

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Grain taking root

R' Elazar asks R' Yoshiya to identify the source that the Omer permits new grain that has already taken root.

R' Yoshiya, Shmuel and R' Yitzchok suggest sources for this halacha but all their sources are rejected.

Rava presents a source that is unsuccessfully challenged.

**2) MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins by enumerating exclusions to the chodosh prohibition and concludes with a list of other leniencies that apply to the offering of the Omer.

### 3) Irrigated fields of the valleys

A Baraisa explains the reason that the chodosh prohibition does not apply to grain grown in irrigated fields of the valleys.

An alternative way of interpreting the pasuk cited in the Baraisa is suggested but then rejected.

### 4) Identifying the author of the Mishnah

The Gemara proves that the Mishnah reflects the view of R' Yehudah and then notes what appears to be a contradiction between two rulings of R' Yehudah.

### 5) Harvesting unripe grain

A Mishnah in Peah is cited in which R' Meir rules that harvesting unripe grain is not considered harvesting.

Rabba bar bar Chana in the name of R' Yochanan asserts that R' Meir is consistent with R' Shimon's position in our Mishnah.

This parallel is rejected and the Gemara suggests that R' Meir follows R' Yehudah's opinion in the Mishnah.

This suggestion is also rejected and R' Dimi asserts that R' Meir follows R' Akiva's position.

The Gemara challenges the parallel between R' Meir's and R' Akiva's respective positions. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. What special allowance was given to the residents of Yericho?

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2. How does one bundle שמוע?

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3. What is the result of dividing a field for peah?

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4. How does R' Dimi explain R' Meir's ruling?

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## Distinctive INSIGHT

### Improper reading of the Shema

יכורכין את שמוע

The Mishnah informs us that the people of Yericho used to cut their grain early, before the bringing of the omer, but the sages did not protest or deter them from doing so. A Baraisa in the Gemara taught that this custom of the people of Yericho was one of six customs that were unique, three of which were done without the sages' protesting, but the other three were done against the will of the sages.

Among the customs of the people of Yericho which the sages did not protest was that they "bound up the reading of the Shema." Rashi explains, based upon the Gemara in Pesachim (56a), that this means that when they read the Shema, they were not careful to read the words clearly and distinctly with a pause between one word and the next. This is also the explanation which Tosafos gives here, in the name of the Yerushalmi.

In Pesachim, Rashi points out that the opinion of R' Meir and R' Yehuda is that the people of Yericho did not pause during Shema, meaning that they did not allow a break between the end of the sentence of Shema (the word "אחד") and the beginning of the paragraph of ואהבת. The halacha is that one must pause at this point, in order to allow a break between the first sentence, which is one's acceptance of the yoke of heaven, and the next paragraph, which is one's acceptance of the yoke of mitzvos. Tosafos explains the lack of a pause was that within the first sentence itself they did not stop between the word "Yisroel" and the next word, "Hashem." This corrupted reading of resulted in the sentence implying that we are praying "Listen to Yisroel, God." In other words, it sounded as if they were praying that God listen to Yisroel's voices. The correct meaning is that we are proclaiming "Listen, our fellow Jews! God is our Lord, etc."

The view of R' Yehuda in the Baraisa is that the people of Yericho read the words of Shema properly, but the problem was that they did not say the sentence of "Baruch Shem K'vod, etc." Rashi explains that they did say it, but they recited it loudly, rather than softly, which is improper.

An additional explanation in the Gemara (ibid.), provided by Rava, is that the correct reading of the phrase is, "these words which I command you today, shall be on your hearts." The people of Yerichos corrupted its reading as they paused after the word "מצוד," before the word "היום." This resulted in a sentence which says, "these words which I

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# HALACHAH Highlight

## Trimming branches from a fruit tree

מתירין גמזיות של הקדש של חרוב ושל שקמה

*They permitted benefitting from branches of the carob and sycamore trees*

The Gemara relates that the residents of Yericho were permitted to benefit from branches taken from sycamore and carob trees that were sacred. Their rationale to permit the branches was that the tree was sanctified for the beams that would be made but the branches were never sanctified. The sages of the time disagreed and maintained that even the branches were sanctified. What is important to note is that the concern about trimming the branches was that they were sacred but no one was concerned with the prohibition of **בל תשחית** that one violates when he trims branches from a fruit tree.

Rashi<sup>1</sup> explained that the reason they specifically cut branches from the sycamore and carob was that these trees are generally grown for their wood rather than their fruit. For this reason Mishnah Lamelech<sup>2</sup> writes that one does not undermine the mitzvah to settle Eretz Yisroel when one cuts down a sycamore or carob tree. However, regarding the prohibition of **בל תשחית**, Sefer Tiferes Yedidya<sup>3</sup> proves that the prohibition of **בל תשחית** is violated when one cuts down a carob tree since it

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command you shall be on your hearts today," which implies that the command should be with you today, but not tomorrow.

A proper reading of the Shema should include care to avoid these issues. ■

does produce fruit.

Poskim debate whether one violates the prohibition of **בל תשחית** if he merely trims the branches of a fruit tree. Mishnah Lamelech argues that there is no prohibition against trimming a tree as long as one does not uproot the tree altogether. Teshuvah Mahari Bassan<sup>4</sup> disagrees and maintains that even trimming branches from a tree is not permitted. Teshuvah Chikrei Lev<sup>5</sup> asserts that those who maintain that it is prohibited for one to trim branches of a fruit tree limit that prohibition to trimming branches in a destructive manner. If, however, one trims branches of a fruit tree, for example, when it is young so that it should grow stronger it is permitted and poses no danger whatsoever. He supports his position from the verse that states (Vayikra 25:3), "And six years you may prune your vineyard." ■

1. רש"י ד"ה מתירין.
2. משנה למלך פ"ז מה"א איסורי מזבח ה"ג.
3. ספר תפארת ידידה סי' כ"א.
4. שו"ת מהר"י באסן סוף סי' ק"א.
5. שו"ת חקרי לב מהדו"ת יו"ד סי' י"א. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## Binding the Shema

"וכורכין את שמע..."

The Shem MiShmuel, zt"l, offers a deep analysis of a statement on today's daf. "In Menachos 71 we find that the people of Yericho would not pause while reciting Shema. In Pesachim, Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Yehudah explain that they did not pause between Shema and V'ahavta. Although the sages didn't agree with this practice, they did not protest. Many questions present themselves. Why did the people of Yericho deviate from the opinion of the sages? And why didn't the sages protest?

"To explain, we must first understand that every human being is a microcosm, as we find in the Midrash. Our heads parallel the upper world while our

bodies mirror the lower world. One's intellect alludes to the sun, while his heart is like the moon which receives its light from the sun. Like the sun, one's intellect should be used to illuminate proper conduct. His heart should only desire that which his intellect knows is fitting.

"It is impossible to be a whole person without these two faculties working in concert. If the intellect knows what is good but the heart is drawn in the opposite direction, it would be better for him not to have intellect at all.<sup>1</sup> In Mishlei we find that such a person is compared to a pig with a golden nose ring—a valuable adornment graces an unworthy object. The same is true when the heart follows the directives of the mind when that mind is crooked. This is why in ancient times people clung to idolatry. Their hearts followed their intellects, but their minds confused light for darkness and darkness for light. This is worse than

those whose intellect is straight but their hearts do not follow its directives."

The Shem MiShmuel then explained the connection with the practice of the people of Yericho. "The first verse of Shema straightens the intellect, since the very word Shema means to listen carefully and understand. V'ahavta clearly refers to the heart, as the verse continues, '...upon your heart.' The people of Yericho didn't pause at the juncture in order to deepen their awareness that the heart must follow after the well-guided mind. The sages, on the other hand, would pause to remind themselves that without toil it is easy to disconnect the heart from the intellect.

He concluded, "Although the way of Chazal was more correct, the sages did not protest against the practice of the people of Yericho because, in essence, their meaning was the same."<sup>2</sup> ■

1. דברים רבה, פ"ז ד'.
2. שם משמואל, שופטים תרע"ח, ע"ק כ"ח.