

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Cunning evildoer (cont.)

The final example of “the cunning evildoer” is presented.

### 2) One who does not serve Torah scholars

Different comparisons are made to describe a person who studies Tanach and Mishnah but fails to serve Torah scholars.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok sides with one of the earlier-cited opinions.

A related Baraisa is cited.

Additional related expositions are recorded.

### 3) “Those who ruin the world”

A Baraisa presents different examples of “people who ruin the world.”

The Gemara unsuccessfully challenges the examples cited in the Baraisa.

Two interpretations of the Baraisa’s case of “a minor who did not complete his months” are recorded.

The Gemara discusses how long a scholar must wait before he begins to issue halachic rulings.

### 4) Wounds of ascetics

A Baraisa presents seven different categories of ascetics.

The Gemara elaborates on the different categories of ascetics.

Tangentially, the Gemara records two statements related to insincere piety.

**5) MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins with R' Shimon’s opinion that a woman’s merit cannot delay the effects of the bitter waters. The discussion switches to the topic of a Minchas Sotah that became tamei. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. What is the definition of an עם הארץ?
2. Explain מורין הלכה מתוך משנתן.
3. Who are the seven insincere ascetics?
4. Why does R' Shimon reject the principle that a woman’s merit could delay the effects of the bitter waters?

Today’s Daf Digest is dedicated  
 חנה גולדא בת משה  
 Karen Weiss,  
 by her husband Harry Weiss

## Distinctive INSIGHT

*More reward for a better prayer*

ולא שכר פסיעות יש לי

The Mishnah lists those who ruin the world due to their devious acts. Among them is a widow who visits her neighbors. This needed to be explained, especially in light of an exchange between Rabbi Yochanan and a certain woman who used to walk to a distant neighborhood to pray. Rabbi Yochanan praised her, and even commended her for walking farther than the closest synagogue to her house, because she felt that her prayers were more sincerely spoken in the farther location. The Gemara notes, however, that the widow who ruins the world is one who conceals her sorcery and her casting of spells. A woman who prays with sincerity and devotion should be praised.

In his sefer פתח עינים, the Chid”a notes that the woman who Rabbi Yochanan applauded seems to have walked a far distance simply in order to earn reward. When Rabbi Yochanan asked her why she walked so far, she responded by pointing out that she expected to be rewarded for it, as she asked, “Do I not get reward for my steps — ולא שכר פסיעות יש לי?” This is obviously not an admirable attitude in fulfilling a mitzvah, so we have to understand why Rabbi Yochanan was impressed. Furthermore, that Hashem rewards a person for every gesture he exerts is a well-known adage. What was the insightful lesson which Rabbi Yochanan is teaching here?

The Chid”a answers based upon the words of the חכם צבי. The rule is אין מעבירין על המצוות—when an opportunity comes to do a mitzvah, we are not allowed to squander it and possibly let the moment pass without capitalizing upon the chance. This, however, is only true when the mitzvah will not be fulfilled with any improvement (הידור) by waiting. If the mitzvah will be enhanced, we are allowed to wait to do it better. Here, too, the woman passed by many chances to pray in a synagogue, but she did so in order to pray in a place which was more conducive for her intent. Rabbi Yochanan at first explained that when we say that it is better to pray in the place where one learns rather than to daven in a shul (Berachos 7a), this only in said in reference to a talmid chacham who himself learns in his Beis midrash seat. However, women and laymen should always daven in shul, for that is where a larger crowd is gathered. This woman informed Rabbi Yochanan that she was increasing her reward by going to a Beis midrash. By saying when she was willing to travel she pointed out that her intent was not just for the reward, but that her prayers would be more desirable in the farther place. Rabbi Yochanan then told her that she was correct, and her gesture was admirable. ■

# HALACHAH Highlight

## *Walking to a more distant Beis Haknesses*

אמרה ליה רבי ולא שכר פסיעות יש לי

*She said, "Rebbi, do I not receive reward for the additional steps?"*

**P**oskim<sup>1</sup> question why the Gemara praises the widow who walked to daven in the Beis Hamidrash. There is a principle that one is not permitted to pass an opportunity to do a mitzvah (אין מעבירין על המצוות) and seemingly she violated this principle when she passed the Beis Haknesses that was closer to her house to daven in the Beis Hamidrash. Teshuvos Levushei Mordechai<sup>2</sup> asserts that the prohibition against passing an opportunity to perform a mitzvah does not apply if one passes the opportunity to perform a mitzvah in order to do that same mitzvah in a more beautiful manner. Therefore, since walking to the more distant Beis Hamidrash involves greater effort, the mitzvah is enhanced and thus the prohibition against passing an opportunity to perform a mitzvah is not violated.

Rav Dovid Pardo<sup>3</sup> writes that the value of walking to a more distant Beis Haknesses does not apply for someone who is a Torah scholar who spends all his time studying Torah. For such a person it is better to daven at the Beis Haknesses that is closest to his home so that he should

not lose valuable learning time walking to the more distant Beis Haknesses.

Teshuvos Divrei Malkiel<sup>4</sup> challenges the principle that walking to the more distant Beis Haknesses should carry greater reward. The mitzvah that will be performed is davening in the Beis Haknesses, so why should walking to a more distant Beis Haknesses generate any greater reward? If someone sends an agent to a nearby location and the agent takes a longer route than necessary could he seek additional reward for the extra distance that he traveled? Obviously not! Therefore, he suggests that the case of the Gemara refers to a circumstance where the widow established her place (מקום קבוע) for davening at the Beis Haknesses that was distant from her home before the Beis Haknesses that was closer to her home was built. Even though there was now a Beis Haknesses that was closer to her home she continued to daven in the one that was more distant from her home since that is the place that she established as her place for davening. Davening in the place one establishes for his davening is conducive to davening, for which the additional trip will generate additional reward. ■

1. ע' שו"ת אבן שתיה או"ח סי' ט"ו
2. שו"ת לבושי מרדכי תניינא או"ח סי' כ"ב
3. ספרי דבי רב פרשת ראה
4. שו"ת דברי מלכיאל ה"ה סי' י"ט ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## *Reward for every step*

וקיבול שכר מאלמנה

**O**nce there was an extremely wealthy man who lived quite close to his synagogue. Although he could have easily walked the short distance, he would choose to ride on his very expensive horse to the beis knesses, since he felt it befitted his distinguished stature.

Someone pointed out to this man that it may be preferable to walk. The wealthy man enjoyed riding to syna-

gogue but he wanted to go the best way according to halachah. So he consulted with the Ben Ish Chai, zt"l.

"It is better to go by foot," the Ben Ish Chai ruled. "We see this in Sotah 22. The Gemara there recounts that a certain widow used to pray in Rav Yochanan's beis midrash even though she lived closer to a different beis midrash. When Rav Yochanan asked her why she went out of her way to come to her shul, she replied, 'I come here to receive reward for each step!' "This implies that the reward for going out of one's way is only if one troubles himself to walk on his own two feet, not if one rides!

The Ben Ish Chai continued, "We see this in Chagigah as well. A small child is not obligated to be olah l'regel because he can't walk to the Beis Hamikdash himself. Beis Hillel rule that a child is not obligated until he is old enough to hold his father's hand and walk on his own two feet from Yerushalayim to Har Habayis. Although those who were very distant from Yerushalayim would surely ride, clearly one should walk as much as possible, as implied on Chagigah 3. For the above reasons, you should walk to synagogue on your own two feet, regardless of your honor and status!" ■

