

Avodah Zarah – Simanim

רבי ישמעאל – פרק ד

דף נה – Daf 55

1. Why idols may appear to “heal” people, etc. (“החליקין בדברים”)

Zunin said to Rebbe Akiva, “Both you and I know there is nothing to idolatry, but why do people enter a pagan temple with broken limbs and leave healed?” Rebbe Akiva responded with a משל of someone with whom everyone would leave deposits without עדים, and one person would always leave deposits with עדים, but one time left something with him without עדים. The שומר’s wife suggested denying having received the item and keeping it, but the שומר replied, “Just because this fool acted improperly, we should destroy our trustworthiness?!” Similarly, any יסורים – sufferings decreed upon a person are sworn to depart at a particular moment and keep true to their oaths even if the sufferer entered a pagan temple at that moment. Rav Yehudah was asked to explain an idol which appeared in dreams during a drought, demanding human sacrifice to make it rain, and after the sacrifice, it would indeed rain. He quoted Rav *darshening* a *passuk* about idols: אשר חלק ה' אליהם – *which Hashem your G-d has apportioned to them*, מלמד שהחליקין בדברים כדי לטורדן מן העולם – *this teaches that [Hashem] smoothed the way for [idolators] to slip with meaningless words which enable them to believe in their idols.*

2. Harvesting and treading grapes with an עכו"ם, or Yisroel who processes wine in tumah

The next Mishnah permits buying the contents of a winepress (i.e., grapes crushed by foot) from an עכו"ם – *and it cannot become נסך until it descends into the pit*. Once it descends into the pit, the juice in the pit is prohibited, but the juice remaining in the treading area remains permitted. The Mishnah continues: דורכין עם העובד כוכבים בגת – *one may tread with an idolator in the winepress*, and there is no concern he is being paid for working with a prohibited substance, since the juice is still permitted. There is also no concern of causing *tumah* to *chullin* in Eretz Yisroel, because the grapes became *tamei* when the עכו"ם began trampling them. However, it is prohibited to harvest grapes with an עכו"ם, since the Jew’s placing them in the treading area will cause their becoming *tamei*. The Mishnah prohibits harvesting or treading grapes with a Yisroel who processes his wine in a state of *tumah*, because he cannot assist his sinful actions in any way (as opposed to assisting an עכו"ם, who is not prohibited from being *metamei* food). Still, he may help the sinful Yisroel transport barrels to and from the winepress, which is a separate activity.

3. When juice pressed from grapes is considered “wine” for נסך

Rav Huna says: יין כיון שהתחיל להמשך עושה יין נסך – *once wine begins to flow down the treading basin, it can become נסך*. Our Mishnah disagrees, since it states that once the pressed juice descends into the pit, only the juice in the pit is prohibited, but the juice remaining in the treading basin remains permitted!? Rav Huna answers that our Mishnah reflects the משנה ראשונה – *original teaching*, whereas his own ruling reflects the משנה אחרונה – *final teaching*. A Baraisa elaborates that originally, it was permitted to tread grapes with an עכו"ם, without concern that it can become נסך, but later they taught it is prohibited to tread grapes with an עכו"ם, because it can become נסך as soon as it starts to flow down the basin. The Baraisa teaches that they additionally retracted and permitted being *metamei chullin* in Eretz Yisroel, and one may therefore harvest grapes together with an עכו"ם. However, it is still prohibited to harvest or tread grapes with a Yisroel who processes wine in *tumah*, because a portion of it must be made *terumah*, which is Biblically prohibited to be *metamei*.

Siman – Speed Limit 55

The idolator who was speeding over the 55-mph speed limit and **thought it was his prayers to his idol that got him off the hook when really the cop would have let him go either way**, was running late for his job at the **wine press to tread grapes with a Yisroel**, but didn’t realize that when he got there, **they wouldn’t let him because the wine can become נסך as soon as it starts to flow**.

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3 things to remember

1. Why idols may appear to "heal" people, etc. ("החליקן בדברים")
2. Harvesting and treading grapes with an עכו"ם, or Yisroel who processes wine in tumah
3. When juice pressed from grapes is considered "wine" for יין נסך

