

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The judgment of Rosh HaShanah (cont.)

The Gemara concludes quoting a Baraisa that presents a disagreement between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel regarding a detail related to the way Hashem judges different groups of people.

The Baraisa proceeds to discuss the final consequence of different categories of wicked people.

R' Yitzchok bar Avin gives a description of the effects experienced by those who descend into Gehinom.

A contradiction in the Baraisa is noted as to whether the intermediate group (בינונים) is punished.

The contradiction is resolved.

In the Gemara's resolution the Gemara distinguishes between different categories of "Jews who sin with their body - פושעי ישראל בגופן."

Rava expounds upon one of the pesukim cited in the Baraisa.

R' Chisda defines one of the categories of sinners mentioned in the Baraisa as communal leaders who instill excessive fear on the community.

2) Tipping the scales towards kindness

Three opinions are cited to explain how Hashem tips the scales towards kindness.

Rava qualifies the last opinion.

Rava offers another drosha on one of the earlier-cited verses.

A related incident is recorded.

R' Acha bar Chanina expounds on the rest of the verse.

3) Hashem's method of judgment

Three drashos are presented that describe the way Hashem judges the world.

A long presentation is made regarding Hashem's attribute of mercy.

4) The power of teshuvah

R' Yochanan presents a description of the effectiveness of teshuvah.

A series of unsuccessful challenges are presented against R' Yochanan's assertion that teshuvah can result in a person's conviction being torn up.

In the course of this discussion the Gemara explains that there is a difference between the teshuvah of an individual and that of a tzibbur. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Wrapped up in prayer as the leader of the community

אמר רבי יוחנן אלמלא מקרא כתוב אי אפשר לאומרו, מלמד שנתעטף הקב"ה כשליח ציבור והראה לו למשה סדר תפילה

This verse introducing the attribute of mercy states: "And Hashem passed before him (Moshe) and proclaimed." Rav Yochanan said: "Were a verse not written, it would be impossible to say it. This teaches that the Holy One, blessed is He, wrapped Himself in a tallis like a prayer leader and showed Moshe the order of prayer. He said to him: " 'Any time that Israel sins, let them perform before Me this procedure and I shall forgive them.'"

What does the Gemara mean when it says that the Jewish people should "perform this procedure?" The Shl"ta explains that we are instructed to pattern our conduct according to the attributes of Hashem. Just as He is compassionate, we should also act with compassion. Hashem is slow to anger, and we should emulate this trait as well. And so it is with all the aspects of Hashem. If we act accordingly, we can expect that Hashem will forgive our sins.

Rabbi Meir Auerbach MiKalish, author of Imrei Bina, provides another interpretation of what it means to "perform this procedure," based upon the opening remark of this Gemara. Hashem "wrapped Himself as the leader of the services, and He showed Moshe the order of prayer." Similarly, we are each directed to approach our opportunity to engage Hashem in prayer as if each of us were the leader of the community. We must include the distress of the community in our thoughts, and we should pray for the welfare and the needs of the nation at large as we talk to Hashem. In this manner, we are assured that our prayers will not be unanswered.

The Gemara (Berachos 8a) expounds upon the verse (Iyov 36:5): "Behold God is mighty, He does not despise any." This teaches us that Hashem does not reject the prayers of the community. We may wonder about this, though, because we often notice large groups who pray together, yet we are not aware that these prayers are answered. It may be, however, that although many people are together in one room as they pray, yet they each offers individualized prayers. When people each ask for his own personal needs, and they focus only upon themselves and their own immediate families, this constitutes many people praying privately. The most effective manner to pray is when each person presents a prayer for others. In this manner, each member of the community is davening a communal prayer, and this request is something that Hashem cannot refuse to grant. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Causing others to sin

ושחטאו והחטיאו את הרבים כגון ירבעם בן נבט וחביריו יורדין לגיהנם ונידונין בה לדורי דורות

... And those who sinned and caused the community to sin, like Yeravam ben Nevat and his fellows, descend to Gehinom and are punished there for eternity.

The Gemara clearly reports that those who cause multitudes to sin do not leave Gehinom. Accordingly, Rambam¹ includes them amongst those people who do not have a portion in the World-to-Come. Another relevant halachah, mentioned in the Gemara in Sanhedrin², is the prohibition against burying a wicked person (רשע) next to a righteous person (צדיק).

There was once a butcher who was found guilty of intentionally selling non-kosher meat to the residents of his community. After his death his heirs paid a large sum of money for the butcher to be buried next to a particular tzaddik. When this was discovered, an inquiry was sent to Rav Shalom Mordechai Schwadron, the Maharsham, for guidance.

Maharsham³ initially cited the lenient ruling of Rav Moshe Sofer⁴, the Chasam Sofer, who ruled that although it is prohibited to bury a wicked person next to a righteous person, if the burial was already done there is no requirement to exhume the body. This applies, explains Maharsham, to a case of a standard wicked person where it is possible to say that he was forgiven through the pain of death and other punishments. One who causes the community to sin, on the other hand, remains in Gehinom forever, as stated in our Gemara, and thus we do not en-

REVIEW and Remember

1. What happens to those who cause others to sin?

2. Who are פושעי ישראל בגופן?

3. What is the covenant of the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy?

4. How did R' Yosi explain when Hashem shows favoritism and when He does not?

ertain the possibility that he was forgiven. Thus, the wicked person cannot be left buried next to the tzaddik.

Furthermore, there is no requirement to consider the possibility that the butcher did teshuvah before he died since the Gemara in Yoma⁵ states that one who causes the community to sin will not have the opportunity to repent. Although if we knew he repented he could be buried near a tzaddik⁶, we do not have to give him the benefit of the doubt, and we therefore assume he did not repent. ■

1. רמב"ם פ"ג מהל' תשובה ה"ו
2. משנה סנהדרין מו וכן נפסק בשו"ע יו"ד סי' שס"ב סע' ה'
3. שו"ת מהרש"ם ח"ז סי' מ"ז
4. שו"ת חת"ס יו"ד סי' שמ"א
5. גמ' יומא פז
6. רמ"א יו"ד סי' שס"ב סע' ה' ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The Covenant of the Thirteen Attributes

אמר רב יהודה ברית כרותה לי"ג מדות שאינן חוזרות ריקם שנאמר (שמות לד) הנה אנכי כורת ברית

Rav Yehuda taught that the recital of the "Thirteen Attributes" is always favorably answered from on high. The Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, told a parable to help us understand why sometimes it seems as though they are not really being heard:

There was once a wealthy man who owned a number of businesses. One day, he was approached by a poor nephew who pleaded with his uncle for a position. The businessman agreed, and immediately sat down to describe exactly what his

nephew's responsibilities would be. The list was quite long, and to ensure that the young man would remember the tasks before him, his uncle committed them to writing. "Review them every day!" he exhorted.

The young man was thrilled with his position, and thanked his uncle profusely. After a while, the boss summoned his nephew and said, "Tell me, how is your work coming along? Are you doing your all for the good of the firm?"

"Certainly!" answered the young man. "I've done everything that you asked of me."

"Tell me exactly how you have carried out your responsibilities."

"Well, Uncle," responded the nephew, "Every day I recite the list of tasks that you gave me. I remember every one by heart and can even recite them for you!"

"But did you do them?" asked the uncle, growing angrier by the second.

The young man answered sheepishly, "I thought that since my uncle is the boss, it would be enough for me to just repeat them."

"You fool!" thundered the uncle. "That list was only to remind you what to do!"

The Thirteen Attributes of Mercy are a list for us to follow in all our affairs. This means, "Just as He is Merciful, so should you be merciful. Just as He is Gracious, so should you be gracious." If we don't learn exactly how to live with these attributes and then actually act accordingly, we are just like the nephew in the story! Hashem's promise to always answer us is only if we also act in accordance with these attributes in everything we do! ■