

# daf yomi summary

## Shemini Atzeret 5781

עירובין נג - נט

EDITION: 36

### ERUVIN 56: LOOKING AFTER ONE'S HEALTH

THANKS TO RABBI YONI ISAACSON - YONISAACSON.COM

In loving memory of Rosh Yeshiva of Yeshiva College, South Africa, Moreinu haRav Avraham Tanzer of blessed memory.

At the bottom of the previous Daf, Rav Huna rules that a Talmid Chacham is prohibited from living in a city where vegetables are not available. Rashi explains that this is because in places where vegetables are easily available, they are generally a cheap form of healthy food, which enables him to sustain himself easily and have more time to learn: "הרותב קוסעל לוכיו לזוב חקלנו לכאמל בוט".

In our world of global trade, such a thing might seem hard for the Westerner to imagine, and we indeed daven that global supply of produce will continue uninterrupted despite the current pandemic, but in days prior to modern transport, storage and technology, this was simply not to be taken for granted. If a certain perishable species did not grow locally, it was usually simply not available.

Given that both Eretz Yisrael and Bavel were generally arid regions, making the availability of vegetables a requirement for one's place of abode was no simple thing, even in the "fertile crescent" region, which can hardly be called lush by temperate and tropical standards. Even if we could regard Rav Huna's statement as non-authoritative halachically but more as a form of advice coded in the strong language of halacha, it certainly is a very strong statement about the importance of a healthy diet.

Although Rashi seems to understand that vegetables are not the ONLY healthy food, and that the reason for Rav Huna's ruling is that they are a cheap form of healthy food which will allow the scholar to maximize his learning time without having to work too hard to be able to afford it, the basic assumption that eating healthy food is an obligation remains.

The Gemara questions this ruling, not because of any doubt regarding the importance of having access to healthy food, but because of Tannaic statements that say that vegetables can actually be harmful. It upholds Rav Huna's ruling by distinguishing between different types of vegetables, different parts of vegetables, and different seasons (see similar discussions in Brachos 44b), and whereas the correct approach of a Ben-Torah to specific health

advice of Chazal requires its own post, the basic idea that Chazal required us to eat healthily is not open to debate.

The Rambam (Deos 4) codifies this idea, going a step further and claiming that the main source of illness is an unhealthy diet and lack of exercise, a claim which has stood the test of time and is largely borne-out by modern medical studies that list poor diet, lack of exercise, and other unhealthy lifestyles (such as smoking) as primary risk factors in most serious diseases.

Those who attended Yeshiva College in Johannesburg can never forget the words of the school anthem: "Rosh Yeshiva we are for you, both in sports and back at school." Rav Tanzer זצ"ל always drummed it into us that we were his representatives wherever we were and needed to try our best to make a Kiddush Hashem on the sports field as much as in the classroom. He viewed sports and exercise as an essential part of life in order to maintain physical, emotional and social well-being, and strengthen us so we could better carry out our spiritual duties, something that cannot be taken for granted amongst all teachers of Torah.

As Chazal say (Kesubos 30a): "הכל בידי שמים חוץ מצינין ופחים" - everything is in the hands of Heaven, except for colds and fever." Rashi explains that these can sometimes come upon a person through negligence, presumably by not looking after one's health properly. Particularly during this time of lockdown and pandemic, it goes without saying that we all need to make an extra effort to look after our health, both by eating healthily and exercising as well as possible under the circumstances, and avoiding contracting or spreading the disease, chalila.

With the right effort on our side, we can then daven with all our strength that Hashem keeps us all healthy, heals the ill, and brings a very soon! \*This post is intended to raise issues and stimulate further research and discussion on contemporary topics related to the Daf. It is not intended as psak halacha.

THURSDAY | OCTOBER

THANKS TO TOVA KESTENBAUM

עירובין נג

Daf 53 discusses the details of how to measure the boundaries of a city. Borders always had to be drawn in a straight line and in a square/rectangular shape.

The borders would include any house that protruded from the edge of a city as the entire boundary of the border is pushed out to

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include it. In this way, Chazal greatly increase the area of the city. The Gemara opens the discussion about this city with protruding borders with questions regarding the spelling for me'abberin. Should it be with the letter "ע" or "א".

Although practically and halachically it made little difference how the word is spelled, the meaning of the word changes, and an underlying debate comes to life. Me'abberin with an alef is derived from the Hebrew word for limb. Me'abberin with an ayin is derived from the Hebrew word for a pregnant woman. The differences between these two positions might subtly reflect a "between the lines" discussion that is taking place here.

The basic difference between these two readings is whether one sees the "extension" as an appendage (a "limb") or as a core part of the whole. Perhaps the rabbis of Babylonia saw themselves as an extension of the rabbis of the land of Israel, and perhaps they were suggesting subtly that they shouldn't be seen as an appendage but as the core of the rabbinic tradition. This reading might also account for the fact that another halachic debate, about the right to add a month to the lunar calendar, also uses the language of "me'aberrin." The rabbis of Babylonia sought to establish their rights in this area of halacha as well.

The Daf continues with debates between other geographical areas, regarding methods of speech and Torah study. For example, the Bnei HaGalil are described as not having the fitting methodologies to remember the Torah and allowing Torah to endure. The following stories might be seen as a defense of the Babylonian traditions, seeking to place them at the core of the Talmudic enterprise. Though some of these legends are less well known, the Daf finishes with a relatively famous story about Bruria, who sarcastically ridicules Rav Yossi HaGaglili who seems to have lost his way both figuratively and literally.

FRIDAY 2 OCTOBER  
THANKS

עירובין נד

Last week we learned Daf 54 in Eruvin. During the course of our Daf Yomi zoom Shiur someone asked what "all this Aggadatah" has to do with Eruvin. I'd like to share my perspective as a speech/language therapist. In the past, when working with a child /adult with word retrieval difficulties (anomia/dysnomia), we helped them remember words by organizing the words into categories, so that the brain is able to retrieve the words more easily. Imagine a chest of drawers, and how much easier it is to find things when the drawers are neatly organized.

The theory was that if words are neatly organized into categories in the brain, it would make it easier to retrieve them. There is definitely some validity to that. However, recent neuroscientific research has shown that that this not actually how the brain works. The brain is a complex web, an intricate network of thoughts and associations intertwined. The more associations we can make with a word or idea, the easier it is to recall words and information. The association can be semantic, phonemic, related to who said it, where we heard it... the list goes on and on... Our sages knew this even before neuropsychologists made this discovery. The Oral Law needed to be remembered by heart. Don't think of the tangents of the Gemara as random - approach them as a method to boost and support our

memory.

For example, if we are already talking about groups of three, then let's list other things that come in threes. If we are stating an opinion of a certain Rabbi, then let's list other things that this particular Rabbi discussed. If we quote a verse in the Torah, let's discuss the other verses with similar wording. All these tangents help to trigger our memory.

The Rabbis are helping us to remember the Mishna/Talmud that we learn. It may not always be clear to us what the train of thought is, but it's always a good idea to try to figure it out - it will help us embed the the Oral Torah in our memories. Moadim L'simcha.

SHABBAT 3 OCTOBER

THANKS TO DANIEL STRAUCHLER

עירובין נה

The beginning of Daf 55 holds a discussion on the pasuk "Lo bashamayim hi."

Three interpretations are given. Avdimi bar Chama bar Dosa says that if the Torah was in heaven or across the sea, we would need to travel to get it. The Gemara connects this to a previous discussion on Daf 54 about using mnemonics and other great efforts to remember Torah. This connection is interesting as at first glance the need to travel across sea would be to learn for the first time, but the Gemara is telling us that the effort of reaching heaven is also critical for the retention of one's learning (perhaps more so).

Rava says that Torah is not found in "those who raise or widen their da'at like the heavens or the sea respectively". Rabbi Yochanon says Torah is not found among those who are haughty, or among mechants and traders. Rabbi Yochanon's statement regarding haughtiness seems to encompass both of Rava's interpretations. Why does Rava distinguish between "raising" and "widening" one's da'at? "Raising one's da'at" may be understood as thinking one is more intelligent than Torah, while "widening one's da'at" can be understood as thinking that one's breadth of knowledge is greater than Torah (similar to distinction between iyun vs bekiut).

Recognizing one's inferiority to Torah both in terms of raw intellectual ability and scope of knowledge is critical to success in learning.

SUNDAY 4 OCTOBER

THANKS TO ILAN GRIBOFF

עירובין נו

There are probably few pages of Shas that bridge the idea of "Torah U'Madah" more than Eruvin 56. The Daf begins with a discussion on how to align to the world compass, where the Gemara states: "Use Ursa Major (The Big Dipper) to find north and Scorpio to find south". What's amazing is that in modern astrology we know that The Big Dipper points to the Polaris (The North Star) and is therefore a very accurate way of finding due north.

The Daf then discusses other methods of finding directionality using the sun, and continues with a discussion of the seasons and a calculation for determining when the solstices and equinoxes will fall each year. Underlying this discussion is a clear understanding that the solar year is 365 ¼ days, the ¼ day being important in the modern calendar as that is why we have a secular leap year once every four

years.

Amud Bet moves on to a discussion on how to calculate that the "migrash", or the area that was left empty outside of the cities of the Levi'im constituted  $\frac{1}{4}$  of their techum. Throughout this discussion, the Amoraim display an underlying understanding of  $\pi$ , and the relationship between a square and its diagonal. Perhaps the most relevant scientific piece for this time of lockdown is the discussion that opens the day's Daf: "Any one city that has a lot of peaks and valleys will cause the people to age faster." An important reminder not to overstress your body and to exercise and stay in shape. Stay healthy everyone!

MONDAY 5 OCTOBER  
THANKS STEVE WIND

עירובין נז

Today's Daf reminds us that the Torah source for the techum is the verse relating to the cities of the Levi'im: "And the open spaces of the cities, that you shall give to the Levi'im, shall be from the wall of the city and outward one thousand amos around. And you shall measure from outside the city on the east side two thousand amos" (Bamidbar 35:4-5).

Today's Daf adds the Torah source for the techum being a square from the verses relating to the Korban Olah: "And they shall sprinkle the blood around upon the altar" (Vayikra 1:5), which mentions the same word "saviv" (around), and since the Kohen sprinkles the blood around by placing it at two opposite corners of the altar, we see that saviv can refer to a square shape.

We also learn from the words "outside the city" that we should provide a certain vacant space outside the city, and only afterward measure the two thousand amos. The Gemara goes on to explain that if the vacant space of one city overlaps with the vacant space of another, then the cities can combine in terms of measuring the techum.

Furthermore, if there are three cities that are located close together forming a triangle, but if the three cities were theoretically aligned in a row and the vacant spaces would then overlap, then all three cities combine into one in terms of measuring the techum.

TUESDAY 6 OCTOBER  
THANKS TO RUSSEL LEVY

עירובין נח

The Daf mostly discusses eruv techumin: how far you can leave the city, the type of rope to be used for measuring, and how to measure the distance across valleys and canyons.

One aspect which is enlightening is the definition of a canyon, and when we ignore either its vertical or horizontal component. We will focus on the case where the vertical component is ignored. Because of a seeming contradiction between the Mishna and a Braita, the Gemara explains that we can ignore the vertical component of a valley when the incline is large.

Any incline can be decomposed into a horizontal and vertical component, where the length of the incline can be calculated by the Pythagorean Theorem: the sum of the squares of the horizontal and vertical components is equal to the square of the incline. Generally, the three sides will not all be whole numbers, other than

Pythagorean Triples, such as ones with sides 3/4/5, 5/12/13, as well as multiples of those (10/24/26).

Why is this important? Chazal defined an incline as a 10 tefachim vertical over 4 amot, or 24 tefachim of distance. If we assume the four amot is the horizontal component of the triangle, as the Kidur method of measuring is explained in the Gemara, this is an easy measurement to take: both lengths of both ropes will be whole numbers. If, at the end of a horizontal 4 amot rope you can measure more than 10 tefachim, it is too steep and you can ignore the vertical component, and if it is less than 10 tefachim, you must measure the slope.

WEDNESDAY 6 OCTOBER

THANKS TO DR YARDAENA OSBAND - TALKING TALMUD  
PODCAST

עירובין נט

The Gemara breaks from its discussion on eruv techumim and discusses the establishment of an eruv chatzerot in smaller towns where there is a possibility to include an entire town in one large eruv - an "עיר של יחיד".

The Mishna and Gemara discuss a case where a private city becomes a public city. This type of city is allowed to establish an eruv chatzerot for the whole city, "ונעשית של רבים", but for a public city that then becomes a private one, "ושל רבים ונעשית של יחיד", an eruv chatzerot can be established for the whole city, but an area of the city must be excluded from the eruv so that residents do not forget that an eruv was necessary in order to carry.

The Mishna explains that according the Rabbi Yehuda, the size of the area that needs to be excluded from the town's eruv is the size of the city of Chadasha in Yehuda, which had 50 residents: כעיר חדשה שביהודה, שיש בה חמשים דיורי.

Chadasha appears in Sefer Yehoshua 15:37, "צנן וחדשה ומגדל גד" (Zenan, Hadasha, Migdal-gad). These were cities in the nachala of Yehuda, near the border of Edom, captured by Yehoshua and Bnei Yisroel. The name Chadasha comes from the word chadash, new, and here we are discussing a city that becomes new - it is a different city than what it was before. This Mishna, and the discussion in the Gemara, recognizes that cities change as populations grow or decline, and can become "chadash".

