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## CHAPTER VIII.

### REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE PRESCRIBED QUANTITIES OF VICTUALS AND BEVERAGES WHICH MUST NOT BE CARRIED ABOUT ON THE SABBATH.

**MISHNA I.:** The prescribed quantities (of victuals and beverages) prohibited to be carried about on the Sabbath (are as follows): Sufficient wine in a goblet, which with the addition of a certain quantity of water would make a full goblet of wine (fit to drink); 1 milk to the quantity of a mouthful, honey sufficient to cover a wound with, oil sufficient to anoint a small limb with, and water in quantities sufficient for a medical bath for the eyes. For all other liquids and also of whatever can be poured out, the prescribed quantity is a quarter of a lug (about a quart). R. Simeon says: The prescribed quantities for the liquids enumerated in this Mishna are also a quarter of a lug, and the various prescribed quantities specified apply only to those who store such liquids.

**GEMARA:** A Boraitha, in addition to this Mishna, states: "The quantity which suffices for a good goblet of wine." What is to be understood by a good goblet? The goblet used in benediction 2 after meals.

R. Na'hman in the name of R. Abuhu said: "A goblet used at benediction after meals must contain no less than a fourth of a quarter lug (of pure wine), so that when mixed with water the prescribed quantity (a quarter lug) will be made." Said Rabha: We have learned this in our Mishna: "Sufficient wine in a goblet, which with addition of water would make a full goblet"--commented on by the Boraitha to mean "which would make a good goblet." From the close of the Mishna we learn: "For all other liquids the prescribed quantity is a quarter of a lug." [And] he is in accordance with his theory elsewhere, that wine which is not strong enough to be mixed with three parts of water is not

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considered wine at all. Said Abayi: "There are two objections to this: Firstly, there is a Mishna that wine fit to drink is such as has been mixed with two-thirds water, like the wine of Sharon; secondly, do you think that the water in the pitcher (intended for mixing with the wine) is counted in?" Rejoined Rabha: The first objection does not hold good, as Sharon wine is an exception, which although weak is nevertheless good; or it may be that there the particularity is the color, which is not changed by an addition of two-thirds; but concerning taste, I say that only one which can bear three-fourths of water is considered. As to the second objection, concerning water in the pitcher, it is also nothing as concerning Sabbath. The quality and not the quantity is considered, and the wine in question is of that quality.

There is a Boraitha that the prescribed quantity for the extract of wine is the size of an olive. So said R. Nathan. And R. Joseph said that R. Jehudah agrees with him in a Mishna, Tract Nidah

(which will be translated there).

The rabbis taught: The prescribed quantity for animal milk is the equivalent of a mouthful; for human milk and the white of an egg, as much as is used for the preparation of a salve for a sore eye; when mixed with water, the prescribed quantity is as much as is used to bathe both eyes with.

"*Honey sufficient to cover a wound with.*" A Boraitha states: "Sufficient to cover the mouth of a wound with."

Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: The Holy One, blessed be He, has created nothing useless in the world. He created the snail as a remedy for a sore, the fly for the sting of a wasp, the mosquito for the bite of a serpent, the serpent for the mange, and the lizard for the bite of a scorpion.

The rabbis taught: There are five terrors through which the strong succumb to the weak. The Maphgia terrorizes the lion, 1 the mosquito the elephant, the lizard the scorpion, the swallow the eagle, and the kilbith (a small fish) the whale. Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: Is any similarity to be found in the Scripture? [Amos, v. 9] That causeth wasting to prevail against the strong."

R. Zera once met R. Jehudah standing at the door of his (R. Jehudah's) father-in-law in a very cheerful mood, and disposed to answer a whole world full of questions. He asked

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him: "What is the reason that (in a flock) the she-goats generally go ahead of the sheep?" And he answered: "In accordance with the Creation: At first darkness, then light" (she-goats are generally dark and lambs [or sheep] white). "Why are she-goats not covered with a tail?" asked the former again. And he answered: "Those who cover us are (in turn) covered, and those that do not cover us are not covered." (Because sheep provide us with wool, they are also provided with cover.) "Why has a camel a short tail?" "Because it feeds on thorns (in order that the thorns may not catch in its tail)."

And "Why has an ox a long tail?" "Because he grazes in plains and must protect himself from the gnats." "Why are the feelers of a locust soft?" "Because the locusts swarm in fields; were their feelers hard, the locusts would be blinded by losing them in knocking against trees, for Samuel said, all that is necessary to blind a locust is to tear off his feelers." "What is the reason that the lower eyelids of a hen are turned up (and cover the upper eyelids)?" "Because a hen soars to her roost and (in a house full of smoke) she might be blinded by the smoke from below."

The rabbis taught the following: "Three creatures grow stronger as they grow older, viz.: Fishes, serpents, and swine."

"*Oil sufficient to anoint a small limb with,*" i.e., a little finger. At the school of R. Janai it was thus explained: "It means the smallest limb of a one-day-old infant." And the same was said by R. Simeon b. Elazar.

"*Water sufficient for a medical bath for the eyes.*" Said Abayi: Let us see! Of an article which is very often used for one purpose and seldom for another, the rabbis always leniently permitted the maximum quantity to be used, as the prescribed quantity, of the article much in use. Again, when an article is used alike for several purposes, the rabbis restrict the prescribed quantity to its minimum: (to be more explicit) wine is frequently used as a beverage and only at times as a medicament; hence the rabbis regard it solely as a beverage (and determine the maximum quantity); the same is the case with milk; honey, however, which is used to a greater extent as a medicine than for nutritive purposes, is regarded as a medicine and therefore restricted to the prescribed quantity for medicines (which is a smaller quantity than a beverage). What is the reason, then, that the rabbis restrict water, which is certainly more of a beverage than a medicament, to the minimum quantity? Rabha answered: They

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hold with the opinion of Samuel, who declared that all liquids used as medicine for the eyes inflame and blind, except water, which soothes and does not blind (and in this case the Mishna has reference to one who carried about water on the Sabbath as a medicament for the eyes).

"*For all other liquids, the prescribed quantity is a quarter of a lug.*" The rabbis taught: For blood and all other liquids the prescribed quantity is a quarter of a lug. R. Simeon b. Elazar said the prescribed quantity for blood is as much as is used to apply to one eye; because that quantity is used when the eye is afflicted with a cataract.

All these prescribed quantities apply only to those who carry (the victuals or beverages) about. To those, however, who store them (the victuals or beverages) the carrying of even the least imaginable quantity is prohibited (because from his storing them we see that he considers them valuable); but R. Simeon says all these prescribed quantities apply to such as stored (victuals and beverages and hence considered them valuable); but as for persons who only carried them out, for all beverages (whether used also for medical purposes or not) if carried out in any quantities less than a quarter of a lug there is no culpability.

The former teacher said that "those prescribed quantities only refer to those who carry out," but to "those who store them the carrying of even the least imaginable quantity is prohibited." Is the one who stores not also a carrier (he is culpable for carrying and not for storing)?

Answered Abayi: The Boraitha treats of a case where a master ordered his retainer to clear off the table. If the retainer removed something of value to everybody from the table, it constituted a quantity which must not be carried about on the Sabbath. If the thing was of value only to the master and the retainer carried it out, he (the retainer) is culpable, in spite of the fact that the thing was of value to his master alone. (Hence he is called one who stores, and not a carrier) for it signifies that the thing is worth storing.

Again, the former teacher said: "And the sages agree with R. Simeon that the prescribed quantity of slops is a quarter of a lug." Of what use are slops? Said R. Jehudah: "To prepare mortar with." But were we not taught that the prescribed quantity for mortar is only as much as suffices to make the mouth of a bellows-pipe with? Aye, but for the purpose of preparing mortar, a man would not trouble himself to carry out so small

a quantity as is sufficient to make a mouth of a bellows-pipe, hence a quarter of a lug would be the least that would be carried out to make mortar with.

MISHNA II.: The prescribed quantity for rope is as much as suffices to make a handle for a basket; for reeds, as much as suffices to hang a fine or coarse sieve thereon: R. Jehudah says: As much as is sufficient to take the measure of a child's shoe; for paper, as much as suffices to write a toll-bill on--a toll-bill itself must *not* be carried out; the prescribed quantity for paper that has been erased is as much as will wrap the top of a perfume bottle. The prescribed quantity for vellum is as much as suffices for the covering of an amulet; for parchment, as much as suffices for the writing of the smallest portion of the phylacteries, which is "Hear, O Israel for ink, as much as is necessary for the writing of two letters (characters); for paint, as much as will paint one eye. The prescribed quantity for (bird) lime is as much as will suffice to put on a lime twig; for pitch or sulphur, as much as will cover a hole (in a quicksilver tube); for as much as will fill up a small leakage (in a utensil); for loam, as much as suffices to make all orifice for a pair of bellows used by goldsmiths; R. Jehudah says the prescribed quantity for loam is as much as will make a stand for a goldsmith's crucible; for clay, as much as will cover the mouth of a goldsmith's crucible; for lime, as much as will cover the little finger of a maiden; R. Jehudah says for lime the prescribed quantity is as much as will cover the temple of a maiden; R. Nehemiah says as much as will cover the back part of a maiden's temple.

GEMARA: "*For paper, as much as suffices to write a toll-bill on.*" There is a Boraitha: "The legal size of a toll-bill is a piece of paper large enough to contain two letters." Is this not contradictory to the Boraitha which says that the carrying out of a piece of blank paper large enough for two letters of ordinary size to be written on makes one liable? Answered R. Shesheth: "The two letters referred to by the Mishna are the letters used by the toll-master (usually extra large letters). Rabha, however, said that the piece of paper referred to is large enough for two letters and has a margin by which it can be held.

The rabbis taught: If one carry out on the Sabbath an unpaid promissory note he is liable, but not so for a paid one. But R. Jehudah said: The same is the case with a paid-up note, for its value lies therein, that the owner may show it to a prospective creditor in order to prove promptness of former payments. What

is the point of their differing? Said R. Joseph: "They differ if it is allowed to preserve a paid note. According to the rabbis it is prohibited, and according to R. Jehudah it may be done. [1](#)

"*For vellum is as much as suffices to make a cover for an amulet.*" Rabha questioned R. Na'hman: "Of what size?" and the latter answered: "As we were taught in the Mishna, as much as will suffice to make a cover for an amulet." And what is the size in regard to tanning? The same quantity. And where do you take this from? From the Mishna farther on, that gives the same quantity for wool preparing to be woven and for already woven. The same is here as it is for tanning; the quantity is the same as if already tanned. (The further discussion is repeated in many places, and each is translated in its proper place.)

"*Parchment as much as suffices to write thereon the smallest portion,*" etc. Is this not a contradiction to the Boraitha which teaches that the prescribed quantity for parchment and double parchment (δο-ξ•στος) is as much as suffices to write a Mezuzah (inscription on the door-posts) on? The Mezuzah mentioned in the Boraitha refers to the Mezuzah contained in the phylacteries. Does the Boraitha call phylacteries Mezuzah? Yea, it does elsewhere. But since the latter part of the Boraitha teaches explicitly that the prescribed quantity for parchment is as much as is required for writing the smallest portion of the phylacteries, which is "Hear, O Israel," is it not to be assumed that in the former part of the Boraitha a Mezuzah proper is meant? Read: What is the prescribed quantity for parchment and double parchment? For the latter as much as is required for the writing of a Mezuzah; and the former, for the writing of the smallest portion of the phylacteries, which is "Hear, O Israel."

Rabh said: "Double parchment is the same as parchment. The same as we may write the portions of the phylacteries on parchment, so may we also write them on double parchment." Were we not taught "*parchment sufficient,*" etc., which certainly does not mean double parchment? Nay, it is only a better observance to write on parchment than on double parchment.

"*For ink,*" etc. A Boraitha adds: The prescribed quantity for dry ink is as much as will suffice for the writing of two letters; for prepared ink as much as a quill or stub will require to write the two letters with. Said Rabha: For carrying out sufficient

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ink for two letters and writing the two letters while carrying the ink, one is culpable; for the writing is equivalent to depositing a thing in a place. But for carrying out sufficient ink for one letter only, and writing that letter while carrying the ink, afterward carrying out another quantity of ink sufficient for one letter and writing the other letter while carrying the ink, one is not culpable; for by the time the second letter was written (the ink of the first letter dried out and) the prescribed quantity of ink was not visible. Again Rabha said: For carrying out food to the size of one-half of a dried fig, laying it down, and then carrying out another quantity of like size (one is not culpable), for it is considered as if the first quantity had been consumed by fire. But why should it be thus considered? Is it not lying there yet? He means to say: If one picked up the first before he laid down the second, the first is to be considered as if consumed by fire, and hence one is not culpable.

"*For paint,*" etc. Is it not a fact that people never dye one eye only? Said R. Huna. Modest women veil one eye and only paint the other. To this explanation some one objected, viz.: For paint as a remedy the prescribed quantity is as much as will dye one eye, said R. Simeon b. Elazar, but as a means for beautifying the prescribed quantity is as much as will dye two eyes. Hillel, the son of R. Samuel b. Nahmeni, explained it by saying that R. Simeon b. Elazar referred to country damsels who dye both eyes.

"*For bird lime as much as is sufficient to put on a lime twig.*" There is a Boraitha: As much as is sufficient to put on a twig for the purpose of catching birds.

"*For pitch and sulphur,*" etc. A Boraitha states: Sufficient to fill up a hole in a quicksilver tube.

"*For loam,*" etc. A Boraitha states: Sufficient to fill up the cracks in a small stove.

"For clay," etc. The rabbis taught: It is prohibited to carry out hair for the purpose of mixing it with clay used to cover a goldsmith's bellows-pipe with.

"For lime," etc. A Boraitha states: To cover the smallest finger of a damsel. Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: Daughters of Israel, when they become of age, and they have not yet developed the signs of puberty, the poor smear their bodies with lime, the rich ones with fine meal, and princesses with myrrh oil. What is myrrh oil? *στακκη*. And R. Jeremiah b. Aba said: Olive oil from olives which were only one

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third ripe. There is a Boraitha: R. Jehudah said: It is called (in Menachoth) *anphiknun* (ο μ φωνιον); and why do they anoint with this? Because it removes the hair and makes the complexion clear. R. Bibi had such a daughter and he anointed her with the same, each member of her body separately; and finally one of the prominent men paid him four hundred zuz and married her. He had a Gentile neighbor who also had such a daughter, and he anointed her whole body at one time, and she died; said he: "R. Bibi has murdered my daughter." Said R. Na'hman: "R. Bibi, who used to drink beer, his daughter needed the anointing, but our daughters do not need it, for we do not drink beer."

"As much as is sufficient to cover," etc. What is meant by Kalkub and Andiphi? Said Rabh: The temple, and the hair between it and the ear. Are we to understand from the Mishna that the prescribed quantity permitted by R. Jehudah is larger than that of the rabbis? Is it not a fact that the rabbis allow the larger prescribed quantity? Aye; R. Jehudah allows a larger quantity than R. Nehemiah, but still a smaller quantity than the rabbis. Or it is possible that an Andiphi means a forehead, from the following narration: "It happened that a Galilean once came to Babylon and was requested to lecture on metaphysics. The Galilean consented and began: I will interpret to you something in the style of R. Nehemiah. Meanwhile a wasp flew out of the wall, stung him on the Andiphi (forehead) and the Galilean died on the spot. It was said that he died a merited death." [1](#)

MISHNA III.: For sealing-wax the prescribed quantity is as much as is required for the sealing of a bale of goods, so is the decree of R. Aqiba; the sages, however, say for the sealing of a letter. For dung or fine sand as much as is required to fertilize (the soil around) a cabbage stalk, according to R. Aqiba, and to the sages as much as is required to fertilize (the soil around) a leek stalk. For coarse sand as much as is required to fill a trowel, for reed as much as is required to make a writing-pen from, or should it be thick or split, as much as is required to fry the softest beaten egg with, (which) mixed with oil, (lies) in a hot shell.

GEMARA: "*Sufficient to fill a trowel.*" A Boraitha states: (For coarse sand the prescribed quantity is) as much as is required

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to fill the trowel of a plasterer. Who is the Tana that holds that sand is an improvement on plaster? Said R. Hisda: R. Jehudah of a Boraitha (Baba Bathra, 60b); Rabha, however, said it may be also in accordance with the rabbis, as they hold that the spoiling (of the whiteness) of the

plaster (through the admixture of sand) is an improvement of its durability.

*"For reed as much as is required to make a writing-pen."* A Boraitha teaches: A pen that reaches the joints of the fingers.

*"Or should it be thick."* A Boraitha teaches: To fry a beaten egg mixed with oil. Said Mar b. Rabhina to his son: "Didst thou ever hear what is understood by the softest egg?" He answered that R. Shesheth said it was a hen's egg, Why does the Mishna call it a light (soft) egg? Because the sages found that no eggs are cooked as quickly as pullets' eggs. Why is it that all other prescribed quantities prohibited to be carried out on the Sabbath are of the size of a dried fig, and here the quantity is of the size of an egg? Answered R. Na'hman: "Even here is meant the quantity of a dried fig from an egg."

MISHNA IV.: The quantity of a bone is that large enough to be made into a spoon--R. Jehudah says large enough to be made into a key; glass of sufficient size to be used for scraping off the points of a weaver's spindles; a splinter or a stone large enough to throw at a bird--R. Elazar b. Jacob says to throw at an animal.

GEMARA: Is it to be understood from the Mishna that the prescribed quantity allowed by R. Jehudah is larger than that allowed by the rabbis? Is it not a fact that the rabbis allow the larger? Said Ulla: (R. Jehudah refers to) the tooth of a key.

*"Glass of sufficient size,"* etc. A Boraitha states: Sufficient glass to cut two threads at once.

*"A splinter,"* etc. Said R. in the name of R. Johanan: "Provided it is large enough to hurt." But how large should it be? R. Elazar b. Jacob teaches in a Boraitha: The weight of ten zuz.

Zunin once entered the college and questioned the teachers. "What is the prescribed quantity for gravel used in privy for toilet purposes?" He was answered: "The equivalent in quantity to the size of an olive, a nut, or an egg." Said he: "It would then be necessary to carry along a scale." So they deliberated, and decided that the quantity should be a handful.

Rabba b. R. Shilla asked of R. Hisda: "Is it permitted to carry up gravel to the roof (for the purpose cited above, as it is

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extra trouble, which is prohibited on the Sabbath)?" He answered: "Precious is the honor of man. For honor's sake, even a direct scriptural commandment may be circumvented!"

Said R. Johanan: It is forbidden to use fragments of earthenware for toilet purposes (after doing one's necessities) on the Sabbath. What is the reason? Is it to say because it is dangerous, then it should be forbidden also on week days; or is it to say because of witchcraft, it would also be prohibited on week days? What then is the reason? Is it because it may remove the hair (from the posterior)? Would this not be an act performed without intention (and work done unintentionally, he is of the opinion is permissible)? R. Nathan b. Ashia answered: A great man made the assertion; we have to find, therefore, a reason for it. There is no doubt whatever that

fragments of earthenware are prohibited to be used on week days, when some other things can easily be obtained; but on Sabbath, if nothing else happens to be on hand, nor may be bought, the fragments might be considered as utensils; and, lest one might be inclined to think that for this reason they would be permitted to be used, he informs us that they are not. Can witchcraft be exercised through the agency of fragments? Aye; for the following proves it:

R. Hisda and Rabba b. R. Hana once travelled in a ship, and a matron who wanted to go on the same ship asked their permission to sit down near them, which they refused. She pronounced a certain word and the ship stood still, but they in turn pronounced a certain word and the ship moved on. She then said: "It grieves me sorely that I cannot inflict some punishment on you, seeing that you use no fragments for toilet purposes, nor do you kill the vermin in garments, nor do you pull out vegetables from a bundle (but cut the bundle first)." (Hence it may be seen that fragments can be used as a means for the exercise of witchcraft.)

R. Huna said to his son Rabba: Why do you not go more frequently to R. Hisda, who expounds the law so pointedly? Answered the son: "Of what use would it be? He never taught me but mere worldly knowledge, such as, for instance: Not to sit down to excrementize with a jerk nor to force myself too much, lest the intestines come out and endanger life." R. Huna then rejoined: "Thou sayest 'mere worldly knowledge.' He is interested in the life of the people, and you call it mere worldly knowledge. So much the more should you go to him."

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R. Hisda and Rabhina differ as to the consequences of one withholding to perform his necessities. One is of the opinion that foul breath is the result, while the other holds that the entire body assumes a bad odor. The opinion of the latter is supported by the following Boraitha: "He who takes nourishment while in need of performing his necessities is compared to a stove in which a fire was built without previously removing the ashes, which is invariably the cause of a bad smell. One who feels like performing his necessities, but cannot do so, R. Hisda advises that he keep on sitting down and getting up until able. R. Hanan from Neherdai advises him to look for another place, but the rabbis say the sole remedy is to think of nothing else."

The rabbis taught: One who is about to eat a hearty meal should walk ten times four ells or four times ten ells, then perform a (natural) necessity, and after that go in and sit down to the meal.

MISHNA V.: The prescribed quantity of fragments (of earthenware) is the size of such as are placed between two boards, is the decree of R. Jehudah. R. Meir says, of a size sufficient to stir a fire with. R. Jossi, of a size to receive (hold) a quarter of a lug. Said R. Meir: Although no positive proof for my assertion can be found in the Scripture, still a vague reference can be deduced from the passage [Isaiah, xxx. 14]: "So that there cannot be found among their fragments a sherd to rake fire from a hearth." Said R. Jossi: "Therefrom you would adduce your proof? It says immediately after that [ibid., ibid.], 'and to draw water from a pit.'"

GEMARA: We must assume that the prescribed quantity allowed by R. Jossi is larger than that allowed by R. Meir; but the scriptural text shows that R. Meir allows the larger; because, is it possible that the prophet will curse them with a larger object after having cursed them with a smaller? Said Abayi: R. Meir also means a fragment used to stir a big fire with; hence his fragment is larger than R. Jossi's.



"Said R. Jossi," etc. Is not R. Jossi's answer correct? What could R. Meir rejoin? R. Meir might say that the prophet intends to convey that not only shall they not have anything of the least value left, but they shall not even have anything that is as valueless as a piece of fragment big enough to contain a drop of water.

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## Footnotes

[143:1](#) The wines used in Palestine were so strong that they had to be mixed with water in order to make them fit to drink.

[143:2](#) At the benediction after meals a goblet possessing certain qualities and which is called a goblet of benediction must be used, as ordained in the Tract Benedictions.

[144:1](#) Maphgia is a species of insect, unknown to us at the present day, of which Rashi said that it was a small animal whose voice was so strong that when a lion hears it, he is afraid of it, taking it for a very great animal.

[148:1](#) Abayi and Rabba also discuss the same note, but this is repeated in the Third Gate, in whose translation we are now engaged, and is, therefore, omitted here.

[150:1](#) A Mishna teaches elsewhere that it is a sin to lecture on metaphysics, outside of the university.

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[Next: Chapter IX: Rabbi Aqiba's Regulations On Different Subjects](#)