

Daf Yomi Study Temple Beth Elohim 2018

Daf yomi is an international practice to read the entire Babylonian Talmud in seven and a half years at the rate of one page a day. Tens of thousands of Jews study daf yomi worldwide, all on the same page each day, following a schedule fixed in 1923 in Poland by Rabbi Meir Shapiro, the founder of daf yomi, who envisioned the whole world as a vast Talmudic classroom connected by a global network of conversational threads.

A Talmudic page is actually a double-sided page comprised of multigenerational conversations among the rabbis of the first few centuries of the Common Era, dealing with everything from what to do if your camel knocks over a candle and sets a store on fire to the consequences of embarrassing another person while he is naked.

The Talmud is divided into 37 volumes, known as tractates, each of which deals with different aspects of Jewish law, from vows to marriage to the logistics of offering sacrifices in the ancient Temple. The subjects of the tractates are highly discursive texts, proceeding by association rather than by any rational scheme. Every page presupposes knowledge of other pages, which is why it is difficult to start learning without prior background. Every page connects to conversations on other pages.

The *Mishnah* consists of six orders (*sedarim*, singular *seder* סדר), each containing 7–12 tractates (*masechtot*, singular *masechet* מסכת; meaning web, 63 in total. Each *masechet* is divided into chapters (*peraqim*, singular *pereq*) and then paragraphs (*mishnayot*, singular *mishnah*). In this last context, the word *mishnah* means a single paragraph, the smallest unit of structure; the plural being *Mishnayot*, for the whole body of work.

Because of the division into six orders, the *Mishnah* is sometimes called 'Shas' (an acronym for *Shisha Sedarim* – the "six orders"), and that term is also used for the Talmud as a whole.

The six orders are:

- *Zeraim* ("Seeds"), dealing with prayer and blessings, tithes and agricultural laws (11 tractates)
- *Moed* ("Festival"), pertaining to the laws of the Sabbath and the Festivals (12 tractates)
- *Nashim* ("Women"), concerning marriage and divorce, some forms of oaths and the laws of the nazirite (7 tractates)
- *Nezikin* ("Damages"), dealing with civil and criminal law, the functioning of the courts and oaths (10 tractates)
- *Kodashim* ("Holy things"), regarding sacrificial rites, the Temple, and the dietary laws (11 tractates) and
- *Tohorot* ("Purities"), pertaining to the laws of purity and impurity, including the impurity of the dead, the laws of food purity and bodily purity (12 tractates).

Rabbinic commentaries on the *Mishnah* from the next four centuries, done in the Israel and Babylonia were eventually redacted and compiled as well. In themselves they are known as *Gemara*. The books which set out the *Mishnah* in its original structure, together with the associated *Gemara*, comprise the Talmuds. Two Talmuds were compiled, the Babylonian

Talmud (to which the term "Talmud" normally refers) and the Jerusalem Talmud. Unlike the Hebrew *Mishnah*, the *Gemara* is written primarily in Aramaic.

The term "Mishnah" is related to the verb "shanah", to teach or repeat, and to the adjectives "sheni" and "mishneh", meaning "second". It is thus named for being both the one written authority (codex) secondary (only) to the Tanakh as a basis for the passing of judgment and for creating laws. The rabbis who contributed to the *Mishnah* are known as the *Tannaim*, of whom approximately 120 are known. The period during which the *Mishnah* was assembled spanned about 130 years, or five generations, in the first and second centuries CE. Judah the Prince is credited with the final redaction and publication of the *Mishnah*.

We will begin our study in Moed, Tractate Megillah. It is a bit more accessible, and allows us to connect to upcoming Jewish holidays and specifically Purim.

The order of Moed consists of 12 tractates:

1. ***Shabbat***: or Shabbath (שבת) ("Sabbath") deals with the 39 prohibitions of "work" on the Shabbat. 24 chapters.
2. ***Eruvin***: (ערובין) ("Mixtures") deals with the Eruv or Sabbath-bound - a category of constructions/delineations that alter the domains of the Sabbath for carrying and travel. 10 chapters.
3. ***Pesachim***: (פסחים) ("Passover Festivals") deals with the prescriptions regarding the Passover and the paschal sacrifice. 10 chapters.
4. ***Shekalim***: (שקלים) ("Shekels") deals with the collection of the half-Shekel as well as the expenses and expenditure of the Temple. 8 chapters
5. ***Yoma***: (יומא) ("The Day"); called also "Kippurim" or "Yom ha-Kippurim" ("Day of Atonement"); deals with the prescriptions Yom Kippur, especially the ceremony by the Kohen Gadol. 8 chapters.
6. ***Sukkah***: (סוכה) ("Booth"); deals with the festival of Sukkot (the Feast of Tabernacles) and the Sukkah itself. Also deals with the Four Species (Lulav, Etrog, Hadass, Aravah — Palm branch, Citron, Myrtle, Willow) which are waved on Sukkot. 5 chapters.
7. ***Beitza***: (ביצה) ("Egg"); (So called from the first word, but originally termed, according to its subject, *Yom Tov* - "Holidays") deals chiefly with the rules to be observed on Yom Tov. 5 chapters.
8. ***Rosh Hashanah***: (ראש השנה) ("New Year") deals chiefly with the regulation of the calendar by the new moon, and with the services of the festival of Rosh Hashanah. 4 chapters.
9. ***Ta'anit***: (תענית) ("Fasting") deals chiefly with the special fast-days in times of drought or other untoward occurrences. 4 chapters
10. ***Megillah***: (מגילה) ("Scroll") contains chiefly regulations and prescriptions regarding the reading of the scroll of Esther at Purim, and the reading of other passages from the Torah and Neviim in the synagogue. 4 chapters.
11. ***Mo'ed Katan***: (מועד קטן) ("Little Festival") deals with Chol HaMoed, the intermediate festival days of Pesach and Sukkot. 3 chapters.

12. **Hagigah**: (הגיגה) ("Festival Offering") deals with the Three Pilgrimage Festivals (Passover, Shavuot, Sukkot) and the pilgrimage offering that men were supposed to bring in Jerusalem. 3 chapters.

The above is compiled from multiple Google searches.