall contaminate*’ of the first part is also in respect of contaminating liquids; then let the Torah combine them and write them together, as follows: *Of any food which may be eaten, that on which water comes, and all drink that may be drunk, in every such vessel, shall be tamei.* What is the purpose of (writing) ‘*shall be tamei*’ twice? Therefore, ‘*shall be tamei*’ of the first part is in respect of contaminating liquids, while ‘*shall be tamei*’ of the second part is in respect of contaminating food.

The *Gemora* asks: Yet perhaps it is in respect of contaminating vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: Is there not a *kal vachomer*: If a vessel, which contaminates liquids, cannot contaminate another vessel, then liquids, which become *tamei* on account of a

vessel (*and are therefore on a lower level of tumah*), how much more so should they not contaminate vessels!

The *Gemora* asks: Yet perhaps, they do not contaminate vessels when they are liquids which become *tamei* on account of a vessel, but liquids which became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, do indeed contaminate vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: Are then liquids which are *tamei* through a *sheretz* written in the Torah? [*They are not.*] Are they not rather inferred through a *kal vachomer*: If liquids, which become *tamei* through (*containment in*) a vessel, contaminate, then liquids which are *tamei* through (*touching*) a *sheretz*, how much more so, should they contaminate! And therefore, it is sufficient that that which is deduced by this argument shall be as its source law. [*Accordingly, we rule as follows: just as the rule is by the source law that liquids which became tamei through a vessel that came into contact with a sheretz can contaminate foods but not vessels, so too the derived law regarding liquids that became tamei through contact with a sheretz, can contaminate only foods but not vessels.*] (18a1 – 18b1)

The *Gemora* asks: How does he (*R' Akiva*) interpret '*shall be tamei*' of the first part?

The *Gemora* answers: *Of any food which may be eaten, that on which water comes, [yitma] shall be tamei. It shall contaminate [yetamei] liquids.*

The *Gemora* asks: You say it is to contaminate liquids; yet perhaps it is not so, but rather to contaminate vessels?

The *Gemora* answers: It follows with a *kal vachomer*: If a liquid, which contaminates a food, cannot contaminate a vessel, then a food, which cannot contaminate a food, surely cannot contaminate a vessel! How then do I interpret the verse, '*shall be tamei*'? It teaches that it contaminates liquids, which are prone to contract *tumah*.

The *Gemora* asks: Why does the verse apply to liquids, because they are prone to contract *tumah*; deduce it from the fact that there is nothing else left (*for we have proven that a food cannot contaminate vessels, and we will state that food cannot contaminate another food*)?

The *Gemora* answers: This is what he means: And should you argue that a food is more stringent than a liquid, since it contaminates liquids (*but a liquid cannot contaminate another liquid*), and therefore let it contaminate vessels as well (*even though a liquid cannot*); therefore we are told that that is on account of a stringency due to the nature of liquids, because liquids are prone to contract *tumah*.

The *Gemora* explains: They are prone to contract *tumah* because they contract *tumah* without being prepared. [*This is in contrast to food, which are susceptible to become tamei only after moisture has fallen upon them.*]

The *Gemora* continues expounding the verse: '*Yitma*' teaches us that it cannot render something similar to itself *tamei*.

The *Gemora* asks: But is it derived from here? Surely it is derived from elsewhere: *but if water has been placed on a seed and then their carcass falls upon it, it is tamei*. The words *it is tamei* teaches us by inference that the seed is *tamei* but the seed, i.e. food, cannot make another food *tamei*.

The *Gemora* answers: One refers to liquids that became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, and the other refers to liquids that became *tamei* through (*containment in*) a vessel; and both are necessary, for if we were informed this (*that cannot contaminate other liquids*) of liquid which is *tamei* through a vessel, I would say that this is because it is not stringent (*for it is only a second degree of tumah*), but in the case of liquid that became *tamei* through a *sheretz*, which is stringent, I might argue that it creates *tumah* similar to its own.



The *Gemora* asks: Then let us be told this about liquid contaminated by a *sheretz*, and certainly liquid that became *tamei* through a vessel?

The *Gemora* answers: That which may be inferred through a *kal vachomer*, the Torah takes the trouble of writing it explicitly. (18b1 – 18b2)

Ravina said to Rav Ashi: But Rava said: Rabbi Yosi does not agree with Rabbi Akiva, nor does Rabbi Akiva agree with Rabbi Yosi?

He replied: Rabbi Yosi stated it in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Akiva his teacher, but he himself does not hold like that. (18b2)

#### **DAILY MASHAL**

##### ***Kal vachomer***

The *Gemora* states that something which may be derived through a *kal vachomer* (*literally translated as light and heavy, or lenient and stringent; an a fortiori argument; it is one of the thirteen principles of biblical hermeneutics; it employs the following reasoning: if a specific stringency applies in a usually lenient case, it must certainly apply in a more serious case*), the Torah may anyway take the trouble to write it explicitly.

The Bnei Yissoschar explains the reasoning for this: A *kal vachomer* is based upon logic. One might say that the reason this *halacha* (*derived through a kal vachomer*) is correct is because it is understandable to me; it makes sense. The Torah therefore goes out of its way to write it explicitly in order to teach us that the *halacha* is correct because the Torah said so; regardless of whether it is understood or not.

The Ra"n in *Nedarim* (3a) notes that this concept is applicable by a *hekesh* (*when the halachos from one topic are derived from another one*) as well. The *Gemora* in *Bava Metzia* (61a) states that it also applies to a *gezeirah shavah* (*one of the*

*thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics; it links two similar words from dissimilar verses in the Torah*).

According to the explanation of the Bnei Yissoschar, we could say that the concept should only apply to a *kal vachomer*, for that is based upon logic. The Torah would not find it necessary to state explicitly a *halacha* which is derived through a *hekesh* or *gezeirah shavah*, for they are not based upon logic at all, and it would be superfluous to write it.

The *Yad Malachei* writes that if the Torah does explicitly write a *halacha* which was derived through one of the thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics, we must treat it more stringently than an ordinary *halacha*. This is comparable to a Rabbinical prohibition, which has a slight support from something written in the Torah. *Tosfos* in *Eruvin* (31b) rules that such a prohibition is stricter than an ordinary one, which does not have any Scriptural support. (17b3 – 18a1)