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Avodah Zarah Daf 69

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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

Nullified in how much?

They inquired: What is the law if a mouse fell into vinegar? Rav Hillel said to Rav Ashi: Such an incident happened with Rav Kahana and he prohibited it (*for the vinegar’s taste improved*).

Rav Ashi replied to him: In that case, the mouse may have disintegrated into pieces (*and that is why it was forbidden; for there was a concern that one would eat a piece the size of a lentil or more, and just as such a piece transmits tumah (as it is from the eight sheratzim), so too one incurs lashes for eating such a piece*).

Ravina thought to apply here the principle of a hundred and one (*to nullify the mouse; it needs more, for it has an extremely sharp flavor*). He figured that it is not worse than *terumah*, in connection with which we learned in a *Mishna*: *Terumah* becomes nullified when the proportion is one in a hundred.

Rav Tachlifa bar Giza said to Ravina: Perhaps it should be like spices of *terumah* which fell into a pot of food, where the taste is not nullified at all!

Rav Achai ruled that with vinegar the proportion must be fifty (*parts vinegar*) to one (*part mouse*).

Rav Shmuel the son of Rav Ika ruled that with beer the proportion must be sixty (*parts beer*) to one (*part mouse*).

The *Gemora* rules that in either case, it is sixty to one, and it is so with all prohibited substances forbidden by the Torah. (68b – 69a)

Mishna

If an idolater was transferring jugs of wine from place to place with a Jew, if it may be presumed to have been under supervision, it is permitted. If he informed him that he was going far away (*and it was kept in sealed barrels, then it depends on if the Jew went away for*) - long enough so that he might bore a hole (*through the top*), seal (*with clay*), and wipe dry. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: If it was long enough so that he might open (*the cover*) and replace with a new one, and wait for it to dry (*then it would be forbidden*).

One who leaves his wine in a wagon or on a ship (*with an idolater*), and then goes along a short distance, enters the city and bathes – it is permitted. If he informed him that he was going far away (*and it was kept in sealed barrels, then it depends on if the Jew went away for*) - long enough so that he might bore a hole (*through the top*), seal (*with clay*), and wipe dry. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: If it was long enough so that he might open (*the cover*) and replace with a new one, and wait for it to dry (*then it would be forbidden*).

One who leaves an idolater in his shop, even though he goes out and comes in - it is permitted. But if he informed him that he was going far away (*and it was kept in sealed barrels, then it depends on if the Jew went away for*) - long enough so that he might bore a hole (*through the top*), seal (*with clay*), and wipe dry. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: If it was long



enough so that he might open (*the cover*) and replace with a new one, and wait for it to dry (*then it would be forbidden*).

If he ate with him at the table, and put a flask on the table and one in the cupboard, and left him and went out - that which is on the table is forbidden, but that which is in the cupboard is permitted. If he said to him, "Pour and drink" - even that which is in the cupboard is forbidden. Open barrels are forbidden; sealed ones - long enough so that he might open (*the cover*) and replace with a new one, and wait for it to dry (*then it would be forbidden*). (69a)

Explaining the Mishna

The *Mishna* had stated: if it may be presumed to have been under supervision etc. What is the meaning of that?

The *Gemora* answers with a *braisa*: Behold a man's (*am ha'aretz*) donkey drivers (*that he hired*) or workmen that are laden with things which are *tahor*, and though he might have went more than a *mil* apart from them, his *tahor* items retain their state of purity. However, if he said to them, "Go on and I will follow you later," as soon as they are out of his view, his *tahor* items lose their state of purity.

Rav Yitzchak explains the *braisa*: The first case refers to an employer who purified his donkey drivers or workmen for the task.

The *Gemora* asks: If that is so, it should apply also to the second case!?

The *Gemora* answers: An *am ha'aretz* is not particular about the touch of his fellow (*and the workers might allow another am ha'aretz to touch the items*).

The *Gemora* asks: If that is so, it should apply also to the first case!?

Rava answers: It refers to a case where the employer could come upon them by some roundabout path.

The *Gemora* asks: If that is so, it should apply also to the second case!?

The *Gemora* answers: Since he had told them, "Go on and I will follow you later," they are confident that he will not be there for a while.

The *Gemora* explains the necessity of each of the *Mishna's* cases.

Rabbah bar baar Chanah said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The dispute in the *Mishna* (*regarding how long the Jew must be away in order for the wine to become forbidden – in a case where the Jew told him that he was going far away*) is concerning a case where the lid was made out of plaster (*and the patch, when it dries, has the same color as the cover*), but with one made out of clay (*where the patch is dark until a few days, and the idolater would be scared to make a hole and use plaster*), all agree that he must have been away only long enough so that he might open (*the cover*) and replace with a new one, and wait for it to dry (*then it would be forbidden*).

Rava rules like Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, for an anonymous *Mishna* was taught according to his view. (69b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Honey as a Preservative and a Solvent

Our *sugya* explains that small fragments of a crawling creature (*sherez*) forbid food or drink into which they have fallen. As a result, Tosfos (s.v. *Hahu imretutei* and other Rishonim) ask: "We should now wonder how we eat bees' honey as the bees' legs are mixed in the honey." Other

Rishonim consider the question and reached surprising conclusions.

The production of honey: Many of us are well acquainted with the production of honey. The bees exude the honey from their bodies into small cells in the honeycomb and when the cells become full the honey is separated from the comb. Today the honey is removed by centrifugal force in a machine but in the past it was done by hand. At any rate, the honey is still impure as it contains dead bees that were stuck to the comb, fragments of wax from the comb, pupae remains and other substances.

The legs and wings of bees may be eaten: After a while this refuse floats up and is removed but particles of the bees' legs remain in the honey, identifiable as tiny dark dots. Tosfos therefore ask how we can eat honey and they conclude that though the body of the bee must not be eaten because it is a *sheretz*, the legs are permitted! The *Rosh* rules likewise (Ch. 5, §11): "The legs of a fly or its wings are not considered a *sheretz* but are regarded as mere dust."

Honey preserves and dissolves: However, this innovation was not accepted as halachah and the Rishonim had to provide other reasons to permit eating honey. Thus, for example, the Rashba (Responsa, I, 80) reveals that honey serves as a preservative to whole bodies but a severed body is penetrated and dissolved by the honey. This vital information was repeated by Rabeinu Yonah's pupils (cited by the *Rosh*, Berachos Ch. 6, §35): "the nature of honey is to turn anything that falls inside it into honey." The bees' legs therefore become honey and there is no reason to refrain from eating them.

DAILY MASHAL

The hungry one in the honey has been consumed: Apropos, Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra was asked about a fly that fell into honey. He replied: "We explained: the hungry one in the honey has been eradicated and burnt." In other words, the

fly was completely dissolved. His reply is ingenious as when the words are written one word to a line – *peirashnu ra'avtan shebadevash nisba'er venisraf*; it can be read in four directions: from right to left starting at the top, from top to bottom starting on the right, from bottom to top starting on the left and from left to right starting at the bottom:

ו	נ	ש	ר	פ
ו	ת	ב	ע	ר
ש	ב	ד	ב	ש
ר	ע	ב	ת	נ
פ	ר	ש	נ	ו