

That grew on their own

שעלו מאליהן –

OVERVIEW

The **ברייתא** teaches that grasses which grew on their own and covered the windows they (among other things) can reduce the opening of the window,¹ so that the **טומאה** will not extend through the window. **גמרא** reconciles our **תוספות** with seemingly contradictory **גמרות**.

תוספות asks:

תימה היאך ממעטין הטפח הא תנן במסכת אהלול (פרק ח' משנה ה') -

It is astounding! How can the grass diminish the טפח opening of the window, for the מסכת אהלול in משנה -

אלו לא מביאין² ולא חוצצין³ הזרעים והירקות המחוברים לקרקע -

'These items cannot bring טומאה and cannot protect from טומאה; plants and vegetables which are attached to the ground -

חוץ מן הירקות שמנו פירוש הנהו דמנו לעיל⁴ דמביאין וחוצצין -

Except for the vegetables that have been enumerated'; meaning those vegetables that were enumerated previously, which can bring טומאה and protect from טומאה, which are -

האירוס⁵ והקיסוס וירקות חמור ודלעת יוונית -

The iris and the ivy and a squirting cucumber, and a Greek gourd -

ואם כן היכי קתני דעשבין שעלו מאליהן דחוצצין -

So therefore the question is how can the ברייתא teach that (even attached) grasses which grew on their own can be חוצץ, when the משנה explicitly states that anything which is attached to the ground is not (מביא and not) חוצץ?!

תוספות answers:

¹ In order to transmit טומאה from a room to outside the room we require that the opening of the window be a פותח טפח (a square טפח); these grasses cover part of the window (which was a פותח טפח), so that now since there is less than a פותח טפח, the טומאה cannot extend through this opening.

² **אלו לא מביאין** [את הטומאה] means that if there is an attached plant which is covering a corpse and utensils, the plant is not considered to be an אהל and does not bring the טומאה from the מת to the utensils. If however the plant would not be attached to the ground it would be considered an אהל, and the כלים would become טמא.

³ **לא חוצצין** [בפני הטומאה] means if there is a מת and the attached ירקות are covering the מת and there are כלים on top of the ירקות, the ירקות do not protect the utensils, and the כלים become טמא since they are מאהיל on the מת. If however the ירקות were detached (and there was a פותח טפח between the מת and the detached ירקות), anything on top of the ירקות would remain טהור, for the ירקות would be חוצץ.

⁴ שם משנה א'.

⁵ The translator is indebted to Sefaria for the translations on this line.

ותירץ רבינו תם דהתם איירי לענין אהל דאין נעשין אהל לחוץ בפני הטומאה -

And the ר"ת answered that there in the משנה we are discussing regarding an אהל, that attached plants cannot become an אהל to protect from טומאה -

על מה שתחתיהם או שעליהם⁶ או להביא טומאה⁷ -

On whatever is below them or above them, or that attached plants cannot bring the טומאה, the reason is -

מפני שהרוח מנשבו ואינו עומד במקום אחד -

Because the wind blows it about and it does not remain in one place -

והוי דומיא דעוף הפורח שאינו לא חוצץ ולא מביא -

So it is like a flying bird which is not חוצץ and not מביא; however here the function of the grass is not to be חוצץ on what is above or below the מת, but only to diminish the size of the opening, for that purpose even attached grass is sufficient –

Tosfos asks:

הקשה רבינו יצחק דהכא בכולה שמעתין לא בעינן מירוח⁸ לא בעשבים ולא בחבית -

The ר"י asked that in the entire גמרא here we do not require smearing, neither regarding grasses, nor regarding the barrel; we know this -

דפריך לעיל היא גופה⁹ תיחוצ -

For the גמרא previously asked, ‘it (the barrel) itself should be חוצץ -

ובהגוזל קמא (בבא קמא דף קה,א) אמר רבא הרי חבית שניקבה וסתמוה שמרים הצילוה¹⁰ -

However, רבא said in קמא הגוזל, פרק הגוזל קמא רבא, ‘a barrel which was pierced and the sediment closed it up, this closure by the שמרים saved the barrel from being מקבל טומאה, for the sediment seals the hole completely; if however -

פקקה בזמורה עד שימרח מן הצדדין -

He stuffed up the hole with a twig it is not considered sealed off, until he smears along the sides of the twig with mud or some paste so the seal will be tight. So why here do we not also require that it must be tightly sealed off?¹¹

Tosfos answers:

ויש לומר דהתם בכלי¹² בעינן מוקף צמיד פתיל להכי צריך מירוח אבל הכא לא בעי צמיד פתיל:

⁶ See footnote # 3.

⁷ See footnote # 2.

⁸ This means smearing a type of sealant to make sure the closure is tight.

⁹ The גמרא asks that the barrel by itself (without anything else) should be חוצץ. We know that it is highly unlikely (almost impossible) that the barrel fills up the entire window, without leaving over some open spaces; nevertheless the גמרא feels that this is sufficient and no smearing of a sealant is required.

¹⁰ At the conclusion of the תוספות it will become clear what this saving means.

¹¹ See ‘Thinking it over’ # 2.

¹² The (התם בכלי בעינן) amends this to read, (התם בעינן) (instead of הכלי בעינן).

And one can say that there we require that it be surrounded by a **צמיד פתיל**,¹³ therefore smearing is required, however here (to diminish the size of the opening)¹⁴ we do not require a **צמיד פתיל**.

SUMMARY

Attached plants cannot be an אהל (to bring or protect from טומאה), however they are effective in diminishing the size of an opening. A צמיד פתיל is required to save from אהל; however it is unnecessary when diminishing the טפה size of an opening.

THINKING IT OVER

1. How can we understand the difference between the **הוא אמינא** of **תוספות** first question (regarding **מחובר לקרקע**) and **תוספות** answer?¹⁵

2. How are we to understand תוספות second question (regarding מירוח);¹⁶ it is obvious that concerning diminishing the size of a טפה we do not need to close off the entire טפה just to make the opening less than a טפה, so what is תוספות question?!!¹⁷

¹³ וְלֹא כָּלִי פְתוּחַ אֲשֶׁר אֵין צִמִּיד פְּתִיל that אהל המת states regarding vessels that are found in the פסוק יט, טו is פסוק צמִיד פְּתִיל) they need to be covered tightly (עָלְיוּ טָמֵא הוא means tightly covered). The גמרא ב"ק is regarding saving the wine in the barrel; for that the barrel must be tightly closed whether by the sediments or with a twig plugging the hole provided that it is smeared properly so that it is tightly closed.

¹⁴ In our case we are not discussing saving the contents of the barrel from becoming טמא, rather we are using the barrel to diminish the size of the opening to less than a טפה so once that is accomplished by the barrel; we have no concern for the slight opening which is less than a טפה. See מהרש"א in footnote # 17 and נחלת משה for a clearer explanation.

¹⁵ See אהלות (פ"ח מ"ה) in משנה in תפארת ישראל, and נחלת משה.

¹⁶ See footnote # 11.

¹⁷ See *מהרש"א*.