

YESHIVAT HAR ETZION
ISRAEL KOSCHITZKY VIRTUAL BEIT MIDRASH (VBM)

TALMUDIC METHODOLOGY
By Rav Moshe Taragin

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

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לע"נ

יהודה פנחס בן הרב שרגא פייזוועל
כ"ב אב תשכ"ח – י' אב תשע"ב

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Shiur #32: *Dash* – Part 2

In a [previous shiur](#), we questioned whether *dash* is defined as separating produce from material attached to it during its growth or if *dash* is defined as excavating produce from the natural sheath that protected it during growth. This *shiur* will address a broader question of whether *dash* is an isolated activity or is only prohibited if it caps a larger progress.

The *gemara* in *Shabbat* (95a) describes a potential *dash* violation for extracting blood from a mollusk for the purpose of dying clothing. Although R. Yehuda considers this activity “classic *dash*,” the Rabbanan disagree because a mollusk is not “*gidulei karka*,” it does not grow from the ground. Why should *dash* be limited only to items that grow from the ground?

Perhaps this limitation reflects the fact that *dash* is not simply a formal act of separating materials. If it were, it might be difficult to distinguish between materials that grow from the ground and other materials. Instead, perhaps *dash* is the final **stage** in preparing produce for human consumption. Produce naturally grows in a protective coat, and part of preparing it for human consumption entails removing that coat. As we previously suggested, *dash* constitutes removing something concealed by its protective coat. However, it is not a formal or isolated **act** of excavation, but rather a **stage** in the processing of food for consumption. As such, it can only apply to items that grew from the ground in a protective coat that now must be removed to allow for utility.

Potentially, this view of *dash* may severely limit its scope only to consumable food. According to Rashi’s understanding, the *gemara* in *Shabbat*

(73b) describes a situation of *dash* in the case of removing wastes of flax and wool. However, Rabbeinu Chananel interprets the *gemara* to refer to edible foodstuffs. Perhaps he views the prohibition of *dash* as the final stage in preparing **food** for consumption, and he therefore limits *dash* only to foodstuffs. To be eligible for *dash*, not only must the item be produced by the ground, but it must also be a food.

A more extreme application of this logic may be found in a comment of the Ba'al Ha-Ma'or on the *gemara* in *Shabbat* 128a, which permits *dash*-like processing for heaps of hay and ripe stalks. The Ba'al Ha-Ma'or explains that these items are not consumed by humans, but are rather *ma'akhal beheima*, animal food, and *dash* does not apply. This would be the most radical limitation of *dash* if this *melakha* is defined as the final stage in preparing produce for consumption by removing the protective coat within which it grew. Since animals ingest those husks and coats, animal food does not require this processing. Thus, *dash* is not violated when protective coats are removed from animal feed.

However, these positions are minority opinions. Most positions apply *dash* to **any substance** that grows from the ground, whether it is food for humans, food for animals, or perhaps not even food at all (as in the case of Rashi's literal application of *dash* to flax and cotton). However, the item must at least be produced by **growing** from the ground. In the instance of a mollusk, which does not grow from the ground, the skin cannot be viewed as a protective coat for the blood. Thus, drawing the blood does not constitute removing a shell and completing the process of harvesting agricultural produce.

Ironically, this *gidulei karka* requirement may be suspended in a scenario in which an item is drawn out of a specific protective coat. Ultimately there is no formal requirement that an item must grow from the ground. Rather, it is **characteristic** that items which do grow from the ground develop with some external protective shell, and *dash* constitutes excavating the item from within its shell. If a natural protective shell exists in items that are not *gidulei karka*, perhaps *dash* would still be violated if the inner material is extracted.

This helps explain the interesting situation of milking a cow, which Rashi (*Shabbat* 95a) classifies as *dash*. Tosafot (*Shabbat* 73b, s.v. *Mefarek* [2nd]) challenges Rashi based on the fact that extracting blood from a mollusk is not considered *dash*. If blood extraction is not considered *dash* (at least according to the *Chakhamim*), milking cow should similarly not be considered *dash*.

Perhaps the explanation of Rashi lies in the above description of *dash*. The excavation of a concealed material per se is insufficient to classify something as *dash*. This *melakha* is only violated if an item is removed from within a shell that is specifically designed to protect it. This protective shell is common to agricultural items, but it also defines the udder and milk. The udder has no role other than storing and protecting milk. Thus, it is functionally

similar to a husk that surrounds agricultural produce. By contrast, the skin of a mollusk is not designed primarily to protect the blood. The epidemiological layer serves multiple functions and cannot be considered the **container** or protector of the blood. Therefore, *dash* does not apply.

Perhaps an additional consequence of defining *dash* as the final stage in the preparation of harvest for human utility would be the rule that *dash* is only violated if performed in the **typical** fashion. The *gemara* in *Shabbat* (144b) applies *dash* to the extraction of juice from fruit, provided that the fruits are typically designated for juice. Everyone agrees that extraction of wine and oil qualifies as *dash*. R. Yehuda and the *Chakhamim* dispute the halakha regarding berries and pomegranates, with the former permitting and the latter prohibiting. However, extracting juice from all other fruits is Biblically permitted according to all opinions. The *Rishonim* attribute this permissibility to the fact that these fruits are not typically designated for juice extraction. However, they do not explain why *dash* is only violated when the extraction follows typical patterns.

Perhaps this requirement stems from *dash's* definition as the final stage of harvest and preparation. If *dash* were merely a mechanical activity of separating two items, or even a mechanical activity of excavating a hidden material, it would matter little whether the process were standard or irregular. However, defining *dash* as the final stage of a preparatory process may limit this violation only to a typical process of produce preparation. Grapes are typically processed into wine and the extraction process is the final stage of wine production. Since (in *Chazal's* era) apples were not regularly processed for their juice, the extraction process cannot be cast as the final stage of food preparation.

In fact, many *Rishonim* (the Rif and the Rambam in *Beitza* 13b)) maintain that even grains can be manually separated from their husks and sheaths on Shabbat, since these are not typically processed by hand, but rather through animal trampling or other mechanical options. The *gemara* in *Beitza*, which permits these extractions, allows them on both *Chag* and Shabbat. The Rif (comments to *Shabbat* 144b) associates the permissibility of juice extraction with this paradigm. Just as extraction of non-standard juices is permitted, similarly extraction of grains through atypical means is permitted. If *dash* is cast as the final stage of preparing produce, it is only violated if the object being extracted is typically extracted and (possibly) if the manner of extraction is standard.

A final application of this principle may relate to situations in which the extraction does not confer a new **status of food** to the extracted item. Several *Rishonim* claim that in this instance, *dash* has not been violated, even though the mechanical process of extraction has occurred. The paradigm for this is the *gemara* in *Shabbat* 144b, which allows squeezing juice into solid food. Since the juice is absorbed by a solid food, it never achieves the status of "juice" (*mashkeh*); it was incorporated in a solid food before the act of extraction and now is absorbed by new food. Since it always retains the status of "*okhel*," *dash* has not been violated.

Why should a status change into *mashkeh* be necessary to violate *dash*? Again, if *dash* is the final stage of food preparation, it may only be violated if it confers some status change to indicate the effects of this preparation.

A similar application applies to a situation in which the excavated material was attached to something that was also considered *okhel*. For example, as stated in an earlier *shiur*, the Maharil questioned the permissibility of extracting peas from their pod. One method of justifying this practice is to view the pod as edible. Since the peas are being extracted from *okhel*, *dash* is not violated. Similar logic is used to explain a Tosafot in *Beitza* (13b) that allows the removal of grains from a thin shell. The thin shell is edible, and the grain is thus being separated from *okhel*.

If the entire function of *dash* is to conclude the harvest process and render the item fit for human consumption, perhaps the process must endow a newly conferred state of *okhel*. If the food was attached to *okhel*, it already possessed that status; the extraction process does not confer any new status. In the absence of this change, *dash* has not been violated.