

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Sancheriv (cont.)

The Gemara unsuccessfully challenges an earlier assertion that the term ליש refers to Nevuchadnetzar.

Additional verses that discuss Sancheriv are expounded.

2) Dovid HaMelech and Nov

The Gemara begins to elaborate on the incident of the massacre of Nov.

Avishai's uncertainty about riding Dovid HaMelech's mule is presented as well as the related story.

3) The earth contracting

A Baraisa presents a list of three people for whom the land contracted.

The Gemara demonstrates how we know the earth contracted for each of these three people.

The incident of the land contracting for Yaakov Avinu is discussed.

4) Dovid HaMelech and Nov (cont.)

The source that Dovid HaMelech's descendants were obliterated is cited.

5) Sancheriv (cont.)

The Gemara resumes recounting the story of Sancheriv.

The number of troops in Sancheriv's army is discussed.

Tannaim debate what the Angel struck the soldiers with in Sancheriv's army.

Different opinions regarding the number of soldiers who survived is recorded.

The exact manner in which Sancheriv died is described. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Explain the phrase בת דינא בטל דינא.
2. For which three people did the earth contract?
3. How did the angel smite Sancheriv's troops?
4. How many of Sancheriv's soldiers survived the angel's strike?

Distinctive INSIGHT

Yaakov instituted the evening prayer

ויפגע במקום... דבר אחר, אין פגיעה אלא תפילה

What can we learn from the fact that Yaakov's unique addition to our prayers is seemingly instituted at this particular point in his life? What is this moment in Yaakov's life, and how do we understand its unique role in tefilla?

Rabbi Tzvi Haskell notes that Yaakov was just leaving the Yeshiva of Shem and Ever. There he was totally immersed in Torah, resembling a heavenly existence, not yet encumbered with the enormous challenges that lay ahead of him. There he was able to bask and grow in a Torah environment unequalled even by Yitzchak's household. Yet, how is one meant to create a bridge between such dissimilar worlds, one a world of spirituality resembling Olam Haba, the other the house of Lavan, wrought with lying and cheating that would challenge the integrity of even Yaakov Avinu?

Perhaps the Torah is teaching us that the bridge between these worlds is prayer. Only through prayer do the "mundane" aspects of this world become a tool for becoming close to Hashem. Only in prayer can we transform those frightening challenges, even if we fail in the short term this time, into moments of a creation standing in front of his Creator begging Him to help him not be swallowed up by the spiritual dangers that lurk around him. The relationship of prayer and worldly dealing goes so far that Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzato, in Derech Hashem, explains that the difficulties of providing a livelihood for one's family are not meant to hinder tefilla, but rather to help it - to force a human to pray for his sustenance.

Thus it was particularly at this point that Yaakov achieved a new pinnacle in his life. No longer was he only the yoshev ohalim, whose connection to Olam Hazeh was a fleeting one, where it could only be a hindrance. He now struggled with livelihood and honesty and used these difficulties as a source of becoming close to Hashem.

If the above is true, the application to our lives, with our constant worries, ranging from large to small, is obvious. May we, too, be ever motivated to stand before our

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 By Rabbi and Mrs. Michael Balinsky

In memory of their father
 ר' לוי שמחה בן ר' משה, ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

Bathing in preparation for Shabbos

אבישי בן צרויה הוה קא חיף רישיה

Avishai ben Tzeruyah was shampooing his head

The Gemara relates in passing that Avishai the son of Tzeruyah was shampooing his head in preparation for Shabbos. This manner of preparation for Shabbos is codified in Shulchan Aruch¹ where he writes that there is a mitzvah to wash one's face, hands and feet in hot water on Erev Shabbos. Additionally, there is a mitzvah for one to shampoo his head and cut his nails on Erev Shabbos. Mishnah Berurah² asserts that the term "mitzvah" used by Shulchan Aruch should not be understood as establishing an obligation. It is a proper thing to do and those who do bathe in preparation for Shabbos will be rewarded but those who do not bathe in preparation for Shabbos will not be punished. Mishnah Berurah³ also adds that women should also make an effort to bathe in preparation for Shabbos. Shulchan Aruch mentioned bathing one's face, hands and feet but Rema adds that preferably one should bathe his entire body. Accordingly, if one finds himself running out of time he should not risk desecrating Shabbos by bathing or showering his entire body; rather he should follow the ruling of Shulchan Aruch and only wash his face, hands and feet⁴.

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Creator and turn our challenges to our spirituality into opportunities. ■

Another point that is emphasized by Mishnah Berurah⁵ is the timing of the obligation. He emphasizes that the Shabbos bath should be taken specifically on Friday (or Erev Yom Tov) and one should not bathe on Thursday for Shabbos since that does not show that one is attempting to honor Shabbos. In the event that one will not be able to bathe on Friday, he writes that one should bathe on Thursday but the closer to Shabbos that he can bathe the better.

Beur Halacha⁶ emphasizes the importance of using hot water for bathing. Whether lukewarm water fulfills the obligation is uncertain, although his tendency is to think that the obligation would be fulfilled. One who bathes in cold water, however, certainly does not fulfill his obligation. Beur Halacha⁷ also notes that we do not find in the Poskim that one must use hot water for shampooing and one can fulfill that obligation with anything that will clean one's hair. ■

1. שו"ע או"ח סי' ר"ס סעי' א'.
2. מ"ב שם סק"א.
3. מ"ב שם סק"ב.
4. מ"ב שם סק"א.
5. מ"ב שם סק"ה.
6. ביאור הלכה שם ד"ה בחמין.
7. ביאור הלכה שם ד"ה לחוף הראש. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

A special visit

"כי מטא לחרן אמר..."

On today's daf we find that after Yaakov reached Charan he regretted not having davened at the place where Avraham and Yitzchak had prayed, so he decided to return. The Chidushei HaRim, ז"ל, addresses this teaching with a pointed question. "How could Yaakov Avinu, the bechir ha'avos, miss such an obvious opportunity to daven at the holiest place in the world?"

His answer highlights a very practical lesson. "Yaakov Avinu was a true tzaddik and understood that when he

was passing by the m'kom hamikdash on his way to Charan, a random visit was not the right way to visit the holiest site in the world. He knew that such a holy place should merit its own exertion. It was therefore not spiritually valuable for him to just make a short stop over on the way to Charan. He preferred instead to first pass it by and arrive at his destination and only then to turn back and make a special journey to this most holy place."

He concludes that every person should learn from this. Many chassidim did not visit when passing their rebbes or great tzaddikim on their business travels and the like. Instead, they preferred to visit the rebbe on a special visit when the only purpose of their

trip was to see the tzaddik.¹

Nevertheless, it should be pointed out that a person must know himself truly and determine if he is on a sufficiently high level to implement this kind of advice. As the Chovos Halevavos, ז"ל, points out, the yetzer likes to use a person's desire to do a mitzvah perfectly to prevent him from doing anything. For example, although it is better to do a mitzvah in private, sometimes a person will refrain from doing a mitzvah publicly but will also not have the strength of will to do it privately, despite his good intentions.² The same is true in this case. ■

1. שיח שרפי קודש, פרשת ויצא
2. חובות הלבבות, שער יחוד המעשה ■