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## CHAPTER XIII.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING WEAVING, TEARING, HUNTING, ETC., ON THE SABBATH.

MISHNA: R. Eliezer said: One who weaves (on the Sabbath) is culpable, as soon as he has woven three threads at the beginning of the web, and with a web already begun the addition of one thread suffices to make him culpable. The sages said: Both at the commencement of a new web, as well as at the continuation of one already begun, the prescribed quantity (making one culpable) is two threads. One who attaches two threads to the web, either to the warp or to the shoot, to the fine or to the coarse sieve, or to the basket, is culpable. Also one who sews two stitches, or tears asunder, in order to sew (together with) two stitches.

GEMARA: When R. Itz'hak came to Babylon, he taught that R. Eliezer said "two threads and not three," as stated in the Mishna. But we learned three! This is no contradiction. R. Itz'hak refers to thick threads and the Mishna to thin.

"*One who attaches two threads,*" etc. Said Abayi: This means, one who attached two threads *to* the web and one *in* the web.

"*One who sews two stitches,*" etc. Was this not taught in the Mishna treating of the principal acts of labor? Because in the succeeding Mishna the rule is taught concerning one, who tears while in a rage, or through grief at the death of a near relative, sewing and tearing is repeated in this Mishna.

"*Or tears asunder in order to sew together with two stitches.*" How is this to be imagined? (If by tearing the thing one means to spoil it, he may tear even as much as will require any number of stitches and not be culpable, but if he tears in order to sew together with two stitches and thus improve the thing, how can that be done?) This can be done in the case of a piece of cloth protruding from a garment, which one would tear off, and then sew up the remaining rent.

MISHNA: One who tears a thing while enraged, or through

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grief on account of his dead, and, in general, all who spoil a thing are *not* culpable. If, however, one destroy a thing with the intention to mend it, the prescribed quantity (making him culpable) is determined according to the prescribed quantity of the act by which it is mended. The prescribed quantity of wool when being washed, carded, dyed or spun is a thread the length of a double sit; 1 in the weaving the prescribed quantity for wool is the breadth of one sit.

GEMARA: There is a contradiction: We have learned in a Boraitha: One who tears a thing

while in a rage, or through grief, or through mourning for the dead, is culpable, and although he desecrates the Sabbath, the duty of tearing (ordained in cases of mourners for the dead) is fulfilled. This presents no difficulty. The Boraitha treats of the case of a man who tore his garment on account of the death of one on whose account it was his duty to tear his garment, while the Mishna treats of the case of a man who did not do so for duty's sake, but on account of a death of a stranger, and this not being his duty, he merely spoiled his garment. How can you say, that the Mishna treats of a man who tore his garment on account of the death of a stranger; it says distinctly *his* dead? Yea, it says his dead, but he has such relatives, on whose account he need not tear his garment; (though it may be his duty to bury them, he being the nearest living relative; and tearing one's garment becomes a duty only in the event of the death of a father, mother, son, daughter, brother, or sister). Now, there is no contradiction then as far as mourning for the dead is concerned, but there surely is as regards one who is enraged? In the Boraitha he is held culpable and in the Mishna he is not? Here also there is no difficulty: The Mishna's statement is in accord with R. Simeon's decree, who holds, that one is not culpable of performing a deed not for its own sake, while the Boraitha is in accord with the opinion of R. Jehudah, who holds one culpable of performing work even *not* for its own sake. But you have heard that R. Jehudah's opinion only applied to an act by which a thing was mended? Did you also hear that he decreed thus in the case of where a thing was destroyed? Said R. Abhin:

This is also a case of mending, because it relieves the man's

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mind; and while he may spoil the garment at the same time he abates his fury." Is such action permitted? Have we not learned that R. Simeon ben Elazar said in the name of 'Hilpha bar Agra, quoting R. Johanan ben Nuri: "He who tears his garments in his fury, or he who breaks his vessels, or he who throws away his money while in a rage, shall be regarded in your eyes as a worshipper of idols, because such is the custom of the misleader: To-day he says to one, 'Do so,' to-morrow 'Do something else,' until he tells one to go and worship idols and the man does so." R. Abhin added to this: "Where can a Scriptural passage be found prohibiting this? [Psalms lxxxi. 10]: 'There shall not be among thee a foreign god; nor shalt thou bow thyself down to any strange god.' This means that no foreign god (misleader) shall be in thy heart, because it says Becho (in thee). The latter part of the verse infers, that if he allows the misleader to dwell in his heart it will bring him to bowing down to idols." Such action is permitted only when a man is not in an actual fury, but wishes to appear as if enraged in order to command obedience (from his family), as R. A'ha bar Jacob used to do; viz.: "When he wanted to show displeasure at the deeds of his family, he would take up a broken vessel and shatter it, making his family believe that he was furious and was breaking whole vessels."

Said R. Simeon ben Pazi in the name of R. Jehoshua ben Levi, quoting Bar Qapara: [1](#) The tears shed by a man on account of the death of an upright man are counted by the Holy One, blessed be He, and stored in His treasury, as it is written [Psalms lvi. 9]: "My wanderings hast Thou well numbered: put Thou my tears into Thy bottle, behold they are numbered by Thee." R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh said: "One who is slow to mourn the death of a scholar deserves being buried alive, as it is written [Joshua xxiv. 30]: 'And they buried him on the border of his inheritance at Thimnah-serach, which is on the mountain of Ephraim, on the north side of Mount Ga'ash.' Ga'ash signifies storm, and from this it is inferred, that because the people did not mourn the death of Joshua the mount stormed and tried to bury them alive."

Said R. Hyya bar Aba in the name of R. Johanan: "One

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who is slow to mourn the death of a scholar will not have long life. This is in retaliation; (because he did not mourn the death of the scholar, his own death will be hastened), as it is written [Isaiah xxvi. 8]: 'In measure, by driving him forth, thou strivest with him.'" R. Hyya bar Aba objected and said to R. Johanan: How canst thou say, that one who is slow to mourn the death of a scholar will not have long life? Is it not written [Judges ii. 7]: "And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders, that lived many days after Joshua, who had seen all the great deeds of the Lord, which he had done for Israel"? R. Johanan answered: "Thou Babylonite! Does the verse say, that lived many years? It only says many days!" Now, according to R. Johanan's argument, does the verse [Deut. xi. 21]: "In order that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children," etc., also mean days and not years? In this verse it is different. Where a blessing is conferred days *and* years are meant.

R. Hyya bar Aba said again in the name of R. Johanan: "If one brother die, let the remaining brothers take care that *they* do not die. Or if a member of a society die, let the other members take care that *they* die not." This means: if the best one among them die; another says, on the contrary, if the least one among them die.

"*The prescribed quantity of wool,*" etc. R. Joseph showed the extent of a double sit as being twice the distance between the fore and the middle finger when spread out, and R. Hyya bar Ama showed its extent as being the distance between the thumb and the forefinger when spread out.

MISHNA: R. Jehudah said: "One who chases a bird into a bird-tower or a deer into a house is culpable." The sages said: "One who chases a bird into a bird-tower, a deer into a house, yard, or into a menagerie, is culpable." Said R. Simeon ben Gamaliel: "Not all menageries are equal. Following is the rule: Where another chase would be necessary (to catch the deer) one is not culpable; where no further chase is necessary, one is culpable."

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: One who caught a blind or a sleeping deer is culpable, but if the deer is lame, sick or old he is not culpable. Said Abayi to R. Joseph: "What difference is there between the two?" Answered R. Joseph: "A blind or a sleeping deer, as soon as touched, would attempt to escape, whereas. a lame or a sick animal could not do this." Have we

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not learned in a Boraitha, that one who caught a sick deer is culpable? This presents no difficulty. The rabbis refer to a deer sick with fever (when it was impossible for it to move), while the Boraitha refers to sickness arising from overexertion.

MISHNA: If a deer run into a house and one lock (the doors) behind the deer, he (the man) is culpable. If two men lock (the doors) both are free. If one of them could not lock (them) himself and *both* did so, they are both culpable. R. Simeon declares them free. If one sit down at the entrance of the house without filling it up and another sit down beside him, thus filling up the gap, the latter is guilty. If the former sat down at the entrance and filled it up, and another came

up and sat beside him, the former, even if he got up and walked away, is culpable, and the latter free; for this is the same as if one locked his house to preserve its contents and a deer were on the inside.

GEMARA: R. Jeremiah bar Aba in the name of Samuel said: One who catches a lion on the Sabbath is not culpable until he brings him into his cage.

R. Aba said in the name of R. Hyya b. Ashi, quoting Rabh: "If a bird flew under a man's coat-skirt, the man may keep it there until dark." R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak objected: From the above Mishna, "If a man sat down at the entrance and filled it up, and another came up and sat beside him, the former, even if he got up and walked away, is culpable and the latter is free," would we not assume, that the man is free (*i.e.*, he need bring no sin-offering) but he should not have done it in the first place? Nay; it means he is free and may do so to commence with. This seems to be borne out by the latter part of the Mishna, viz.: "For this is the same as if one locked his house to preserve its contents and a deer were on the inside." It is certainly allowed to close the house on a Sabbath and hence, being the same as locking the house, it is allowed in the first place.

Said Samuel: "At all times when it is taught, that one is not culpable of performing work on the Sabbath, it is meant that, while he is not culpable, he must not perform such work to commence with, excepting in the three following instances: One of the three has just been mentioned (concerning the deer); the second is, when one lances a wound on the Sabbath; if the intention is to extract the pus contained in the wound, he is not

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culpable, and may do so in the first place; as we have learned in a following Mishna, that a sewing needle may be used to remove a splinter from the flesh; the third is, when one catches a snake on the Sabbath and he did so in order to escape being bitten, he is not culpable and may do so to commence with, as we have learned in a preceding Mishna, that one may put a vessel over a serpent, in order to escape being bitten."

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## Footnotes

[214:1](#) The length of a sit is the distance between the first and middle finger of the hand when stretched taut. A double sit is the distance between the thumb and forefinger when stretched farthest apart.

[215:1](#) Because mourning for one's dead is treated of in the last paragraph, the following discussions relating to mourning for upright men in general are held and the opinions of the different teachers cited.

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[Next: Chapter XIV: Regulations Concerning the Catching of Reptiles, Animals and Birds](#)