

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah explains how Ov and Yid'oni are practiced and the punishment for the practitioner and the one who inquires of it.

2) Ov and Yid'oni

The Gemara asks why our Mishnah lists Ov and Yid'oni separately and a Mishnah in Kareisos only mentions Ov.

R' Yochanan offers one resolution and Reish Lakish offers a second resolution.

The Gemara analyzes at length their opinions and why each disagrees with the other.

Much of the Gemara's analysis relates to the dispute between R' Akiva and Rabanan concerning the degree of action necessary in one's worship of idolatry to be liable to death.

A Baraisa is cited that elaborates on the prohibition of **חבר חבר** –conjuring.

The Gemara concludes its clarification of R' Yochanan's position.

A Baraisa describes how Ov and Yid'oni work.

Two unsuccessful challenges to the assertion that Ov involves a voice emanating from one of the joints of the sorcerer are presented.

Another Baraisa differentiates between two different methods of Ov.

A point in the Baraisa is clarified.

A related incident is recorded.

The Gemara differentiates between Ov and the general prohibition against seeking the dead.

Rava expounds the verse cited by R' Akiva in the previous Baraisa in a different manner.

Two incidents involving righteous people performing acts of creation are cited.

3) Sorcery

A Baraisa presents differing opinions about the nature of the prohibition against **me'onein**.

Another Baraisa describes the nature of the prohibition against **me'nacheish**. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. How does one practice **ידעוני** and **אוב**?

2. What is a **חובר חבר**?

3. What does a spirit respond on Shabbos?

4. What is a **מנחש**?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The impure forces of sorcery and witchcraft

וידעוני זה המדבר בפיו

Rashi explains that **ידעוני** is a service where a bone from an animal called **ידוע** is taken and placed in one's mouth, at which time the bone speaks on its own through witchcraft.

Rambam (Hilchos Avoda Zara 6:2) explains that this service is where one's takes a bone from a bird named **ידוע** and places it into one's mouth. He then burns incense and other rituals until he falls over as if in an epileptic seizure, and voices will emerge from his mouth regarding future events. Tiferes Yisroel (#70) notes that according to Rambam the wording of the Mishnah is quite precise when it says that **ידעוני** "speaks from his mouth," as opposed to **אוב בעל אוב** which causes the voice of the dead to be heard. Here, **ידעוני** itself speaks from the mouth of the person after the person himself falls over in a seizure.

In his Commentary to the Mishnah, Rambam emphasizes that all phenomenon mentioned in the Mishnah regarding these "supernatural" powers are all imaginary and false imagery. The voices they seem to produce and the effects they appear to create are similar to the perceptions one experiences when he is in a desolate and forlorn place, all by himself, and he imagines that he is hearing voices or seeing mirages. Meiri adds that these voices and sounds are noted mostly by people who have wild imaginations and who are susceptible to these powers of suggestion.

Nevertheless, this opinion of Rambam is consistent with his general view regarding sorcery and witchcraft. His opinion is that these are not natural methods, and that they are false and meaningless. Rambam writes (ibid., 11:16) that sorcery and witchcraft were fabricated to mislead the public to take advantage of them, but these are all worthless. Anyone who thinks that there is any substance to these processes, but that the Torah simply prohibits accessing these forces, is being foolish and lacking in understanding.

Nevertheless, many Rishonim disagree with Rambam's

HALACHAH Highlight

Can a being created by a tzadik be counted in a minyan?

רבא ברא גברא וכו'

Rava created a person etc.

Rashi¹ comments that Rava created a person by using information contained in Sefer Yetzirah. Yad Ramah² explains that information in Sefer Yetzirah by itself is not sufficient to create a person. It is only because Rava was righteous that he was able to use the information contained in the sefer to create a person.

Teshuvos Chacham Tzvi³ questioned whether a person created by using Sefer Yetzirah could be counted towards a minyan. The argument that he should not be included is that the source for a minyan for the recitation of certain prayers is the verse (Vayikra 22:32), that states ונקדשתי בתוך בני ישראל – And I will be sanctified in the midst of the Children of Israel. Since the verse mentions the sanctification of Hashem from the Children of Israel it would seem that a being created from Sefer Yetzirah should not be counted since he is not considered a member of the Children of Israel. On the other hand one could argue that since this being is the handiwork of a righteous person it should be considered a member of the Children of Israel. This is based on the Gemara earlier (19b) that taught that raising an orphan is considered as though he gave birth to him. Similarly, the handiwork of righteous people is consid-

(Insight...continued from page 1)

ered their offspring and thus such a being could be counted towards a minyan. He suggested that from the fact that R' Zeira returned the being created by Rava to dust indicates that it could not be counted towards a minyan because R' Zeira wouldn't "kill" something that could be of value.

Rav Yaakov Emden⁴ questioned the possibility of including a created being in a minyan. Someone who is deaf and mute, insane or a minor does not count towards a minyan even though they are indisputably members of the Children of Israel, so certainly a created being should not count towards a minyan since he lacks the requisite da'as to be counted towards a minyan regardless of whether he is considered part of the Children of Israel. ■

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1. רש"י ד"ה ברא.
2. יד רמ"ה ד"ה אמר.
3. שו"ת חכם צבי סי' צ"ג.
4. שאילת יעב"ץ ח"ב סי' פ"ב. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Creating worlds

"אי בעי צדיקי ברי עלמא..."

Rav Chaim Brim, zt"l, recounted the fascinating insights of certain Torah greats on why a chosson is like a king. "On my son's wedding day, the Skverer Rebbe shlit"a, pointed out, 'In Pesachim, our sages tell us that a king forges a path by breaking through barriers.¹ But we may well ask: How does this apply to a chosson, since he is also like a king?² The answer is that he breaks through the barriers erected between himself and Hashem by his sins.

We find that sins make such a barrier in the verse, עוונותיכם היו מבדילים –Your sins have been a barrier between yourselves and your G-d.³ Through teshuvah, the chosson removes all barriers and forges a new path."

"During one of the sheva berachos in Monsey, I recounted this chiddush," Rav Chaim continued. "Rav Shmulik Toibinfeld, zt"l, commented, 'Through this connection we can understand a seemingly difficult gemara in Sanhedrin 65. There, Rava learns from the verse, עוונותיכם היו מבדילים ביניכם "that if tzaddikim wished to create the world they could do so. Rashi there explains that if not for

sins, there would not be anything dividing us from Hashem. If we were on this level, we could build worlds. We see, then, the greatness of a chosson. Due to the special forgiveness conferred on him all barriers between him and Hashem are cast down. He can ascend to the level of tzaddikim who could build entire worlds if they only wish!"⁴

It is no wonder that the Chasam Sofer, zt"l, writes that a chosson during sheva berachos is lifted to the level of the tzaddik of the generation!⁵ ■

1. פסחים, דף ק"י
2. פרקי דרבי אלעזר, סוף פט"ז
3. ישעיהו נ"ט:ב'
4. מרבה חיים, ח"א, ע' קי"ח
5. מובא בקונטרס מבקשי תורה ■