

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Menachos 65-71

Week of 21-27 Tammuz 5756 / 8-14 July 1996
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

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The Temple Made in Heaven

Chadash – new grain – was forbidden to be eaten before the *Omer* Meal Offering was made in the Temple on the sixteenth day of the Month of Iyar. This was usually done no later than midday so even those who lived far from Jerusalem could assume by that hour that the *Omer* had been offered and it was safe to eat from the new grain. In post-Temple times daybreak of the sixteenth day marks the time that new grain is permitted by the Torah. The Torah teaches that when the *Omer* cannot be offered the ban on *Chadash* is in effect only until the beginning of the sixteenth. But Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai instituted a decree to prohibit *Chadash* the entire sixteenth day. His reasoning: We look forward to the Temple soon being rebuilt and the *Omer* being offered. If we permit eating *Chadash* this year from the beginning of the day, people will say that they can eat *Chadash* next year from daybreak as well, when in truth they must wait for the *Omer* to first be offered.

In *Mesechta Rosh Hashanah* (30a) this point is expanded upon. If the Temple will be built on the sixteenth no problem will exist, for daybreak already made *Chadash* permissible. If it will be built before the sixteenth then the *Omer* will have been offered by noon. Why then was the decree for banning *Chadash* all day long? The answer is that Rabbi Yochanan was afraid lest the Temple be rebuilt just before sunset of the fifteenth (the first day of Pesach) or the night of the sixteenth, which would not allow enough time to reap the barley and process it into flour before the end of the sixteenth.

Rashi, however, raises the question as to how the Temple could be built on a holiday or at night when we know from *Mesechta Shavuos* (15b) that these are times when such construction may not take place? His answer is that only a Temple built by human effort has this restriction. The Temple of the future, however, will descend from Heaven.

Menachos 68b

Plowed in the Cloud

If barley descended from the clouds it could be used for the *Omer* Meal Offering on Pesach because the Torah does not specify that it must be brought from *Eretz Yisrael*. But if wheat thus came down from Heaven a question arises as to whether it could be used for the Two Loaves offered on Shavuos.

Does the Torah's directive to use wheat which comes "from your dwelling place" only exclude lands outside of *Eretz Yisrael*, but not the clouds — or does this exclusion extend to clouds as well?

This question remains unresolved, but there is an interesting discussion in the commentaries as to how the grain came down from the clouds.

Rashi explains that the clouds over the ocean swallowed a ship filled with grain which later came down from those clouds along with the rain.

Tosefos challenges this explanation. If the source of the grain was *Eretz Yisrael* why should it become disqualified by being absorbed into the clouds? And if the source was a field outside of *Eretz Yisrael* what reason is there to assume it might be eligible simply because it entered the clouds?

His own explanation is that the grain in question never grew on earth and came from the clouds in miraculous fashion, just as we find (*Sanhedrin* 59b) that Rabbi Shimon ben Chalafta's prayer for meat to feed the hungry lions that roared at him was answered by two large slabs of meat descending from Heaven.

Menachos 69b

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