

24 Adar 5778
March 11, 2018



Avodah Zarah Daf 55

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

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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

The General Agrippa asked Rabban Gamliel: It is written in your Torah: *For Hashem your God is a consuming fire, a jealous God.* Is a wise man jealous of any but a wise man, a warrior of any but a warrior, a rich man of any but a rich man? He replied: I will give you a parable: To what is the matter like? To a man who marries an additional wife. If the second wife is her superior, the first will not be jealous of her; but if she is her inferior, the first wife will be jealous of her.

[An Israelite named] Zunin said to Rabbi Akiva: We both know in our heart that there is no reality in an idol; nevertheless we see men enter [the shrine] crippled and come out cured. What is the reason? He replied: I will give you a parable: To what is the matter like? To a trustworthy man in a city, and all his townsmen used to deposit [their money] in his charge without witnesses. One man, however, came and deposited [his money] in his charge with witnesses; but on one occasion he forgot and made his deposit without witnesses. The wife [of the trustworthy man] said to [her husband], “Come, let us deny it.” He answered her, “Because this fool acted in an unworthy manner, shall I destroy my reputation for trustworthiness!” It is similar with afflictions. At the time they are sent upon a man the oath is imposed upon them: You shall not come upon him except on such and such a day, nor depart from him except on such and such a day, and at such an hour, and through the medium of so and so, and through such and

such a remedy. When the time arrives for them to depart, the man chanced to go to an idolatrous shrine. The afflictions plead: It is right that we should not leave him and depart; but because this fool acts in an unworthy way shall we break our oath!

This is similar to what Rabbi Yochanan said: What does it mean that which is written: *Harsh and faithful sicknesses?* ‘Harsh’ in their mission and ‘faithful’ to their oath.

Rava son of Rav Yitzchak said to Rav Yehudah: There is an idolatrous shrine in our place, and whenever the world is in need of rain, [the idol] appears to [its priests] in a dream, saying: Slay a human being to me and I will send rain. They slay a human being to it and rain does come! He replied: Now were I dead, nobody could have related to you a certain dictum of Rav, viz., What does it mean that which is written: *Which Hashem your God has divided [chalak] unto all the peoples under the whole heaven!* This teaches us that He made smooth [hechelik] their words to banish [idolaters] from the world.

This is similar to what Rish Lakish said: What does it mean that which is written: *Surely He acts cynically to the cynics, but He gives grace unto the humble!* If one comes to defile himself he is granted facilities for so

doing, and if he comes to purify himself support is given to him.

MISHNAH. A winepress [containing] trodden [grapes] may be purchased from an idol worshiper even though it was he that lifted [the trodden grapes] with his hand and put them on the mound; and [the juice] does not become nesech wine until it descends into the vat. When it has descended into the vat, what is in the vat is prohibited, but the remainder is permitted. [We] may tread the winepress together with an idol worshiper but may not harvest grapes with him. Should a Jew be working in a state of ritual impurity, we may neither tread nor harvest with him, but we may convey [empty] casks with him to the press and carry them [filled] with him from the press. If a baker was working in a state of ritual impurity, we may neither knead nor roll dough with him, but we may convey loaves with him to the bakery.

GEMARA. Rav Huna said: As soon as the wine begins to flow it may become nesech.

The Gemora asks: But we learned in our Mishnah: A winepress [containing] trodden [grapes] may be purchased from an idol worshiper even though it was he that lifted [the trodden grapes] with his hand and put them on the mound!

Rav Huna said: This refers to a winepress which is plugged and full¹.

¹ No wine could then run out; so when the juice flows from the grapes it remains on top. Consequently the wine must have been touched by the idol worshiper and it is rendered nesech.

Come and hear: and [the juice] does not become nesech wine until it descends into the vat. — Similarly here [says Rav Huna, the Mishnah deals with] a vat which is plugged and full².

Come and hear: When it has descended into the vat, what is in the vat is prohibited, but the remainder is permitted. — Rav Huna said: There is no contradiction; one teaching is from the initial Mishnah and the other from the final Mishnah; for it has been taught: At first [the Sages] used to say BaD”D that [Jews] may not harvest grapes together with an idol worshiper [and bring them] into a winepress, for the reason that it is forbidden to cause tumah to the ordinary chullin of Eretz Yisroel, nor may they tread grapes together with a Jew who works with his fruits while he is in a state of tumah for the reason that it is forbidden to assist transgressors; but they may tread grapes together with an idol worshiper in a winepress. Consequently no attention is here paid to the view of Rav Huna. Later [the Rabbis] said DaB”B that [Jews] may not tread grapes together with an idol worshiper in a winepress, for the reason given by Rav Huna, nor may they harvest grapes together with a Jew who works with his fruits while he is in a state of tumah; so how much more may they not tread grapes, but may harvest them, together with an idol worshiper, since it is permitted to cause tumah to chullin of Eretz Yisroel.

² So that the wine remains in the upper trough.