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Aborted a Shapeless Object

If a woman miscarried a shapeless object (*where she is definitely not tamei on account of a childbirth*); if there was blood with it she is *tamei*; otherwise, she is *tahor*. Rabbi Yehudah ruled: In either case, she is *tamei*.

If a woman miscarried an object that was like a rind, like a hair, like dust, like a fly; if it is red, let her put it in water and if it dissolves she is *tamei*, but if it does not she is *tahor*.

If a woman miscarried an object in the shape of a fish, locust, vermin or crawling creatures; if there was blood with them she is *tamei*, otherwise, she is *tahor*.

If a woman miscarried a fetus that looks like a domesticated animal, wild animal or bird, whether it is kosher or non-kosher; if it was a male she must observe the standard purity and impurity periods prescribed for a male, and if it was a female she must observe the standard purity and impurity periods prescribed for a female, but if the gender is unknown, she must observe the standard purity and impurity periods prescribed for both male and female; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. [*The period of her tumah is fourteen days (as it is for a female), and not seven (as it is for a male), while the subsequent period of her clean days terminates on the fortieth day (as it would for a male), and not on the eightieth day (as it would for a female).*] The Sages, however, ruled that anything that doesn't have the shape of a human being cannot be regarded as a human child.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: Rabbi Yehudah declared the woman *tamei* only where the shapeless object had the color of one of the four types of blood (*that would render a woman a niddah*), but if it had the color of any other type of blood, the woman is *tahor*. Rabbi Yochanan said: If it had the color of one of the four types of blood, all agree that she is *tamei*, and if it had that of any other type of blood, all agree that she is *tahor*; they disagree only in the case where she miscarried something, and she does not know what she has miscarried. Rabbi Yehudah maintains that we are to be guided by the nature of the majority of such shapeless objects, and the majority of such objects have the color of one of the four types of blood, while the Rabbis hold that we do not say that we are to be guided by the nature of the majority of such objects (*for there is no majority*).

The *Gemora* asks: But is this correct? Surely when Rabbi Hoshaya arrived from Nehardea, he came and brought with him the following *braisa*: If a woman miscarried a shapeless object that was red, black (*which are colors that would be tamei*), yellow or white (*which are colors that would be tahor*); if there was blood with it, she is *tamei (as a niddah)*, but otherwise, she is *tahor*. Rabbi Yehudah ruled: In either case she is *tamei*. Now, doesn't this present a difficulty against Shmuel in one respect and against Rabbi Yochanan in two respects?

The *Gemora* explains: Against Shmuel in one respect, since Shmuel stated: Rabbi Yehudah declared the woman *tamei* only where the shapeless object had the color of one of the four types of blood (*that would render a woman a niddah*),

whereas here 'yellow and white' were mentioned, and Rabbi Yehudah nevertheless disagrees.

The *Gemora* notes that you cannot answer that Rabbi Yehudah differs only in respect of red and black but not in that of yellow or white (*for there, he would declare the woman tahor*), for if so, according to whom was yellow and white mentioned? [*What novelty is being taught by mentioning those cases?*] It cannot be for that of the Rabbis, for since they declared the woman *tahor* even in the case of red and black blood, is it necessary to state that the same law applies also to yellow and white (*which are not colors that render a woman tamei*)? It must be conceded that these were mentioned according to Rabbi Yehudah, who, it thus follows, does disagree (*in all four cases*)!?

Furthermore, according to Rabbi Yochanan, who said that if it had the color of one of the four types of blood, all agree that she is *tamei*, but weren't red and black (*which are two of the four types of tamei blood*) also mentioned, and the Rabbis nevertheless disagreed (*and ruled that the woman is tahor*)!?

The *Gemora* notes that you cannot answer that the Rabbis disagree only in regard to yellow and white, but not in that of red and black (*for there, they would declare the woman tamei*), for if so, according to whom was red and black mentioned? [*What novelty is being taught by mentioning those cases?*] It cannot be for that of the Rabbi Yehudah, for since he declared the woman *tamei* even in the case of yellow and white blood, is it necessary to state that the same law applies also to red and black (*which are colors that render a woman tamei*)? It must be conceded that these were mentioned according to the Rabbis, who, it thus follows, does disagree (*in all four cases*)!?

Rather, Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak explained: The point at issue between them is the question whether it is possible for the uterus to open without bleeding. [*Both R' Yehudah and the Rabbis regard the shapeless object as a piece of flesh; it*

is not a fetus and it is not a mass of congealed blood. Therefore, whatever its color, the woman cannot be regarded as a niddah. R' Yehudah, however, maintains that the uterus never opens without some bleeding (although it might not be noticeable). The woman is therefore tamei on account of the discharge of the blood. The Rabbis, on the other hand, hold that the uterus sometimes opens without any accompanying bleeding and the woman is therefore tahor – no matter what color the object was.]

The *Gemora* notes that they disagree on the same principle as that on which the following *Tannaim* differ, for it was taught in a *braisa*: If a woman was in difficult labor for two days (*within the eleven days' period of zivah, and she saw blood on both of those days*), and on the third she miscarried and does not know what she had miscarried (*whether it was a fetus or not, or whether there was bleeding or not*), her case is one of doubtful childbirth and doubtful *zivah*, and she must therefore bring a sacrifice, which may not be eaten. [*If the woman sees blood three days in a row during these eleven days, she is a zavah gedolah, and must bring a sacrifice after observing seven clean days. If the woman actually gives birth, she brings a sacrifice for the birth, but not for the zivah. Either way, she will bring two birds; one as an olah, and one as a chatas. The olah is completely burned and the chatas is eaten by the Kohanim. If she did not bleed and she did not give birth, she is not obligated to bring any sacrifice at all. Since, in this case, it is not known whether the miscarried object was a fetus or a mass of flesh, whether there was bleeding or not, she brings an olah bird and stipulates that if she is not liable in the sacrifice, it should serve as a voluntary offering. A chatas bird, however, cannot be brought as a donated offering. We allow her to bring a doubtful chatas bird, but it cannot be eaten. This is because it might not be consecrated, and since it was not slaughtered, but rather, melikah (the Kohen kills the bird by piercing the back of the bird's neck with his thumbnail) was performed to it, it still would be a neveilah.*] Rabbi Yehoshua ruled: She must bring a sacrifice and it may be eaten, since it is impossible for the uterus to open without some bleeding (*and therefore, she must bring*



a sacrifice either because of zivah, or on account of childbirth).

The *Gemora* cites an alternative version of the above discussion: Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: Rabbi Yehudah declared the woman *tamei* only where the shapeless object had the color of one of the four types of blood (that would render a woman a *niddah*), but if it had the color of any other type of blood, the woman is *tahor*.

The *Gemora* asks: But is this correct? Surely when Rabbi Hoshaya arrived from Nehardea, he came and brought with him the following *braisa*: If a woman miscarried a shapeless object that was red, black (which are colors that would be *tamei*), yellow or white (which are colors that would be *tahor*); if there was blood with it, she is *tamei* (as a *niddah*), but otherwise, she is *tahor*. Rabbi Yehudah ruled: In either case she is *tamei*. Now here red, black, yellow and white were mentioned, and Rabbi Yehudah nevertheless disagrees!?

The *Gemora* notes that you cannot answer that Rabbi Yehudah differs only in respect of red and black but not in that of yellow or white (for there, he would declare the woman *tahor*), for if so, according to whom was yellow and white mentioned? [What novelty is being taught by mentioning those cases?] It cannot be for that of the Rabbis, for since they declared the woman *tahor* even in the case of red and black blood, is it necessary to state that the same law applies also to yellow and white (which are not colors that render a woman *tamei*)? It must be conceded that these were mentioned according to Rabbi Yehudah, who, it thus follows, does disagree (in all four cases)!?

Rather, said Rabbi Yochanan: The point at issue between them is the question whether it is possible for the uterus to open without bleeding.

The *Gemora* notes that they disagree on the same principle as that on which the following *Tannaim* differ, for it was

taught in a *braisa*: If a woman was in difficult labor for two days (within the eleven days' period of *zivah*, and she saw blood on both of those days), and on the third she miscarried and does not know what she had miscarried (whether it was a fetus or not, or whether there was bleeding or not), her case is one of doubtful childbirth and doubtful *zivah*, and she must therefore bring a sacrifice, which may not be eaten. Rabbi Yehoshua ruled: She must bring a sacrifice and it may be eaten, since it is impossible for the uterus to open without some bleeding (and therefore, she must bring a sacrifice either because of *zivah*, or on account of childbirth). (21a – 21b)