

He is erasing

מוחק הוא -

OVERVIEW

The גמרא cites a dispute in a case where one wrote with red (inferior) ink on top of black (superior) ink. One opinion maintains that he is פטור since he is מקלקל (ruining the superior writing), and one maintains that he is חייב for the מלאכה of erasing (the good writing). תוספות expounds the latter view why it is a proper מלאכה and it is not מקלקל.

וחשיב ליה מוחק על מנת לכתוב¹ דמסתמא² עומד לחזור ולכתוב עליו בדיו –

And he considers (this writing) as erasing with the intent to write, for presumably he intends to rewrite over the סיקרא with proper דיו –

ומקלקל לא הוי³ דעל הכתיבה זאת תהא כתיבה העליונה⁴ רישומה ניכר טפי –

And he is not a מקלקל (for erasing the superior ink writing) because on this writing (of סיקרא) the impression of the uppermost writing will be more apparent -

משאם היתה תחתונה לבדה⁵:

Than if there would only be the lower writing of דיו alone.

SUMMARY

By דיו he is presumably a מוחק ע"מ לכתוב and the last writing will be an improvement over the original.

THINKING IT OVER

Is the rule that מוחק is חייב only if it is ע"מ לכתוב, in order to remove the problem of מקלקל or is it a rule in מלאכת מוחק?⁶

¹ There is a rule concerning the מלאכה of מוחק (and similarly the מלאכות of קורע, סותר, etc.), that it is חייב only if it is ע"מ לכתוב (or לבנות לתפור, etc.). תוספות explains how this criterion is being met.

² See footnote # 5. Otherwise why is he writing over the דיו with the סיקרא?!

³ תוספות may be responding to the following difficulty. Usually מוחק ע"מ לכתוב is where he erases the old letter completely and writes a totally new letter, which is a תיקון. However here original it was written with דיו and eventually it will be written with דיו exactly as it was originally how is this a תיקון?!

⁴ As mentioned previously in תוספות there is a presumption that he will rewrite over this סיקרא with דיו.

⁵ The fact that there are two layers of ink דיו and סיקרא underneath this final layer of דיו (which he will presumably write), the final layer is טפי ניכר, than if he would only write on top of one layer (of דיו).

⁶ See בל"י אות תמה.