

5 Nissan 5778
March 21, 2018



Avodah Zarah Daf 65

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A Ger Toshav

Rav Yehudah sent a present to Avidrana on their festival day. He explained: I know he doesn't worship idols.

Rav Yosef asked: Doesn't the *braisa* state, who is a *ger toshav*? One who accepts upon himself in front of three Torah scholars not to worship idols. [This implies that one needs to accept not to worship idolatry to be considered someone who definitely does not worship idols.]

The *Gemora* answers: This *braisa* is only regarding the commandment to sustain him, not other laws such as sending presents on holidays. [We are commanded to assist a *ger toshav* in ways that we would not normally help a regular gentile.]

The *Gemora* asks: Didn't Rabbah bar bar Chanah say in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If a *ger toshav* spent twelve months as a *ger toshav* and does not circumcise himself (*convert*), he is considered like an idolatrous heretic (and there is a prohibition against giving him gifts by his festival)!?

The *Gemora* answers: This is only if he had previously accepted circumcision on himself, and did not do so. (64b – 65a)

Olam Haba Is Better

Rava sent a present to Bar Sheishach on their festival day. He explained: I know he doesn't worship idols. Rava went and found Bar Sheishach immersed in rose petals up to his neck

and surrounded by naked prostitutes. Bar Sheishach asked: Do you have anything this pleasurable in the World to Come? Rava answered: We will have a much better world than this. Bar Sheishach asked: What is better than this? Rava answered: You still have the fear of the king on you, while we will not. Bar Sheishach asked: What fear of the king do I have? While he was talking, an officer from the king came and commanded him to get up, as the king wanted to see him. When he was getting up to go, he said, "The eye that wanted to see evil upon you - should be removed from its socket." Rava answered, "Amen," and Bar Sheishach's eye proceeded to fall out.

Rav Pappi said: Rava should have answered him from the following verse (which refers to the World to Come): *Daughters of kings are there to honor you; the queen stands to your right with jewelry of Ophir gold.* Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak says that Rava should have answered with the verse: *No eye besides yours, O God, has seen that which He will do for those who wait for Him.* (65a)

Wages for Transporting the Barrels

The *Mishna* discussed a worker who was hired for other work, but was also told to transport barrels of *yayin nesech*.

The *Gemora* asks: Is this even if the worker was not told this towards nightfall (but rather, he was instructed during the day to work with the barrels of *yayin nesech*)? Doesn't the *braisa* state: If an idolater hired a Jewish worker (for permissible work), and towards nightfall told the worker to transport a barrel of *yayin nesech* from place to place, his

wages are permitted? This implies that his wages are permitted because he already earned them in a permitted fashion, and only towards nightfall did he transport the *yayin nesech*. However, if he was already instructed during the day to transport the *yayin nesech*, his wages should be forbidden!?

Abaye answers: Our *Mishna* is also referring to a case where he was only told to transport the *yayin nesech* at nightfall.

Rava says: There is no question. The *braisa* is referring to a case where he was told to move one hundred barrels, for which he would be paid one hundred *perutos*, all of his wages would be forbidden. [*Being that he must complete the entire job to get all of his wages, his transporting of the yayin nesech barrel causes all of his wages to be forbidden.*] The *Mishna* is referring to a case where the worker was hired to transport one hundred barrels for one *perutah* each. [*The wages are permitted except for the perutah of the barrel of yayin nesech.*]

The following *braisa* supports Rava's answer. The *braisa* says: If a worker was hired to transport one hundred barrels for one hundred *perutos*, and one of the barrels was *yayin nesech*, all of his wages are forbidden. If he was told he would be paid one *perutah* per barrel that he moved, and one of the barrels was *yayin nesech*, all of his wages are permitted (*besides for the perutah for the yayin nesech barrel*). (65a)

Placing a Jug on a Donkey

The *Mishna* had stated: If someone rented a donkey in order to transport *yayin nesech*, the money for the rental is forbidden.

The *Gemora* asks: Why was it necessary for the *Mishna* to state this case, when the former case (*regarding a worker's wages when he is transporting yayin nesech*) already expressed this law?

The *Gemora* answers: This was required for the next case. The *Mishna* continues that if the donkey was rented for riding purposes, and the idolater put his jug of wine on the donkey, his wages are still permitted.

The *Gemora* asks: Does this mean that the renter does not have the right to put his personal jug of wine on his donkey? The *braisa* states: If someone rented a donkey to ride on it, he can put his clothing, flask, and food for the journey on the donkey as well. Any added weight can be protested by the owner of the donkey. The owner of the donkey can put the barley, straw, and food for that day on the donkey, but more than this can be protested by the renter. [*The case is where the donkey owner would travel with the renter, and would want to put these things on the rented donkey during the journey. (This braisa clearly implies that it is normal to put one's wine jug on the donkey!?)*]

Abaye answers: While the renter has a right to put a wine jug on a donkey, it is not the type of thing that one would pay less rent for if he chose not to do so. [*Since the wages were not given for the right to place the jug on the donkey, the wages are permitted.*]

The *Gemora* asks: What is the case? If the case is where it is common to buy food every day on the road, the donkey owner should be able to protest that he cannot put all of the food for the entire journey on the donkey! If it is uncommon to buy food every day, why can the renter protest when the donkey owner puts more than one day's food on the donkey?

Rav Papa answers: This is necessary for a case where it is common to be able to buy food from one place of lodging (*where they are staying at night*) to the next. While it is normal for a donkey owner to inquire and find out where to buy food every day, it is uncommon for a renter to do so. [*This is why he can have food for the entire journey on the donkey, while the owner cannot have more than food for one day.*]

The father of Rav Acha, the son of Rav Ikka, would sell wine to gentiles, and pour the wine from his barrel to their wineskins. They would allow him to keep the barrels, and in exchange, he would deliver their wine across the river. They went and told this to Abaye (*for perhaps, he is receiving wages for working with yayin nesech*). Abaye answered: This is permitted, as when he is working with it, the wine is still permitted (*for the wine only becomes forbidden when it comes into contact with the bottom of the wineskins and absorbs the flavor of the yayin nesech contained in its walls; by that time, he already finished pouring the wine*).

The *Gemora* asks: Doesn't he want the idolaters' wineskins to remain in existence and not split while he is transporting it, as otherwise, he will have to use his own barrels (*to save the wine*)?

The *Gemora* answers: He used to make a condition with them that he would carry their wineskins, but if they break, he does not have to use his barrels to save their wine.

Alternatively, the *Gemora* answers: The idolater's supply other vessels to save the wine in case their wineskins crack.

The *Gemora* asks: Isn't he crossing the river with their *yayin nesech* barrels, meaning that he is getting paid for working with *yayin nesech*?

The *Gemora* answers: He had an arrangement with the person in charge of the river that if his customers came to the ferry, they should be allowed to pass for free.

Alternatively, he gave them a sign to show the ferry owner, and he would know to transport them for free. [*However, he himself never did any work with these wineskins, and merely took the barrels in exchange for the pouring and the benefit of this arrangement.*] (65a – 65b)

Mishna

If *yayin nesech* fell on grapes, one can wash off the grapes and they are permitted. If the grapes were cracked, they are forbidden. If *yayin nesech* fell on figs or dates, if they give a flavor of wine to them, they are forbidden. There was an incident where Beitus ben Zonan brought figs onto a boat, and a barrel of *yayin nesech* broke and spilled all over them. He asked the *Chachamim* about them, and they permitted the figs.

This is the rule: Whatever the flavor (*of the prohibition*) provides benefit (*to the food*), it is forbidden. Whatever does not provide flavor that is beneficial, it is permitted, such as (*forbidden*) vinegar that falls on split beans. (65b)

Providing Flavor

The *Gemora* asks: Is the incident of Beitus quoted to contradict what was just said?!

The *Gemora* answers: The *Mishna* is as if it is missing content, and means as follows: If the wine provides flavor in a detrimental way, it is permitted. There was an incident where Beitus ben Zonan brought figs onto a boat, and a barrel of *yayin nesech* broke and spilled all over them. He asked the *Chachamim* about them, and they permitted the figs (*due to the fact that it detracted from their taste*).

There was a silo of wheat that had a barrel of *yayin nesech* fall onto it. Rava permitted it to be sold to idolaters.

Rabbah bar Leivai asked him a question from a *braisa*. The *braisa* states: If clothing contains *kilayim* (*i.e., a thread of linen was sewn into a garment of wool*), but it is no longer known where the *kilayim* is, one should not sell it to an idolater. He should also not make it a saddle blanket for his donkey, but he can make it into shrouds for an unattended corpse (*one who dies without any relatives to bury him*). Why can't one sell this article of *kilayim* to an idolater? It must be because he will possibly sell it to a Jew, who will not realize it

has *kilayim*. So too, one should not be able to sell the wheat to an idolater, as he will sell it to a Jew who will eat it!?

Rava changed his ruling, permitting the Jew to grind up the wheat, bake it into baked goods, and then sell it to idolaters when other Jews are not watching (*otherwise they will think they can buy it from the idolater, as it is really baked goods of a Jew*).

The *Gemora* asks from our *Mishna*: If *yayin nesech* fell on grapes, one can wash off the grapes and they are permitted. If the grapes were cracked, they are forbidden. This clearly implies that there is no problem as long as they are not cracked! [*Why was the wheat have been forbidden?*]

Rav Pappa says: Wheat is different, as it is actually like it is cracked. (65b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Status of a Ger Toshav

The Rambam rules like the *Chachamim* that a *ger toshav* is one who accepts on himself in front of three Torah scholars that he will observe the seven Noahide *mitzvos*. The Rambam also adds that one who accepts on himself to become a *ger toshav* is from the pious people of the nations of the world and he will receive a portion in the World to Come. However, if a gentile observes the seven Noahide *mitzvos* without a formal acceptance, he does not acquire the special status of a *ger toshav*.

Reb Chaim Markowitz cites a *Ritva* in *Makkos* (9b) who writes something similar: A *ger toshav* is a “*metzuvah v’oseh*” (*one who is commanded and observes*), and a gentile is an “*aino metzuvah v’oseh*” (*one who observes without being commanded*).

The Brisker Rav (*in a letter*) explains that the status of *ger toshav* was created after Giving of the Torah, and he bases

this on the aforementioned *Ritva*.

The Brisker Rav seems to hold it is just an acceptance to keep the seven *mitzvos*, and it carries with it certain *halachos*. The *Mishans Ya’avetz* (Y.D. Siman 3) proves that it is a type of conversion, and his status as a gentile is affected.

A practical difference would be regarding the status of a *ger toshav* who resolves not to observe the *mitzvos*. The Brisker Rav writes explicitly that a *ger toshav* can retract, for it was merely an acceptance in the first place. If there was a conversion and a change in status, he could not revert to being an ordinary gentile.

The children of a *ger toshav* would also be a point of issue between the two ways to understand a *ger toshav*'s acceptance.

Reb Chaim Markowitz notes a contradiction in the *Chazon Ish*'s viewpoint, for he writes that a *ger toshav* can retract from his acceptance, but he also says that the small children of a *ger toshav* have the same status as their father.