



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) A tube (cont.)

Abaye rejects the suggestion that Tannaim disagree whether a woman is tamei'ah if blood exits from a tube and suggests an alternative explanation of the dispute.

Rava offers another explanation of the point of dispute in the Baraisa.

Rabbah inquires whether a man is tamei if semen comes out of a tube rather than from his body directly.

R' Huna proves that he is not tamei.

Rabbah unsuccessfully challenges this ruling.

2) Dry blood

R' Yosi the son of R' Chanina inquires whether a discharge of dry blood renders a woman tamei'ah.

R' Elazar cites a source that indicates that she is tamei'ah.

R' Yosi the son of R' Chanina revises his question and again R' Elazar cites a source that even in that case she is tamei'ah.

This answer is unsuccessfully challenged.

Related to the previous discussion Reish Lakish describes the procedure for determining whether a discharge is blood.

A Baraisa presents a dispute about this matter.

Ravina identifies the point of dispute regarding this matter.

A related question is posed and left unresolved.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

Reish Lakish and R' Yochanan disagree whether R' Yehudah disagrees in the case of the discharge that resembles some sort of creature.

A point regarding R' Yochanan's position is clarified.

R' Yehudah in the name of Shmuel suggests a rationale

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Distinctive INSIGHT

Blood that is discharged as a dry piece

אם נמרחו טמאה

R' Yose b. Chanina presented an inquiry to R' Elazar regarding whether blood of niddah which is discharged as a dry piece is tamei. The issue is our understanding of the posuk in Vayikra (15:25) in the section which teaches the laws of zivah. The posuk states, "If a woman's blood flows for many days, etc." The issue is that the posuk might only consider a woman to be tamei'ah if she experiences an actual flow, where the blood is liquid, or perhaps the posuk is just describing the normal manner in which blood flows but it is not intended to exclude tum'ah if the blood comes out in solid form.

The Gemara also clarifies that if the blood was discharged in liquid form, it will remain tamei even if it later dries. The question is only regarding blood that is discharged as dry.

R' Elazar responded that the answer to this question may be found in our Mishnah (21a), where we find that if a woman miscarried various forms of objects, if they are red they should be placed in water and if they dissolve in the water this indicates that they were dried blood, and they are tamei'im. We see that even if the blood is discharged in dry form, it is tamei.

Tosafos proves that a dry substance that can dissolve in water is considered to be a liquid even when it is dried. The proof of Tosafos is from a Mishnah later (54b) regarding a sheretz which is only tamei when moist, but not when dry. If a sheretz can be dissolved and restored to being moist, it is tamei even when dry. We see, says Tosafos, that if something can be dissolved and have its moist state restored, it is considered moist even when still dried. According to this, Tosafos notes that the question of our Gemara must be in regard to a substance which is dried and cannot be dissolved. Therefore, the proof brought by R' Elazar regarding a piece which does dissolve is not relevant to our question.

Tosafos answers that although a piece that can dissolve is defined as a liquid, the Gemara's question was regarding the proper understanding of the posuk which uses the term "flow" in reference to blood. Therefore, our inquiry is resolved, as we find that tum'ah applies even to blood that is discharged as a solid piece and it is not necessary for it to flow.

Ritva explains that if we say that a piece that was originally dry is tahor because it did not flow, we could understand the distinction on 54b between a piece which dissolves and one that does not. When a piece dissolves this is enough of an indication for us to rely upon to now conclude that it was originally a liquid which hardened, and it is tamei. Therefore, the proof from that discussion to resolve our question is now clear, although our question was regarding a piece that was always dry and that Gemara is discussing a piece which was originally a liquid. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What was R' Huna's reasoning why a man is tahor if דרע exits through a tube?

2. Does an emission of dry blood render a woman tamei'ah

3. What is the point of dispute between Reish Lakish and R' Yochanan?

4. What is a גזרה שוה מופנה?

HALACHAH Highlight

The credibility of doctors

וחכמים שאלו לרופאים

And the Chachamim asked the doctors

The Gemara records two incidents of a woman who was discharging red-looking items from her body. In both cases the women approached R' Tzadok who turned to the Torah scholars for guidance who in turn contacted doctors. In both cases the doctors informed them of a condition that women have which causes this kind of discharge from her body and gave them a test to perform to determine whether it is in fact blood or something else as they claim. This discussion is the foundation for determining the extent of credibility that halacha gives to doctors. What makes the question difficult is that on the one hand they asked the doctors what was the source of the discharge and yet on the other hand they did not trust them and they actually performed the test to determine whether the discharge was blood or what the doctors claimed it was.

Tosfei HaRosh¹ maintains that doctors have credibility in halacha and these doctors were not certain about their diagnosis for if they had been they would have declared the women tehoros without the need to test the discharge. Rather the doctors suspected that the women suffered from their respective conditions and suggested a test to confirm whether their suspicions were correct. Maharik² asserts that our Gemara proves that doctors have halachic credibility since they relied

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for R' Meir's ruling concerning a woman who discharges something that resembles an animal.

This explanation is unsuccessfully challenged.

This discussion leads the Gemara into an analysis of the mechanism of a gezeirah shavah and the significance of a gezeirah shavah that is free on both sides.

The significance of a gezeirah shavah that is free on both sides according to R' Yishmael is explained. ■

upon the statements and tests of the doctors for something that is a kares-bearing prohibition. We also find that when a doctor states that someone must eat on Yom Kippur we instruct that person to eat. Clearly halacha trusts the diagnosis of a doctor.

Chasam Sofer³ contends that the Chachamim did not rely upon the doctors to diagnose these particular women. They only relied upon them to teach that women can suffer from these types of conditions that produce discharges that these women experienced. Once the doctors established that these types of conditions exist they went ahead and tested these women to confirm that they actually have the conditions that the doctors described. Regarding Yom Kippur the statement of the doctor only creates a doubt that the person may be so ill that he must eat and a doubt is sufficient to require a person to eat but that does not prove that they have credibility in halacha. ■

1. תוספי הרא"ש ד"ה אמרו אשה.

2. שו"ת מהר"ק סי' קנ"ט.

3. שו"ת חת"ס יו"ד סי' קנ"ח וקע"ג. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

"The Sages Asked the Doctors"

וחכמים שאלו לרופאים

The astounding acumen of the Chazon Ish, ז"ל, even in medical matters is fairly well known. One prominent brain surgeon was forced to consult with him on a complex case. When he heard the brilliant solution the gadol proposed—which certainly saved the patient's life—he was astounded. From then on, he never operated on a difficult case without first consulting with the Chazon Ish. Although many sources pointed out that this shows the greatness of learning Torah lishmah—for how else was he able to advise on such matters—some wish to cast aspersions on this. After all, they claim, it is not as

though the Chazon Ish did not have medical books in his possession. How is his case different from any other person self-trained in medical matters? Perhaps one important point in this discussion is to consider that it is completely unheard of for a person to peruse a few medical books and be able to advise an experienced specialist. Maybe an exceptional genius who immersed himself for years in such texts could attain such greatness. But it seems obvious that someone who hardly looked at such texts, spending every waking moment delving in Torah learning, who quickly read through such texts, could never achieve such deep understanding of medical matters without incalculable siyaata dishmaya.

Interestingly, the Kaftor Vaferach, ז"ל, learns from a statement on today's daf that it is impossible to gain thorough

medical knowledge in our time without studying non-Jewish medical works. "It seems clear that knowledge of medicine is only possible if one knows medical works of the famous non-Jewish doctors. It is clear that, during the time when we were exiled, our sages did not know this discipline thoroughly from Jewish sources alone. We see this from Niddah 22 which states that our sages asked the doctors a medical question.

"The bottom line is that the main thing is the Torah which brings healing to the nefesh and the body. As our sages say, 'One whose body aches or has a headache should delve in the Torah.' One who learns much Torah will be rewarded greatly in the world which is all goodness for eternity!"¹ ■

1. כפתור ופרח, פרק מ"ד