Virginia Rives Tranbarger z"l Series

Saturday night Seder and the making of Hillel's Career

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1. Tosefta Pesachim 4:11

One time the fourteenth [of Nissan] fell on the Sabbath and [the people] asked Hillel the Elder, does the Passover offering override the Sabbath? He said to them, "Do we only have one Passover offering a year that overrides the Sabbath? [Rather,] we have more than three hundred 'Passover offerings' (i.e., the various sacrifices that are brought throughout the year) that override the Sabbath." The entire Temple Courtyard crowded around him. He said to them, "Just as the Tamid is a communal sacrifice that overrides the Sabbath, so too the Passover offering is a communal sacrifice that overrides the Sabbath. And another thing, it is said regarding the Tamid (Num. 28:2), 'its appointed time' and it is [also] said regarding Passover offering (Num. 9:2) 'its appointed time'; thus just as the Tamid as to which it is said 'its appointed time' overrides the Sabbath, so too the Passover offering as to which it is [also] said 'its appointed time' must also override the Sabbath. And moreover, [the matter may be further proven by] a kol v'chomer (a logical deduction): If the Tamid, which does not render one liable for excommunication [by failing to perform it] overrides the Sabbath, is it not logical that the Passover offering, which does render one liable for excommunication [by failing to perform it] must also override the Sabbath? And moreover, I received this tradition from my teachers that Passover overrides the Sabbath, and not [just] the first Passover but [also] the second Passover, and not [just] a Passover offering brought by the community, but also a Passover offering brought by an individual." They said to him, "What should be done about the people that did not bring knives or Passover offerings to consecrate [because they did not know that the Passover offering overrides the Sabbath]?" He said to them, "Leave it to them, [since] the Holy Spirit is upon them. If they are not prophets, they are the children of prophets." What the Israelites did at that moment was that whoever brought a lamb for his Passover offering lodged [his knife] in its wool, [and whoever brought a] kid goat, he tied [his knife] between its horns, and thus they brought knives and Passover offerings to consecrate, and they slaughtered their Passover offerings. And on that day, they appointed Hillel as the

תוספתא פסחים ד:יא

פעם אחת חל י"ד להיות בשבת שאלו את הלל הזקן פסח מהו שידחה את השבת אמר להם וכי פסח אחד יש לנו בשנה שדוחה [את השבת] הרבה מג' מאות פסחים יש לנו [בשנה ודוחין] את השבת חברו עליו כל העזרה אמר להם תמיד קרבן צבור דוחה את השבת אף פסח קרבן צבור דוחה את השבת דבר אחר נאמר [בתמיד] (במדבר כח) מועדו ונאמר [בפסח] (במדבר ט) מועדו [מה תמיד שנאמר בו מועדו] דוחה את השבת אף [פסח שנא' בו מועדו] דוחה את השבת ועוד ק"ו ומה תמיד שאין חייבין עליו כרת דוחה את השבת פסח שחייבין עליו כרת אינו דין שידחה את השבת ועוד מקובלני מרבותי שפסח דוחה את השבת [ולא פסח ראשון אלא פסח שני ולא פסח צבור אלא פסח יחיד] אמרו לו מה יהא [על העם] שלא הביאו סכינין ופסחים למקדש אמר להם [הניחו להם רוה"ק עליהן] אם אין נביאים הן בני נביאים הן מה עשו ישראל באותה שעה מי שפסחו טלה טמנו בצמרו גדי קשרו בין קרניו והביאו סכינין ופסחים למקדש [ושחטו את פסחיהן] בו ביום מנו את הלל [נשיא והיה מורה] להם בהלכות

2. Tractate Pesachim, Jerusalem Talmud 6:1

Nasi and he taught them all the laws of Passover.

HALAKHAH: This question left the Elders of Bathyra at a loss. Once the Fourteenth fell on the Sabbath and they did not know whether *Pesaḥ* pushes aside the Sabbath or not. They said, we have here a Babylonian who served Shemaya and Avtalion and knows whether *Pesaḥ* pushes aside the Sabbath or not. It is possible that there be hope from him. They sent and called him. They said to him, did you ever hear, if the Fourteenth falls on the Sabbath, whether *Pesaḥ* pushes aside the Sabbath or not? He told them, do we have only one *Pesaḥ* which pushes aside the Sabbath every year? Are there not many *Pesaḥim* which push aside the

מסכת פסחים תלמוד ירושלמי ו:א

הלכה: זוֹ הַלָּכָה נֶעֶלְמָה מִזּקְנֵי בָּתֵירָה. פַּעַם אַחַת חָל אַרְבָּעָה עָשָׂר לִהְיוֹת בַּשַּׁבָּת. וְלֹא הָיוּ יוֹדְעִין אִם פָּסַח דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אִם לָאו. אֱמְרוּ. יֵשׁ כָּאן בַּבְלִי אֶחָד וְהִלֵּל שְׁמוֹ. שָׁשִׁימֵשׁ אֶת שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן. יוֹדֵעַ אִם פָּסַח דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אִם לָאו. אֶיפְשַׁר שָׁיֵשׁ מִמֶּנוּ תּוֹחֶלֶת. שֲׁלְחוּ וְקֵךְאוּ לוֹ. אֱמְרוּ לוֹ. שָׁמַעְתָּ מִיָּמֶיךְ. כְּשֶׁחָל אַרְבָּעָה עֶשְׂרֵה לִהְיוֹת בַּשַּׁבָּת. אִם דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אִם לָאו. אָמַר לָהֶן. וְכִי אֵין לָנוּ אֶלָּא פָּסַח אֶחָד בִּלְבַד דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת בְּלֵל־שָׁנָה. וַהָלֹא כַמָּה פְּסָחִים יִדְחוּ אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת

Sabbath every year? There are Tannaim who state: 100. There are Tannaim who state: 200. There are Tannaim who state: 300. He who says 100, the daily sacrifices of the Sabbath. He who says 200, the daily and additional sacrifices of the Sabbath. He who says 300, the daily and additional sacrifices of the Sabbath, and of holidays, and of New Moons, and of semi-holidays. They told him, already we said, there is hope from you. He started to explain to them by analogy, by an argument de minore ad majus, and by equal cut. By analogy: The daily sacrifice is a public offering and Pesah is a public offering. Since the daily sacrifice as a public offering pushes aside the Sabbath, also Pesah as a public offering pushes aside the Sabbath. By an argument de minore ad majus. Since the daily sacrifice, whose action is not subject to extirpation, pushes aside the Sabbath, it is only logical that Pesaḥ, whose action is subject to extirpation, push aside the Sabbath. By equal cut. It is said about the daily sacrifice, at its fixed time9Num. 28:2., and it is said about Pesaḥ, at its fixed time¹⁰Num. 9:2.. They said to him, we already said, is there hope from a Babylonian? The analogy which you proposed can be answered. No, if you said this about daily sacrifices which are fixed in number, what can you infer for Pesah which is not fixed in number? The argument de minore ad majus which you proposed can be answered. No, if you said this about daily sacrifices which are most holy, what can you infer for Pesah which is a simple sacrifice? Concerning the equal cut which you proposed, nobody can introduce an equal cut by himself

Even though he was sitting and explaining the entire day they did not accept it from him until he said, it should come over me, so I heard from Shemaya and Avtalion. When they heard this from him, they rose and appointed him Patriarch over them. After they had appointed him Patriarch over them, he started to goad them with words, and said: What caused you to need this Babylonian? Not that you did not serve the two greats of the world, Shemaya and Avtalion? When he started to goad them with words, practice disappeared from him.

They said to him: What to do with people who did not bring their knives with them? He told them, I was informed of the practice, but I forgot. But let Israel act; if they are not prophets they are descendants of prophets. Then everybody whose Passover sacrifice was a lamb stuck them in its fleece, for a kid goat he bound them to its horns; it turned out that the Passover sacrifices brought their knives with them. When he saw the action he remembered the practice. He told them, this is what I heard from Shemaya and Avtalion.

בָּכָל־שָׁנָה. אִית תַּנָּיֵי תַנֵּי. מֵאָה. אִית תַּנָּיִי תַנֵּי. ָמָאתַיִם. אִית תַּנְיֵי תַנֵּי. שָׁלשׁ מֵאוֹת. מָאן דְּאָמַר. מָאָה. תְּמִידִין. מָאן דְּאָמר. מָאתַיִם. תְּמִידִין וּמוּסְפֵי שַׁבַּתוֹת. מַאן דָּאַמַר. שַׁלשׁ מֵאוֹת. תִּמִידִין וּמוּסְפֵי שַׁבַּתוֹת שֵׁלְיַמִים טוֹבִים וְשֵׁלְרַאשֵׁי חֶדַשִּׁים וְשֵׁלְמוֹעֲדוֹת. אֲמָרוּ לוֹ. כָּבַר אַמַרְנוּ שֵׁיֵשׁ מִמְּךְ תוֹחֱלֵת. הָתְחִיל דּוֹרֵשׁ לָהֵן מֶהֶקֵשׁ וּמְקַל וָחוֹמֵר וּמְגְזֵירָה שָׁוָה. מֵהֶקֵשׁ. הוֹאִיל וְתָמִיד קַרְבַּן צִיבּוּר וּפֶּסַח קָרְבַּן צִיבּוּר. מַה תָמִיד קָרְבַּן צִיבּוּר וְדּוֹחֶה [שַׁבַּת]. אַף פֶּסַח קַרְבַּן צִיבּוּר דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת. ָמִקַל וָחוֹמֶר. מַה אָם תָּמִיד שֶׁאֵין חַייָבִין עַל עֲשִׂייָתוֹ ָּכֶרֶת דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבַּת. פַּסַח שֵׁחֵייַבִין עַל עֲשִׂייַתוֹ ָּכֵרֶת אֵינוֹ דִין שֵׁיִּדְחֶה אֵת הַשַּׁבַּת. מִגְזֵירָה שָׁוַה. נֵאֱמַר בָּתָמִד בִּמְוֹעֲדְוֹ וְנֵאֱמַר בְּפַסַח בִּמְוֹעֲדְוֹ: מַה תַמִיד שֶׁנַאֲמַר בּוֹ בִּמְוֹעֲדְוֹ דּוֹחֵה אֵת הַשַּׁבַּת. אַף ּפֶּסַח שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר בּוֹ בְּמְוֹעֲדְוֹ דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת. אֶמְרוּ לוֹ. כָּבַר אַמַרְנוּ אָם יֵשׁ תּוֹחֶלֵת מִבַּבְלִי. הַקֵּישׁ שַׁאָמַרְתָּ יֵשׁ לוֹ תְשׁוּבָה. לֹא. אָם אָמַרְתָּ בְתָמִיד שֵׁכֵּן יֵשׁ לוֹ קִיצְבָה. תֹּאמֵר בְּפֶּסַח שֶׁאֵין לוֹ קִיצְבָה. קַל ָוַחוֹמֶר שֶׁאָמַרְתָּ יֵשׁ לוֹ תְשׁוּבָה. לֹא. אִם אָמַרְתָּ בְתָמִיד שֶׁהוּא קָדְשֶׁי קָדָשִׁים. תֹּאמַר בְּפֶּסַח שֶׁהוּא קֶדָשִׁים קַלִּים. גְזֵירָה שָׁוָה שֶׁאָמַרְתָּ. שֶׁאֵין אָדָם דָּן גָזֵירָה שָׁוָה מֵעַצְמוֹ.

אַף עַל פִּי שֶׁהָיָה יוֹשֵׁב וְדוֹרֵשׁ לָהֶן כָּל־הַיּוֹם לֹא קיבְּלוּ מִמֶּנוּ עַד שֶׁאָמֵר לָהֶן. יָבוֹא עָלַי כֵּן שָׁמֵּעְתִּי מִשְּמֵעִיָּה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן. כֵּיוָן שָׁשֵּמְעוּ מִמֶּנוּ כֵּן עָמְדוּ וּמִינוּ אוֹתוֹ נְשִׂיא עֲלֵיהֶן. כֵּיוָן שָׁמִינוּ אוֹתוֹ נְשִׂיא עֲלֵיהֶן הִתְחִיל מְקֶנְתְּרָן בִּדְבָרִים וְאוֹמֵר. מִי גָרַם לָכֶם לְצָרֵךְ לַבַּבְלִי הַזֶּה. לֹא עַל שָׁלֹא שִׁימַשְׁתָּם לִשְׁנֵי גְּדוֹלֵי עוֹלָם לִשְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן שֶׁהָיוּ יוֹשְׁבִין אָצְלֵכֶם. כֵּיוָן שָׁקֶּנְתְּרָן בִּדְבָרִים נֶעֻלְמָה הַלָּכָה מִמֶּנוּ.

אָמְרוּ וּלוֹ. מַה לַעֲשׁוֹת לָעָם וְלֹא הֵבִיאוּ סַכִּינֵיהֶן. אָמַר לָהֶן. הֲלָכָה זוֹ שָׁמַעְתִּי וְשָׁכַחְתִּי. אֶלֶּא הַנִּיחוּ לִישְׂרָאֵל אִם אֵינָן נְבִיאִים בְּנֵי נְבִיאִים הַן. מִיָּד כָּל־מִי שָׁהָיָה פָּסְחוּ טָלֶה הָיָה תוֹחְבָהּ בְּגִיזָתוֹ. גְּדִי הָיָה קוֹשְׁרוֹ בֵין קַרְנָיו. נִמְצְאוּ פִּסְחֵיהֶן מְבִיאִין סַכִּינֵיהֶן עִמָּהָן. כֵּיוָן שֶׁרָאָה אֶת הָמַּעֲשֶׂה נִזְכַּר אֶת הַהַּלְּכָה. אָמַר. כָּךְ שָׁמַעְתִּי מִפִּי שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבָּטַלְיוֹן.

3. Tractate Pesachim, Babylonian Talmud, 66a

GEMARA: The Sages taught: This law was forgotten by the sons of Beteira. The fourteenth once occurred on Shabbat, and they forgot and did not know whether the Paschal lamb overrides Shabbat or not. They said: Is there any person who knows whether the Paschal lamb overrides Shabbat or not? They said to them: There is a certain man who came up from Babylonia, and Hillel the Babylonian is his name. At one point, he served the two most eminent scholars of the generation, Shemaya and Avtalyon, and he certainly knows whether the Paschal lamb overrides Shabbat or not. The sons of Beteira sent messengers and called

מסכת פסחים תלמוד בבלי צו.

ּגְּעָר אָנוּ רַבָּנַן: הָלָכָה זוֹ נִתְעַלְּמָה מִבְּנֵי בְתִירָא. פַּעַם אַחַת חָל אַרְבָּעָה עָשֶׂר לִהְיוֹת בְּשַׁבָּת, שָׁכְחוּ וְלֹא יָדְעוּ אִם פֶּסַח דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אִם לָאו. אָמְרוּ: כְּלוּם יֵשׁ אָדֶם שָׁיּוֹדֵע אִם פֶּסַח דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּבָּת אִם לָאו? אָמְרוּ לָהֶם: אָדָם אֶחָד יֵשׁ שֶׁעָלָה מְבָּבֶל וְהְלֵּל הַבַּבְלִי שְׁמוֹ, שָׁשִּׁימֵשׁ שְׁנֵי גְּדּוֹלֵי הַדּוֹר שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן, וְיוֹדֵע אִם פֶּסַח דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אָם לָאו. שָׁלְחוּ וְקְרְאוּ לוֹ, אָמְרוּ לוֹ: כְּלוּם אַתָּה יוֹדֵע אָם הַפֶּסַח דּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת אִם לָאו? אָמַר לְהָם: וְנִי כָּּסַח אֶחָד יֵשׁ לָנוּ בַּשְׁנָה שָׁדּוֹחָה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת? for him. They said to him: Do you know whether the Paschal lamb overrides Shabbat or not? He said to them: Have we but one Paschal lamb during the year that overrides Shabbat? Do we not have many more than two hundred Paschal lambs, i.e., sacrifices, during the year that override Shabbat?

They said to him: From where do you know this? He said to them: "Its appointed time" is stated with regard to the Paschal lamb and "its appointed time" is also stated with regard to the daily offering. Just as the expression "its appointed time," which is stated with regard to the daily offering, indicates that it overrides Shabbat, so too "its appointed time," which is stated with regard to the Paschal lamb, indicates that it overrides Shabbat. And furthermore, it is an a fortiori inference: If the daily offering, the neglect of which is not punishable by karet, overrides Shabbat, is it not right that the Paschal lamb, the neglect of which is punishable by karet, should override Shabbat? After Hillel brought these proofs, they immediately seated him at the head and appointed him Nasi over them, and he expounded the laws of Passover that entire day. In the course of his teaching, he began rebuking them [mekanteran] them with words. He said to them: What caused this to happen to you, that I should come up from Babylonia and become Nasi over you? It was the laziness in you that you did not serve the two most eminent scholars of the generation living in Eretz Yisrael, Shemaya and Avtalyon. They said to Hillel: Our teacher, if one forgot and did not bring a knife on the eve of Shabbat and cannot slaughter his Paschal lamb, what is the law? He said to them: I once heard this halakha

The next day, on Shabbat that was the eve of Passover, one whose Paschal offering was a lamb took the knife and stuck it in its wool; and one whose Paschal offering was a goat, which does not have wool, stuck it between its horns. Hillel saw the incident and remembered the *halakha* that he had once learned and said: This is the tradition I received from the mouths of Shemaya and Avtalyon

from my teachers but I have forgotten it. But leave it to the Jewish people; if they are not prophets to whom God has revealed His

secrets, they are the sons of prophets.

וַבְּלֹא הַרְבֵּה יוֹתֵר מִמָּאתַיִם פְּסָחִים יֵשׁ לָנוּ בַּשְּׁנָה שַׁדּוֹחִין אֶת הַשָּׁבַּת.

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: מִנּיִן לְךָ? אָמַר לָהֶם: נֶאֱמַר ״מוֹעֲדוֹ״ בַּפֶּסַח, וְנֶאֶמַר ״מוֹעֲדוֹ״ בַּתָּמִיד: מָה ״מוֹעֲדוֹ״ הָאָמוּר בַּתָּמִיד דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּבָּת, אַף ״מוֹעֲדוֹ״ הָאָמוּר בַּפֶּסַח דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת.

ְוְעוֹד, קַל וָחוֹמֶר הוּא: וּמָה תָּמִיד שָׁאֵין עָנוּשׁ כָּרֵת דּוֹחֶה אֶת הַשַּׁבָּת, פֶּסַח שֶׁעָנוּשׁ כָּרֵת — אֵינוֹ דִּין שַׁדּוֹחֵה אֵת הַשַּׁבַּת.

מָיָּד הוֹשִׁיבוּהוּ בָּרֹאשׁ, וּמִינּוּהוּ נָשִּׂיא עֲלֵיהֶם, וְהָיָה דּוֹרֵשׁ כָּל הַיּוֹם כּוּלּוֹ בְּהָלְכוֹת הַפֶּסַח. הִתְחִיל מְקַנְטְרָן בִּדְבָרִים. אָמַר לָהֶן: מִי גָּרַם לָכֶם שָׁאֶעְלֶה מִבְּבֶל וְאָהְיֶה נָשִּׂיא עֲלֵיכֶם — עַצְלוּת שֶׁהְיְתָה בָּכֶם, שֶׁלֹּא שְׁמַשְׁתֶּם שְׁנֵי גִּדּוֹלֵי הַדּוֹר, שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן. אָמְרוּ לוֹ: רַבִּי, שָׁכַח וְלֹא הֵבִיא סַכִּין מֵעֶרֶב שַׁבָּת, מַהוּ? אָמַר לָהֶן: הֲלָכָה זוֹ שָׁמַעְתִּי וְשָׁכַחְתִּי, אֶלָּא הַנַּח לָהֶן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, אִם אֵין נְבִיאִים הֵן — בְּנֵי נְבִיאִים הֵן.

לְמָחָר, מִי שֶׁפִּסְחוֹ טָלֶה — תּוֹחֲבוֹ בְּצַמְרוֹ, מִי שֶׁפָּסְחוֹ גִּדִי — תּוֹחֲבוֹ בֵּין קַרְנָיו. רָאָה מַעֲשֶׂה וְנִזְכַּר הָלָכָה, וְאָמַר: כָּךְ מְקוּבְּלַנִי מִפִּי שְׁמַעְיָה וְאַבְטַלְיוֹן.