

Daf Digest for this month is dedicated in memory of ישראל צבי בן זאב גוטליב ז"ל

By the Weiss/Gotlib Families—London, England

OVERVIEW of the Daf

- 1) In the midst of the discussion of קריאת שמע על המטה we analyze one of the mentioned pesukim further to teach that one should utilize their yetzer tov to battle their yetzer hara. The Gemara further tells us how we know that the Written Torah and Oral Torah were given to Moshe Rabbeinu on Har Sinai.
- 2) Our discussion of קריאת שמע על המטה concludes with two statements from R' Yitzchak.
- 3) The topic of suffering is discussed at length.
- 4) Rabban Shimon bar Yochai tells us about the three gifts God gave Klal Yisroel and how each is acquired through suffering.
- 5) The Gemara resumes its discussion of suffering and concludes with the story of R' Huna and his barrels of wine that turned to vinegar.
- 6) Abba Binyamin informs us that he was always careful to daven before doing any other tasks, and that he positioned his bed north-south. He further tells us the consequences of leaving shul while someone else is still davening. ■

Gemara GEM

To focus one's heart for the sake of Heaven

אחד המרבה ואחד הממעיט ובלבד שיכוין לבו לשמים. — ה :

Whether one does a lot or a little, it is equal, as long as his intention is for the sake of Heaven - 5b

In his commentary to Hilchos Krias Sh'ma, the Or Zarua writes: "One who toils in Torah to the best of his ability might nevertheless feel that he has accomplished very little. He should know, however, that as long as he has done his best, he has earned the same reward as another who has toiled in Torah and who has accomplished much. The reward is commensurate with the effort. (Avos 5:23). The Yerushalmi even says that if one person toiled in Torah day and night for one hundred years, while another studied Torah to the utmost of his abilities for a shortened lifespan of twenty years, God rewards them equally."

The Or Zarua concludes and rules that the same measure is used in terms of giving tzedaka and for all meritorious acts.

Distinctive INSIGHT

Judge others favorably

אם רואה אדם שיסורין באין עליו יפשפש במעשיו - (ה.)

If a person sees that suffering visits him, he should examine his conduct — 5a

On עמוד א' n, the Gemara brings the words of Rava, while others say it was Rav Chisda, who advises a person how to interpret any suffering which afflicts him. First, he should analyze his actions to determine if he is faulty in any area. He should then calculate whether he is deficient in his Torah study, and finally, he should attribute his suffering to "Afflictions of Love." Rashi explains that God is subjecting him to this pain, albeit without it being due to sin, in order to increase his reward in the World-to-Come.

On עמוד ב' i, Rav Huna suffered a huge financial loss, where 400 barrels of wine soured and became almost worthless. When the Rabbis visited him, they confronted him and told him that he should review his ways to see if his suffering may be due to his having sinned. "Do you suspect me of sinning?" he asked. "Do you think God caused this loss to you without reason?" they responded.

We might ask, why did the Rabbis immediately suspect Rav Huna of wrong doing? They certainly had the duty to judge him with the benefit of a doubt, and they should have assumed that Rav Huna was being dealt "Afflictions of Love." Tosafos even wonders about this question of the Rabbis for, after all, we all see righteous people who suffer physical as well as financial troubles.

As the story ends, Rav Huna admits to not having provided a certain benefit to his worker, who he knew to be stealing from him. Tosafos explains that here, the Rabbis never would have suspected Rav Huna of any misdeeds just because he was suffering. Nevertheless, the Rabbis were well aware that Rav Huna had not provided his worker with this benefit to which he was due, and they came to Rav Huna to warn him to not remain delinquent. Instead of confronting him directly, they tried to tactfully hint to him to review his deeds. When Rav Huna reacted defensively, they then told him what they knew about his not providing for his worker.

The lesson for us to continue to react to other's suffering with compassion, and to always judge others with the benefit of a doubt, even as they endure "Afflictions of Love." ■

When a person honestly does whatever he can and works to the fullest extent of his abilities, God judges it as if he has accomplished what is expected from him, and God will reward him accordingly. ■

HALACHA Highlight

Davening facing the wall

והאמר רב יהודה אמר רב ואיתימא ריב"ל מנין למתפלל שלא יהא דבר חוצץ בינו לבין הקיר שנאמר (ישעיהו לח,ב) ויסב חזקיהו פניו אל הקיר ויתפלל. - ה:

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav, and others say that it was said in the name of Rabbi Yihoshua ben Levi: From where do we derive that one who prays should have nothing interposed between him and the wall? Since it says: "And Chizkiahhu turned his face to the wall and prayed." - 5b

Two reasons are given for this Halacha:

1) In order that the object(s) not distract the person from his prayer¹.

2) Prayer is likened to an offering, and for offerings there can be no intervening substance between them and the holy vessels².

The Kaf HaChaim³ points out that both views are recognized.

Tosafos⁴ limits this restriction only to items that are not fixed. However, items that have fixed positions such as a the Aron are not considered an obstruction.

Some Poskim⁵ hold that this halacha only applies to large items that are at least 10 tefachim high and 4 tefachim wide (approximately 40 inches by 16 inches), but anything less than that is not prohibited. Yet, some Poskim⁶ point out that according to the second reason for this halacha that equates prayer to an offering, size is not a factor, and smaller items would as well be prohibited.

In our synagogues it is customary⁷ to prayer behind shenders, benches etc. However, if one encounters in finding a

REVIEW and Remember

1. What are the four tactics to be used to battle one's yetzer hara ?
2. What are the three gifts from God acquired through suffering ?
3. What were the two possible outcomes of Rav Huna's vinegar, and what would be the difference between the two possibilities ?
4. What are the positive effects of placing one's bed north-south ?

space without intervening items, and he may need to delay his prayer or look elsewhere, there is leniency to prayer even under these circumstances and not delay. Still, he should close his eyes or read from a Siddur⁸. ■

1 תשובת הרמב"ם (מהד' ר"י בלאו סי' רטו) מובא בבי"י (אוי"ח סי' צ) וכן במאירי (ברכות כאן עמ' 15). (ועוד. והשווה למהר"י צמח בברכ"י (שם אות ח). 2 טור (אוי"ח סי' צח) ומרן כתבו בשו"ע שם (סי'ד). 3 סי' צ' אות קלא. 4 כאן (די"ה שלא יהא דבר) וכן בסמ"ג (עשין יט). ועוד טובא. 5 האבודרהם (דיני תפלת שמונה עשרה, עמ' רט במהד' אור הספר) בשם חידושי דב"ש, ודבריו הובאו בבי"י כאן. ועי' בשלטי הגבורים על המרדכי (ריש ברכות). ונפסק להלכה ע"י הרמ"א בשו"ע כאן. 6 ע"י אי"ר (סי'ק כד). וע"י בכפה"ח שם (אות קלב). 7 ע"י בטי"ז (שם סי'ק ה') ומשי"כ על זה במג"א (סי'ק לו) וביסס הדבר ע"פ שו"ת הרשב"א (ח"א סי' צו). [והשווה דברי הרשב"א למאירי שם] וראה במשנ"ב (סי'ק סו) ובכפה"ח (סי'ק קלב). 8 ע"י בטי"ז שם. והשווה לדברי הרמב"ם בתשובה הני"ל. והובאו דברי הטי"ז במשנ"ב (סי'ק סג) ובכפה"ח (סי'ק קלג). אמנם ע"י בפרמ"ג (משב"ז סי'ק ה') ובכפה"ח שם. ■

STORIES off the Daf

Comforting others

והא א"ר יוחנן דין גרמא דעשיראה ביר. — ה:

R' Yochanan said, "This is a bone from my tenth son." - 5b

R' Avrohom Weiner z"l was a native of Vilna, and he therefore had the opportunity to maintain a very close relationship with R. Chaim Ozer Grodzenski zt"l. R' Chaim was renowned as the father of the entire generation in Torah leadership, and as one who was especially sensitive to the

needs of orphans in particular. R' Weiner had the singular privilege of visiting by R' Chaim Ozer and in observing the manner in which he handled the many burdens of the community with a unique blend of love and genius.

During one visit, R' Chaim Weiner noticed a large picture hanging on the wall in R' Chaim's house. It was a picture of R' Chaim Ozer's only daughter, who had tragically passed away as a teenager. R' Chaim Ozer explained that he displayed the picture on the wall for people to notice. He explained that he hoped to give encouragement to the people who came to him to pour out

their hearts in pain. "When they see the picture of my daughter on the wall," elaborated R' Chaim Ozer, "they are reminded of my tragedy and they immediately become comforted and walk out encouraged and ready to face their predicaments."

The precedent for this is our Gemara, where R' Yochanan kept a bone from his tenth son that passed away, and he showed it to others. He wanted to let people know that he also experienced tragedies. The nature of people is to derive comfort and encouragement when they realize that they are not the only ones who are suffering. ■