

דף יומי • חלין • דף פ"ח

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THE SUGYA

We begin the daf by wrapping up the previous discussion regarding the tumah of liquids. The Gemara is bothered by a contradiction between our Mishnah and a Braisa regarding whether liquids that come from a corpse are tamei. The Gemara resolves this by distinguishing between a corpse and a zav, explaining the specific Rabbinic gezeirah that applies to a zav's liquids but not to a corpse's liquids, based on how people naturally keep their distance from them. From there, the Gemara transitions back to the halachos of kisuy hadam, discussing the source in the pesukim for whether one is obligated to cover blood that spurts or remains on the knife, bringing a machlokes between the Rabbis, Rabbi Yehuda, and Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel regarding what constitutes the main blood of the shechitah.

Next, we learn a new Mishnah that defines the materials kosher for kisuy hadam. The Mishnah lists various substances, such as fine sand, crushed potsherds, and fine manure, while excluding coarse materials or simply overturning a vessel over the blood. The Gemara analyzes the definitions of these materials, specifically what constitutes fine versus coarse sand, and brings a Braisa that expounds the pesukim of "and he shall cover it" and "with earth" to show how the Torah includes certain dust-like substances while excluding others.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

עמוד א' DAF 88A

משנה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

ואלו ואלו אין מטמאין,

And both these, the liquids that issue from a tevil yom, and those, the liquids that touch him, do not impart any severe ritual impurity to other things, as they are only a sheni l'tumah;

MISHNAH

ושאר כל הטמאין, בין קלין בין חמורין – משקין היוצאין מהן כמשקה הנוגע בהן,

and with regard to all other ritually impure sources, whether minor sources of impurity or major sources of impurity, the liquids that issue from them have the same status as liquids that touch them,

MISHNAH

ואלו ואלו תתקלה, חוץ מן המשקה שהוא אב הטומאה.

and both these and those have the status of a first-degree of ritual impurity, except for a liquid that is itself a primary source of ritual impurity, such as the bodily fluids of a zav.

QUESTION

מאי קלין ומאי חמורין?

The Gemara asks: **What** is the meaning of **minor** sources and **what** is the meaning of **major** sources?

OBJECTION

מאי לאו: קלין – שרץ וזב, וחמורין – מת?

Is it not that **minor** sources refers to a **creeping animal** or a **zav**, and **major** sources refers to a **corpse**? If so, the Mishnah implies that all liquids issuing from a corpse are tamei, which contradicts a Braisa!

ANSWER

לא, קלין – שרץ, וחמורין – זב.

The Gemara answers: **No**, the term **minor** sources refers to a **creeping animal**, such as urine found inside its body, and **major** sources refers to a **zav**, whose bodily fluids are indeed a primary source of impurity. But liquids issuing from a corpse are actually tahor, except for its blood.

QUESTION

מאי שנא זב, דגזרו ביה רבנן, ומאי שנא מת דלא גזרו ביה רבנן?

The Gemara asks: **What is different** with regard to a **zav**, that the Rabbis decreed impurity on all liquids that issue from him, and **what is different** with regard to a **corpse**, that the Rabbis did not decree a similar impurity on all liquids that issue from it?

ANSWER

זב דלא בדילי אינשי מיניה – גזרו ביה רבנן, מת דבדילי אינשי מיניה – לא גזרו ביה רבנן.

The Gemara answers: In the case of a **zav**, since people do not naturally separate themselves from him while he is alive, the Rabbis decreed a gezeirah on his other liquids so that people would not come to touch his main impure fluids; whereas in the case of a **corpse**, since people naturally separate themselves from it out of respect and fear, the Rabbis did not decree any extra restrictions.

STATEMENT

דם הניתז ושעל הסכין, תנו רבנן: "וכסהו" – מלמד שדם הניתז ושעל הסכין חייב לכסות.

Regarding the Mishnah's ruling about **blood that spurts** and that which is **on the knife**, the Rabbis taught in a Braisa: The verse says, "And he shall cover it"—this teaches that **blood that spurts** and that which remains on the knife, one is **obligated to cover**.

STATEMENT

אמר רבי יהודה: אימתי? בזמן שאין שם דם אלא הוא, אבל יש שם דם שלא הוא – פטור מלכסות.

Rabbi Yehuda said: **When** is this the halacha? **At a time** when there is no other blood there except for that spurted blood; but if there is other blood there besides that spurted blood, such as the main blood in the pit, then one is exempt from covering the spurted blood.

STATEMENT

תְּנִינָא אִידָּהּ: "וְכָסָהּ" – מִלְמֵד שְׁכָל דָּמוּ חַיִּיב לְכַסּוֹת, מִכָּאן אָמְרוּ: דָּם הַנִּיחָז וְשֶׁעַל אֲגָפִיִּים חַיִּיב לְכַסּוֹת.

It was taught in another Braisa: The verse says, "And he shall cover it"—this teaches that all of its blood, one is obligated to cover. From here they said: Blood that spurts and that which is on the sides of the neck, one is obligated to cover.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּין שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: בְּמָה דְּבָרִים אֲמוּרִים – שֶׁלֹּא כָּסָה דָּם הַנֶּפֶשׁ, אֲבָל כָּסָה דָּם הַנֶּפֶשׁ – פְּטוּר מִלְכַּסּוֹת.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: In what case are these words said? In a case where one did not yet cover the blood of the soul, which is the main life-blood that flows at slaughter; but if one already covered the blood of the soul, he is exempt from covering the remaining spurted blood.

QUESTION

בְּמַאי קָא מִיפְלָגִי?

The Gemara asks: With regard to what principle do they disagree?

ANSWER

רַבִּין וְרַבִּי יְהוּדָה סְבָרִי: "דָּמוֹ" – כָּל דָּמוֹ, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה סְבָר: "דָּמוֹ" – וְאִפְּלוּ מִקְצַת דָּמוֹ, וְרַבִּין שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל סְבָר: "דָּמוֹ" – הַמְּיוּחָד.

The Gemara answers: The Rabbis hold that the word "its blood" implies all of its blood must be covered. Rabbi Yehuda holds that "its blood" implies even a portion of its blood is sufficient to fulfill the mitzvah, so if there is other blood, this spurted blood is exempt. And Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel holds that "its blood" refers to the unique blood, which is the blood of the soul.

MISHNAH מִשְׁנָה

MISHNAH

מִתְּנִי בְּמָה מְכַסִּין וּבְמָה אֵין מְכַסִּין?

MISHNAH: With what substances may one cover the blood, and with what substances may one not cover the blood?

MISHNAH

מְכַסִּין בְּזָבָל הַדֵּק, וּבְחוּל הַדֵּק, בְּסִיד, וּבְחֶרְסִית, וּבְלִבְנָה וּבְמִגּוּפָה שֶׁכֶּתֶשׁוּ,

One may cover with fine manure, and with fine sand, with lime, and with crushed potsherd, and with a brick or with the lid of a jar that one crushed into dust;

MISHNAH

אֲבָל אֵין מְכַסִּין לֹא בְּזָבָל הַגָּס, וְלֹא בְּחוּל הַגָּס, וְלֹא בְּלִבְנָה וּבְמִגּוּפָה שֶׁלֹּא כֶּתֶשׁוּ, וְלֹא יִכְפֶּה עָלָיו אֶת הַכָּלִי.

but one may not cover, neither with coarse manure, nor with coarse sand, nor with a brick or with the lid of a jar that one did not crush, and one may not overturn a vessel over it to merely hide it.

MISHNAH

כָּלֵל אָמַר רַבִּין שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: דָּבָר שֶׁמִּגִּידֵל בּוֹ צִמְחִים – מְכַסִּין בּוֹ, וְשֶׁאֵינוֹ מִגִּידֵל צִמְחִים – אֵין מְכַסִּין בּוֹ.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel stated a general rule: Any substance in which plants grow, one may cover with it; and that which does not grow plants, one may not cover with it.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

QUESTION

גְּמ' הֵיכִי דְּמִי חוֹל הִדֵּק?

GEMARA: What is considered fine sand?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַבָּה בַּר בַּר חֲנָה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל שֶׁאֵין הַיּוֹצֵר צָרִיף לְכַתְּשׁוֹ.

Rabba bar bar Chana said that Rabbi Yochanan said: Any sand that the potter does not need to crush before using it to make vessels.

STATEMENT

וְאִיכָא דְּמַתְנִי לֵה אֲסִיפָא: אָכֵל אֵין מְכַסִּין לֹא בְּזֶכֶל הַגָּס וְלֹא בְּחוֹל הַגָּס.

And there are those who teach this statement of Rabbi Yochanan on the latter clause of the Mishnah: But one may not cover, neither with coarse manure, nor with coarse sand.

QUESTION

הֵיכִי דְּמִי חוֹל הַגָּס?

On this, the Gemara asks: What is considered coarse sand?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַבָּה בַּר בַּר חֲנָה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל שֶׁהַיּוֹצֵר צָרִיף לְכַתְּשׁוֹ.

Rabba bar bar Chana said that Rabbi Yochanan said: Any sand that the potter needs to crush before using it.

QUESTION

מַאי בִּינְיָהוּ?

The Gemara asks: What is the practical difference between them, i.e., between these two versions of Rabbi Yochanan's statement?

ANSWER

אִיכָא בִּינְיָהוּ דְּצָרִיף וְלֹא צָרִיף, דְּמִיפְרִיף אִיפְרוּכִי.

The Gemara answers: **There is a difference between them** regarding sand **that is needed and yet not needed** for crushing, namely, sand **that crumbles** easily by hand without a tool. According to the first version, this is kosher because it does not require formal crushing; according to the second version, it is invalid because it still requires some crumbling.

BRAISA

תנו רבנן: "וְכִסָּהוּ", יָכוֹל יְכַסְּנוּ בְּאֲבָנִים אוֹ יִכְפֶּה עָלָיו אֶת הַכֶּלִי?

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: The verse says, "And he shall cover it." One might think he may cover it with stones, or overturn a vessel over it;

BRAISA

תלמוד לומר: "בְּעֶפֶר".

therefore, the verse teaches: "With earth."

BRAISA

וְאִין לִי אֶלָּא עֶפֶר, מִנֵּין לְרִבּוֹת זָבָל הַדֵּק, וְחֹל הַדֵּק, וְשִׁחִיקַת אֲבָנִים, וְשִׁחִיקַת חֲרָסִית, וְנִעּוֹרָת
כִּשְׁתֵּי דִקָּה,

And I only have a source for earth; from where do we derive to include fine manure, and fine sand, and crushed stones, and crushed potsherd, and fine flax-chaff?

עמוד ב' DAF 88B

BRAISA

וְנִסּוּרַת שֶׁל חֲרָשֵׁין דִּקָּה, וְסִיד, וְחֲרָסִית לְבָנָה וּמְגוּפָה שְׁכַתְשָׁן?

The Baraita continues: And what is the source that we may cover the blood with fine sawdust of carpenters, and lime, and crushed potsherd, and a brick or the lid of an earthenware barrel that one crushed?

EXPLANATION

תלמוד לומר: "וְכִסָּהוּ".

The verse states: "And cover it," which is an inclusive term implying that one may cover it with any substance.

EXPLANATION

יָכוֹל שְׂאֲנֵי מְרִבָּה אֶף זָבָל הַגָּס, וְחֹל הַגָּס, וְשִׁחִיקַת כֶּלִי מַתְכוֹת, וּלְבָנָה וּמְגוּפָה שֶׁלֹּא כְּתוּבָה, וְקִמָּח,
וְסוּבִין, וּמוֹרְסִין?

One might have thought that I will include even thick manure, and thick sand, and filings of metal vessels, and a brick or a lid that one did not crush, and flour, and bran, and coarse bran?

EXPLANATION

תלמוד לומר: "בְּעֶפֶר".

Therefore, the verse states: "With earth," to exclude these.

QUESTION

ומה ראית לרבות את אלו ולהוציא את אלו?

The Baraita asks: **And what did you see that led you to include these substances and to exclude those?**

ANSWER

אחר שריבה הכתוב ומיעט, מרבה אני את אלו שהן מין עפר, ומוציא אני את אלו שאינן מין עפר.

The Baraita answers: **After the verse included** with the term "and cover it" **and excluded** with the term "with earth," **I include these** substances, such as fine sand, **which are a type of earth** in which plants can grow, **and I exclude those** substances, such as thick sand, **which are not a type of earth** because plants do not grow in them.

QUESTION

אימא: "וכסחו" – כלל, "עפר" – פרט, כלל ופרט – אין בכלל אלא מה שבפרט, עפר – אין, מידי אחריןא – לא!

The Gemara asks: Why not say that the term "and cover it" is a **generalization**, and the term "earth" is a **detail**? And we have a rule that in a **generalization and a detail, there is only what is in the detail** itself. If so, **earth, yes**, you may use, but **any other thing, no**, you may not use at all!

ANSWER

אמר רב מרי: משום דהנה כלל הצריה לפרט, וכל כלל הצריה לפרט – אין דנין אותו בכלל ופרט.

Rav Mari said in response: We do not learn it this way **because it is a generalization that requires a detail** to explain how the mitzvah is performed, **and any generalization that requires a detail is not evaluated by the rules of generalization and detail**. The word "cover" is vague, so the Torah had to write "earth" to teach us that the covering must be done with a substance that absorbs the blood, and not just by placing a vessel over it.

STATEMENT

דרש רב נחמן בר רב חסדא: אין מכסים אלא בדבר שזורעין בו ומצמיח.

Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda expounded: One may not cover the blood except with a substance in which one sows seeds and it sprouts.

OBJECTION

אמר רבא: האי בורכא!

Rava said: **This is an absurdity!** Our Mishnah and Baraitas explicitly permit substances in which seeds do not sprout.

ANSWER

אמר ליה רב נחמן בר יצחק לרבא: מאי בורכתיה? אנא אמריתה ניה ליה, ומהא מתניתא אמריתה ניה ליה:

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said to Rava: What is its absurdity? I said this ruling to him, and from this following Baraita I said it to him:

BRAISA

היה מהלך במדבר, ואין לו אפר לכסות – שוחק דינר זהב ומכסה.

If a person was traveling in the desert, and he does not have earth to cover the blood, he may grind a gold dinar and cover the blood with its dust.

BRAISA

הָיָה מְהֵלֵךְ בְּסַפִּינָה, וְאֵין לוֹ עֹפֶר לְכִסּוֹת – שׁוֹרֵף טְלִיתוֹ וּמְכַסֶּה.

If he was traveling on a ship, and he does not have earth to cover the blood, he may burn his garment and cover the blood with the ashes. Now, if desert sand, which does not sprout seeds, were permitted, why would he need to grind a gold dinar?

EXPLANATION

בְּשִׁלְמָא שׁוֹרֵף טְלִיתוֹ וּמְכַסֶּה, אֲשַׁכַּח אֶפֶר דְּאִיקְרֵי עֹפֶר,

The Gemara analyzes the Baraita: **Granted**, that he may burn his garment and cover the blood, because we find that ashes are called "afar" (earth),

QUESTION

אֵלָּא דִּינָר זָהָב מִנָּלָן?

but regarding a gold dinar, from where do we know that its dust is called "afar"?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַבִּי זֵירָא: "וְעִפְרוֹת זָהָב לוּ".

Rabbi Zeira said: The verse says, "And it has dust of gold," showing that gold dust is called "afar."

BRAISA

תָּנוּ רַבָּנֵינוּ: אֵין מְכַסִּין אֵלָּא בְּעֹפֶר, דְּבָרֵי בֵּית שַׁמַּי.

The Rabbis taught in a Baraita: One may not cover the blood except with actual earth; these are the words of Beit Shammai.

BRAISA

וּבֵית הֵלֵל אוֹמְרִים: מְצִינוּ אֶפֶר שְׁקָרוּי עֹפֶר, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר "וְלָקַחוּ לְטָמֵא מִעֹפֶר שְׂרִיפֹת".

And Beit Hillel say: We find that ashes are called "afar," as it is stated regarding the Red Heifer: "And for the contaminated person they shall take from the dust of the burning of the purification from sin."

BRAISA

וּבֵית שַׁמַּי: עֹפֶר שְׂרִיפָה אִיקְרֵי, עֹפֶר סֵתְמָא לָא אִיקְרֵי.

And Beit Shammai respond: It is called "dust of burning," but ordinary "dust" it is not called.

BRAISA

תָּנָא: הוֹסִיפוּ עָלֵיהֶן הַשְּׁחוֹר, וְהַכָּחוֹל, וְנִקְרָת בִּיסוּלִין, וְיֵשׁ אוֹמְרִים: אֵף הַזֶּרְנִיָּה.

A Tanna taught: They added to the list of permitted substances coal dust, and stibium, and shavings from chiseling stones, and some say: even arsenic.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבָּא: בְּשָׂכָר שְׂאֵמַר אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ "וְאֵנֹכִי עָפָר וָאֵשׁ", זָכוּ בָנָיו לְשְׁתֵּי מִצְוֹת: אֶפְרַח פָּרָה, וְעָפָר
סוֹטָה.

Rava said: As a reward for that which Avraham Avinu said, "And I am but dust and ashes," his children merited two mitzvos: the ashes of the Red Heifer, and the dust of the Sotah.

QUESTION

וְלִיחְשׁוֹב נָמִי עָפָר כְּסוֹי הַדָּם?

The Gemara asks: **But let him also count the earth of covering the blood?**

ANSWER

הֵתֵם הַכֶּשֶׁר מִצְוָה אֵיכָא, הִנָּאָה לֵיכָא.

The Gemara answers: **There**, in covering the blood, **there is only the preparation of a mitzvah, but there is no** active benefit that comes from it. The ashes of the Parah Adumah purify, and the dust of the Sotah brings peace between husband and wife.

STATEMENT

וְאֵמַר רַבָּא: בְּשָׂכָר שְׂאֵמַר אַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ

And Rava said: As a reward for that which Avraham Avinu said to the king of Sodom, "If from a thread to a shoe strap..."

SUMMARY

In this daf, the Gemara clarifies that while the Rabbis decreed tumah on all liquids of a zav to prevent people from touching his primary impure fluids, they did not make a similar decree for a corpse because people naturally keep their distance out of respect. Regarding kisuy hadam, the Gemara presents a nachlokes Tanna'im on whether spurted blood must be covered if the main life-blood (dam hanefesh) has already been covered. Finally, the Gemara defines the kosher materials for covering the blood, explaining that any substance resembling earth or in which plants can grow is kosher, provided it is fine and does not require crushing, while coarse materials, metal filings, and food items like flour are excluded.

The Gemara brings down a beautiful teaching of Rava: in the merit of Avraham Avinu saying "And I am but dust and ashes" (עפר ואפר), his children merited two great mitzvos: the ashes of the Parah Adumah and the dust of the Sotah. Think about this chiddush for a moment. Avraham Avinu was the father of the Jewish nation, a giant of giants, yet he looked at himself and saw absolute nothingness. He didn't just act humble; he truly felt like dust and ashes. And because he made himself small, Hashem made his descendants eternal, giving us mitzvos that bring purity and peace.

This is the yesod of all avodas Hashem. The world tells you to make yourself big, to show off your strengths, and to demand respect. But the Torah teaches us the exact opposite. True greatness comes from bittul, from realizing that everything we have is a gift from Hashem and that on our own, we are nothing. When a Yid humbles himself, he doesn't lose anything; on the contrary, he creates a vessel to receive Hashem's blessings and holiness.

Today, when you feel the urge to assert your honor, to win an argument, or to show someone that you are right, stop and remember Avraham Avinu. Take a deep breath, make yourself a little smaller, and let Hashem's presence fill the space instead.