

Zera Shimshon

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Chapter LV: Shir haShirim (Song of Songs)

Essay 14: Permissible work on the intermediate days of a Festival

גְּמָרָא (דְּרָאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה) עַל פְּסוּק "מִה־יָפּוּ פְעָמֶיךָ בְּנִעְלִים בַּת־נְדִיב", מֵה יָפּוּ פְעָמֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּשָׁעָה שְׁעוּלִים לְרַגְלֵךְ וְכוּ', דְּגַרְסִינָן בְּפֶרֶק ד' דְּפֶסְחִים ר' יוֹסִי בְּרִי הִוְדָה אָמַר אַף הָרִצְעָנִים, וּפִירֵשׁ הָרַב עוֹבְדֵי הַמִּבְרָא שְׁכָן עוֹלֵי רְגָלִים מְתַקְנִים מְנַעְלֵיהֶם בְּחֹל הַמוֹעֵד.

There is a **Gemara** of tractate **Rosh Hashana** [sic] on a verse, “‘How lovely are your feet in sandals, O daughter of nobles!’ (Song of Songs 7:2). How lovely are the feet of Israel at the time that they are ascending to Jerusalem for the Festival.”¹ We say in the fourth chapter of tractate **Pesachim**:

Rabbi Meir says: Any labor that one began before the fourteenth [of Nisan, i.e., on the eve of Passover], he may complete it on the fourteenth [before midday]. However, one may not begin [to perform labor] from the outset on the fourteenth, even if he is able to complete it [before midday]. And the Rabbis say: Three crafts [are permitted to] perform labor until midday on Passover eve, and they are: Tailors, barbers, and launderers [whose work is needed for the Festival]. **Rabbi Yosei bar Yehuda says: Even shoemakers** [are permitted to work on the fourteenth].

- Mishnah Pesachim 4:6; Pesachim 55a

And Rabbi Ovadiah from Bartenura² explains that those who ascend for Festivals repair their shoes on the Intermediate days of the Festivals.

וּמְשׁוּם הֵכִי אָמַר הַכֵּתוּב אַף עַל פִּי שְׁכַשְׁאֲתָה עוֹלָה לְרַגְלֵךְ צָרִיךָ אֲתָה לַעֲשׂוֹת מְלָאכָה בְּחֹל הַמוֹעֵד לְתַקֵּן הַמְנַעְלִים, עִם כָּל זֶה "מִה־יָפּוּ פְעָמֶיךָ" וְכוּ'.

Because of this, Scripture effectively said, “Even though when you ascend for the Festival you will need to do work on the intermediate days of the Festival to repair your shoes, with all this, ‘How lovely are your feet in sandals.’ ”

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¹ This is actually found in tractate Sukkah, page 49b.

² Ovadiah ben Abraham of Bertinoro (c. 1445–c. 1515), commonly known as “The Bartenura,” was a 15th-century Italian rabbi best known for his popular commentary on the Mishnah. He writes on Mishnah Pesachim 4:6, “similarly those who come up [to Jerusalem] for the Festival repair their shoes on the Intermediate Days of the Festival.”