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Niddah Daf 16

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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

Fixed Periods

The following inquiry was addressed to Rav Nachman: Is the examination (*which is obligated*) at fixed menstrual periods Biblical or merely Rabbinical? He replied: Since our colleague Huna, citing Rav, ruled that if a woman who has a fixed period did not make an examination when that period arrived, but later on (*at the first examination after the fixed period*) experienced a discharge, she must take into consideration the possibility of a discharge on the date of the fixed period (*even if it was due prior to the period of twenty-four hours immediately preceding the examination; her tumah in such a case extends backward to the time of the fixed period*) and also the possibility of twenty-four hours retroactive tumah (*if less than twenty-four hours intervened between the time of the fixed period and the discharge*) on account of her (*actual*) discharge. Evidently, the examination at regular fixed periods is Biblical.

There are those who say that Rav Nachman replied as follows: The reason then (*for Rav’s ruling*) is that she had experienced a discharge (*and therefore we assume that since she discovered a discharge on examination, she might also have discovered one if she had made an examination at the time of her fixed period*), but if she had not experienced a discharge, the possibility would not need to be taken into consideration. Evidently, the examination at regular fixed periods is only Rabbinical.

It was stated: If a woman had a fixed period, and when the time of that period arrived she did not make the examination and later she did make one, Rav ruled: If by that examination

she found that she was *tamei* she is *tamei* (*from the time that she was expected to see*), but if she found that she was *tahor* she remains *tahor*. Shmuel, however, ruled, Even if by that examination she found herself *tahor* she is deemed *tamei* (*from the time that she was expected to see*), since (*it is assumed that*) the “manner” (*of women*) came at its usual time.

The *Gemora* suggests that they disagree on the question of the necessity for an examination at fixed menstrual periods: One master (*Shmuel*) maintains that it is Biblical (*and that is why she is ruled to be tamei – even if she was found to be tahor at the time of the next examination*) and the other master (*Rav*) holds that it is only Rabbinical (*and it would be following the second version of Rav Nachman cited above*).

Rabbi Zeira said: Both may agree that the necessity for an examination at fixed menstrual periods is Biblical (*and he is following the first version of Rav Nachman’s ruling cited above*), but (*as to the difficulty raised that she should be ruled to be tamei – even if she was found to be clean by the next examination, it can be explained that*) one ruling refers to a woman who examined herself immediately after her expected fixed period (*i.e., after the time it takes a woman who is holding an examination cloth to make an examination, and Rav maintains that she is tahor, for since she was determined to be clean immediately after the time of her fixed period, we can assume that she was clean at that time as well; Shmuel, however, disagrees*), while the other ruling refers to a woman who did not examine herself immediately after her expected fixed period (*but rather, she examined herself after that time; as it is quite likely that earlier, during*

her fixed period of menstruation, there was a discharge, the woman must be deemed *tamei*).

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: They disagree on the very question of the necessity for an examination at a woman's fixed menstrual periods. One master (*Shmuel*) maintains that it is Biblical (and therefore, in the absence of an examination, she is ruled to be *tamei*), while the other master (*Rav*) maintains that it is only Rabbinical.

Rav Sheishes observed: The argument here is indeed a matter of a *Tannaic* dispute, for it was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Eliezer said (regarding a woman who had a fixed period, and when the time of that period arrived she did not make an examination): She is to be regarded as *tamei* like a *niddah* (for the requirement to perform an examination is Biblical), while Rabbi Yehoshua said: Let her be examined (even though her fixed period of menstruation had passed; if, on examination, she finds herself to be clean she is regarded as *tahor* (despite the possibility of an earlier discharge), for the requirement is only Rabbinical, and if she does find blood, the *tumah* is retroactive from the time her fixed period was due).

The *Gemora* notes that these *Tannaim* differ on the same principle as the following *Tannaim*, for it was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Meir said: She is to be regarded as *tamei* like a *niddah* (for the requirement to perform an examination is Biblical), while the Sages said: Let her be examined.

Abaye said: We also learned to the same effect in the following *Mishna*: Rabbi Meir said that if a woman was in a hiding place (on account of troops or bandits) when the time of her fixed period arrived and she did not examine herself, she is nevertheless *tahor*, because fright suspends the bloods. Now, the reason (that she is declared *tahor*) is that there was fright, but if there had been no fright and the time of her fixed period had arrived and she did not examine herself, she would have been deemed *tamei*. Evidently, 'fixed periods' are a Biblical ordinance (for if the duty to examine herself is merely Rabbinic, she would not be declared *tamei* if

she neglected to do so).

The *Gemora* asks: May it be assumed that the following *Tannaim* also differ on the same principle? For it was taught in a *braisa*: If a woman saw some blood (that might be) due to a wound (for the blood from that internal wound must pass through the uterus as it exits the body) - even if this occurred during her fixed period of menstruation, she is deemed to be *tahor*; these are the words of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel. Rebbe said: If she has a fixed period, she must take her period into consideration (and therefore she is regarded as *tamei*, since it is possible that some drops of menstrual blood were mixed up with that of the wound). Now, do they not differ on this principle? One master (*Rebbe*) maintains that the necessity for examinations at the fixed periods is Biblical, while the other master (*Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel*) maintains that they are only Rabbinical?

Ravina replied: No; both may agree that the examinations at the fixed periods are only Rabbinical, but it is on the question whether the place of the uterus is *tamei* (and, therefore, capable of imparting *tumah* to any *tahor* blood that passes through it, and consequently, the woman will be *tamei* for one day for touching that blood) that they differ. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel holds that the woman is *tahor* but the blood is *tamei* because it comes through the uterus, and Rebbe in effect said to him: If you take into consideration the possibility of her regular menstrual flow, the woman also should be *tamei*, and if you do not take into consideration the possibility of her regular menstrual flow, the blood also should be *tahor* since the place of the uterus is *tahor*. (16a)

Examinations

[The *Mishna* previously ruled that a woman who comes into contact with *taharos* must use an examination cloth before and after cohabitation. This *Mishna* deals with the *halachah* regarding such a woman, but one who performs multiple acts of cohabitation during the night.] Beis Shammai said: A woman needs two examination cloths for every (act of)



cohabitation (*before and after*), or (*if she will be using the same cloth*) she must perform it in the light of a lamp (*so she will be able to inspect the cloth beforehand*). Beis Hillel said: Two examination cloths (*one before the first act of cohabitation, and one after the last act*) are sufficient for her for the entire night.

The Gemora cites a *braisa*: Although the Sages have said: He who cohabits in the light of a lamp is despicable, Beis Shammai ruled: A woman needs two examination cloths for every (*act of*) cohabitation (*before and after*), or (*if she will be using the same cloth*) she must perform it in the light of a lamp (*so she will be able to inspect the cloth beforehand*). Beis Hillel said: Two examination cloths (*one before the first act of cohabitation, and one after the last act*) are sufficient for her for the entire night.

It was taught in a different *braisa*: Beis Shammai said to Beis Hillel: According to your view (*that there is no necessity for an examination between each cohabitation*), is there no need to provide against the possibility that she might discharge a drop of blood of the size of a mustard seed in the course of the first act of cohabitation, and this would be covered up with semen during the second act of cohabitation (*so that it will not be perceptible on the second cloth*)?

Beis Hillel asked them: Even according to your view (*that there is a necessity for an examination between each cohabitation*), is there no need to provide against the possibility that the spittle (*the blood*) while still in the mouth (*the vaginal canal*) was diluted (*from the semen*) out of existence (*and even the cloth in between will not suffice*)?

Beis Shammai replied: It is because what is diluted once is not comparable to that which is diluted twice.

It was taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Yehoshua said: I approve of the view of Beis Shammai (*that there is a necessity for an examination between each cohabitation*). His students said to him: What a stringency you have imposed upon us! He

replied: It is a good thing', he replied, 'that I should impose extensive restrictions upon you in this world in order that your days may be prolonged in the World to Come. (16a – 16b)

DAILY MASHAL

Prayers for the Fear of Heaven Are Answered

Our Gemara cites Rabbi Chanina, that "everything is in the hands of Heaven except for the fear of Heaven". The Kotzker Rebbe zt"l explained: The prayer which a person prays rises above and depends on Heaven's decision as to whether it will be answered or not. However, prayer for the fear of Heaven is answered immediately (*Imrei Shamai, Berachos*).