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MISHNAH: With the door¹ in a backyard, or a bundle of thorns in a breach or reed-mats one may not close² [an opening] unless they are raised from the ground.³ (101a)

GEMARA: Doesn't the following, however, present a contradiction: With a door, a reed-mat or a keg, that drag along the ground, it is permitted, whenever they are fastened and suspended, to close an opening on the Shabbos and much more so on a festival day?⁴ — Abaye replied: The latter refers to such as have a hinge.⁵ Rava replied: It refers to a case where they had a hinge.⁶

An objection was raised: With a door, a reed-mat or a keg, that drag along the ground, whenever they are fastened, suspended and raised from the ground even if only by a hair's breadth, it is permitted to close an opening; otherwise this is forbidden?⁷ Abaye explains in accordance with his view, and Rava explains in accordance with his view. 'Abaye explains in accordance with his view': They must either have a hinge or be raised from the ground.

¹ Which as a rule is not fixed to the wall but is movable, and leaned against the doorway only when it is desired to shut it.

² On the Shabbos.

³ If they reach the ground this is forbidden, since their erection resembles 'building'.

⁴ How then is this Baraisa, which only insists on suspension, to be reconciled with our Mishnah which demands that they must be raised from the ground?

⁵ Which imparts to them the character of a proper door the closing of which cannot be mistaken for 'building'. Suspension alone is, therefore, sufficient.

⁶ Though they have none now. The mere mark of the hinge suffices to impart to them the character of a proper door.

'Rava explains in accordance with his view': They must either have had a hinge or must be raised from the ground. (101a)

Our Rabbis taught: If branches of thorn-bushes, or bundles of wood were prepared to serve as a stop-gap for a breach in a courtyard, whenever they are fastened and suspended, it is permitted to close with them on the Shabbos and much more so on a festival day.

Rabbi Chiya learned: With a widowed door that is dragged upon the ground it is not permitted to close an opening]. What are we to understand by a 'widowed door'? — Some say: One made of a single board.⁸ Others Say: One that has no frame. (101a)

Rav Yehudah ruled: A pile⁹ may be laid out from the top downwards,¹⁰ but it is forbidden to build it up from the bottom upwards,¹¹ and the same applies to an egg,¹² a pot, a bed¹³ and a cask. (101a)

⁷ Lit., '(they) may not close with them'. How then is this Baraisa, which requires both suspension and raising from the ground, to be reconciled with the previous Baraisa and with our Mishnah?

⁸ By inserting into a gap such a board which has no resemblance to a door, one appears to be actually building on the Shabbos.

⁹ For making a fire on a festival day.

¹⁰ The upper logs or chips being held up in the air while the lower ones are inserted and arranged beneath them.

¹¹ Placing, for instance, two chips at the bottom and another two crosswise above them; since this has the appearance of building which is forbidden on a festival day as on the Shabbos.

¹² That is to be roasted. The egg must be held up while the wood is laid out under it.

¹³ The center cloth must be held up while the frame is pushed under it.



A certain Sadducee once said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananiah. 'You are thorny, since of you it is written in Scripture: the best of them is as a thorn'. 'Foolish man', the other replied, 'look up the conclusion of the text where it is written: The upright man is a better [protection] than a shelter'. 'What then was meant by the best of them is as a thorn?' 'As these thorns protect a gap so do the best men among us protect us'. Another interpretation: The best of them is as a thorn because they¹⁴ crush³¹ the wicked men in Gehinnom; as it is said in Scripture: Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs brass; and you shall beat in pieces many peoples etc. (101a)

MISHNAH: A man may not stand in a private domain and unlock a door in the public domain,¹⁵ or in the public domain and¹⁶ unlock a door in a private domain,¹⁷ unless he has made a partition ten tefachim high,¹⁸ these are the words of Rabbi Meir. They said to him: It once happened at the butchers' market in Jerusalem that they locked their shops¹⁹ and left the key in a window above a shop door. Rabbi Yosi said: it was the wool-dealers' market. (101a)

GEMARA: As to the Rabbis, how is it that when Rabbi Meir spoke of a public domain²⁰ they retorted by citing a

karmelis,²¹ since Rabbah bar Bar Chanah stated in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: As for Jerusalem, were it not that its gates were closed at night, one would have incurred the guilt of carrying in it as a public domain?²² Rav Pappa replied: The latter statement refers to the time before breaches were made in its wall whereas the former refers to the time after the breaches had been made. Rava replied: The final clause deals with the gates of a garden,²³ and it is this that was implied: is A man may not stand in a private domain and²⁴ unlock a door in a karmelis, or in a karmelis²⁵ and²⁶ unlock a door²⁷ in a private domain, unless he has made a partition ten tefachim high;²⁸ these are the words of Rabbi Meir. They said to him: It once happened at the butchers' market in Jerusalem that they used to lock their shops and left the key in a window above a shop door. Rabbi Yosi said: it was the wool-dealers' market. (101a – 101b)

Our Rabbis taught: The doors of garden gateways, whenever they have a gate-house²⁹ on their inner side, may be opened and closed from within;³⁰ if they have it on their outer side, they may be opened and shut from without; if they have one on either side they may be opened and shut from either side; if they have none on either side they may be neither opened nor shut from

¹⁴ The righteous of Israel.

¹⁵ Even though the key was picked up within four amos from the door. This is a preventive measure against the possibility of transferring the key from the public into the private domain.

¹⁶ By taking up a key from the roof of a shop that was no less than four tefachim wide and above ten tefachim from the ground.

¹⁷ Though the key was picked up in a private domain. This is a preventive measure against the possible transfer of the key from the private into the public domain below ten tefachim from the ground.

¹⁸ To separate his position from the public domain.

¹⁹ The key being held above ten tefachim from the ground.

²⁰ The movement of objects between which add a private domain is Biblically forbidden.

²¹ Which is subject to a Rabbinical restriction only.

²² As the gates, however, were closed at night all the roads and streets of the city were only subject to the restrictions of a karmelis. Now since the preventive measure against the possibility of transferring the key from one domain into another was made by

Rabbi Meir only in the case of a public and a private domain (where a Biblical law might be transgressed), what objection does the Jerusalem incident (which relates to a private domain and a karmelis where only a rabbinical law might possibly be transgressed) provide against Rabbi Meir?

²³ Which, being greater than two beis se'ah, and not having been enclosed for dwelling purposes, is subject to the laws of a karmelis.

²⁴ By pushing his hand through a hole in its walls into the garden.

²⁵ Sc. the garden, this being a preventive measure against the possibility of transferring the key from the karmelis into the private domain.

²⁶ Picking up a key from a spot four tefachim wide and ten tefachim high.

²⁷ At a height of ten tefachim from the ground.

²⁸ To separate his position from the rest of the karmelis.

²⁹ Such a house having the status of a private domain.

³⁰ Since the lock which is four tefachim wide and ten tefachim from the ground has the same status of a private domain as the gate house.

either side.³¹ The same law applies also to shops that open into a public domain: Whenever the lock is below ten tefachim from the ground³² the key may be brought on the Shabbos eve and placed on the threshold,³³ and on the following day the door may be opened and duly closed when the key may again be placed on the threshold;³⁴ and whenever the lock is above ten tefachim from the ground,³⁵ the key must be brought on the Shabbos eve and inserted in the lock, and on the following day it may be opened and shut and returned to its place;³⁶ these are the words of Rabbi Meir. The Sages, however, ruled: Even when the lock is above ten tefachim from the ground the key may be brought on the Shabbos eve and placed on the threshold, and on the following day the door may be opened and shut and the key may be returned to its place or it may be put on a window³⁷ above the door. If the window, however, had an area of four tefachim by four this is forbidden, since the transfer of the key would constitute a transfer from one domain into another.³⁸

Since it was stated: 'And the same law applies also to shops it may be concluded that we are dealing with a threshold that had the status of a karmelis;³⁹ but, then, how are we to imagine the conditions of the lock? If it is one that was less than four tefachim in width it would

surely be a free domain;⁴⁰ and if it was four tefachim wide, would the Rabbis in such a case have ruled: 'Even when the lock is above ten tefachim from the ground the key may be brought on the Shabbos eve and placed on the threshold and on the following day the door may be opened and shut and the key may be returned to its place or it may be put on a window above the door', seeing that thereby one is moving an object from a karmelis into a private domain? — Abaye replied: The fact is that the lock was less than four tefachim but there was sufficient space [in the door] in which to cut and make it up to four tefachim; and it is this principle on which they differ: Rabbi Meir holds the opinion that the door is regarded as virtually cut for the purpose of completing the prescribed width, while the Rabbis maintain that it is not regarded as cut for the purpose of completing the prescribed width.⁴¹

Said Rav Bivi bar Abaye: From this Baraisa you may deduce three things: You may deduce that virtual cutting for the purpose of completing a prescribed width may be assumed; you may deduce that Rabbi Meir⁴² withdrew from his view on the gates of a garden;⁴³ and from the ruling of the Rabbis⁴⁴ you may also deduce that Rav Dimi's view is tenable. For when Rav Dimi came he reported in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: In a place whose area is less

³¹ Even though the key was within the lock. They may not be opened from within as a preventive measure against the possibility of taking the key from the private domain (the lock) into a karmelis (the garden) add they may not be opened from without as a preventive measure against the possibility of taking the key from the private domain into the public domain.

³² So that it has the status of a karmelis.

³³ Which is also a karmelis.

³⁴ This is permitted, since the man, though standing in the public domain only moves the key from one karmelis into another.

³⁵ In consequence of which, since it is also four tefachim wide, it has the status of a private domain.

³⁶ On the top of the lock which is also a private domain. It may not be placed on the threshold since its removal from the lock to it would be tantamount to a transfer from a private domain into a karmelis.

³⁷ Whose sill is less than four tefachim wide and which is, therefore, regarded as a free domain though it is ten tefachim high.

³⁸ From the threshold which is a karmelis to the window which is a private domain. Such transfer is forbidden despite the intervening

free domain of the lock through which the key had passed on its way between the other two domains.

³⁹ If it had not been a karmelis but a public domain it would have been forbidden to transfer the key from it into the lock.

⁴⁰ And Rabbi Meir would not have regarded it as a private domain even where it was above ten tefachim from the ground.

⁴¹ The lock, therefore, has the status of a free domain.

⁴² Who permitted a man standing on a threshold which was a karmelis to take a key from a level above ten tefachim to a lock of a similar level; and did not provide against the possibility of the man's taking the key into the karmelis in which he stood.

⁴³ Where, according to Rava's explanation, Rabbi Meir forbade a man who stood in a karmelis to open a door in a private domain as a preventive measure against the possibility of his taking the key into the karmelis.

⁴⁴ According to which, if the window-sill had an area of four tefachim by four, it is forbidden to take a key from the threshold (a karmelis) to the lock (a free domain) and from the lock to the window (a private domain) because the transfer from one domain to another is forbidden even via a free domain.

than four tefachim by four it is permissible for both the people of the public domain and those of the private domain to re-arrange their burdens, provided only that they do not exchange them.⁴⁵ (101b)

MISHNAH: If a bolt⁴⁶ had a knob at one end, Rabbi Eliezer forbids it⁴⁷ [to be moved]⁴⁸ but Rabbi Yosi permits it.⁴⁹ Rabbi Eliezer said: In a synagogue at Tiberias the common practice, in fact, was to treat it⁵⁰ as permitted, until Rabban Gamliel and the elders came and forbade it to them. Rabbi Yosi retorted: they treated it as forbidden, but Rabban Gamliel and the elders came and permitted it to them. (101b)

GEMARA: Where it can be lifted up by the cord to which it was tied,⁵¹ no one disputes [that it is permissible to move it].⁵² They only differ where it cannot be lifted up by the cord to which it was tied in which case one Master holds that, since there was a knob at one end, it has the status of a vessel, while the other Master holds that, since it cannot be lifted up by the cord to which it was tied, it may not [be moved]. (101b – 102a)

DAILY MASHAL

Debates

Our Gemora says that a heretic mocked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananyah by saying that the verse in Michah says, “The best are like a thorn.” Rabbi Yehoshua answered back that this was clearly a good thing, as the end of that verse says, “He is straight like a shelter.” This implies that the best of the Jews protect the entire nation like a shelter from punishment.

This was not an isolated incident. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chananyah was absolutely famous as being the Amora who always had an answer for the heretics. Whether he was debating them in king’s palaces and winning (see Chagigah 5b) or providing them with sharp answers (Ta’anis 7a), he is known throughout Shas for his quick wit.

Knowing this provides added insight into his famous statement in Eiruvim (53b) that nobody ever bested him besides a woman, young boy, and young girl. The Gemora goes on to relate how they bested him. However, in general, he was known as a master of debate.

The Jews relied on him to protect them from the heretics. When he died, the Gemora in Chagigah (5b) says that the Jews were saddened that they would no longer be able to defend themselves so well from the debates with the heretics. Rabbi Yehoshua assured them that if Hashem was taking him away, the logical strength of the heretic’s arguments would also weaken.

⁴⁵ Because it is forbidden to transfer an object from a public domain into a private one or vice versa even via a free domain.

⁴⁶ Used for securing a door.

⁴⁷ Though it can be used as a pestle for crushing spices.

⁴⁸ On the Shabbos; unless it was tied to a cord and suspended from the door.

⁴⁹ Because it may be treated as a vessel which may well be moved about on the Shabbos.

⁵⁰ The movement of the bolt with the knob.

⁵¹ Lit., ‘by its binding’, sc. the cord by which it is fastened to the door is strong enough to hold it even when it is lifted by it.

⁵² Since it is obvious to all that the bolt formed a part of the door’s equipment and its insertion into its socket constitutes no ‘building’.