



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Davening for Reshaim to die

The story is told of R. Meir davening that someone should die and how his wife Bruriah corrected him.

2) Tzedukim misunderstanding pesukim

Two stories involving צדוקים misunderstanding pesukim are related.

3) פיה פתחה בחכמה

פיה פתחה בחכמה ר' יוחנן tells us in the name of רשב"י that Shlomo HaMelech had his father Dovid in mind when he wrote the pasuk פיה פתחה בחכמה because Dovid lived in five worlds and sang שירה in each of them.

4) ברכי נפשי את ה' וכל קרבי את שם קדשו

Two different explanations are given for the pasuk ברכי נפשי את ה' וכל קרבי את שם קדשו.

5) The story of חזקיהו המלך and ישעיהו הנביא

(Continued on page 2)

REVIEW and Remember

- How do we identify those perakim of Tehillim that were dear to Dovid Hamelech?
- What five characteristics does the neshama share with הקב"ה?
- What was the rationale for חזקיהו המלך to hide the book of medicine?
- In what area do women excel more than men?

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Distinctive INSIGHT

Beruria, the Wife of R' Meir

אמר לה הווא צדוקי לברוריא...

In our Gemara, Beruria, the wife of R' Meir is introduced as an insightful and brilliant woman. She not only provides sensitive advice and guidance to her husband, but she also serves as a spokesman for Torah itself, as she adeptly fends off the mocking remarks of an unnamed Saduccee.

On the Daf informs us that Beruria, the wife of R' Meir, was also the daughter of R' Chanina b. Tradyon (see Gemara Avoda Zara 18a). She studied much Torah and wisdom from the sages, and she was very knowledgeable. The Gemara (Pesachim 62b) refers to her being well-versed in 300 lessons, which she had heard from 300 different sages. ■

Gemara GEM

Praying for Mercy

בעי ר' מאיר רחמי עלויהו כי היכי דלימותו

R' Meir sought relief from the criminals who irritated him. The Tzelach notes that his reaction was that "בעי ר' מאיר רחמי" - he davened for mercy that these criminals die. Yet, this hardly seems like a merciful solution. The commentators explain that a compassionate person such as R' Meir is affected adversely when he witnesses violence more than the average person. As we find in reference to Hashem (Shemos 22:26), "I will listen, because I am compassionate." R' Meir could not tolerate how these rough-necks were persecuting himself and others, so he davened that Hashem not allow them to continue their evil antics. Mercy for the victims demanded the obvious solution of the demise of the perpetrators.

The Gemara provides an introductory comment to this episode. We are told that these thugs were neighbors of R' Meir. What is the significance of this detail? We can say that, in fact, R' Meir did not directly petition Hashem that these people die. R' Meir pronounced a simple, generic prayer (see 16b): "May it be Your will that I be saved from brazen people and from evil neighbors, etc." Now, as long as these men did not reside in the neighborhood of R' Meir, this prayer could have resulted in these evil people staying away from R' Meir. However, now that they were his actual neighbors, the effect of his prayer was that these men die. However, because the prayer never asked that they die, Hashem did not implement the solution in this drastic manner, by having them die. Rather, the situation was remedied when Bruria suggested that her husband daven that these men repent. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Positioning of the Feet During the Amidah

”ואמר רבי יוסי ברבי חנינא משום רבי אליעזר בן יעקב: המתפלל צריך שיכוין את רגליו, שנאמר: (יחזקאל א') ורגליהם רגל ישרה.”

”Rav Yosi the son of Rabbi Chanina said in the name of Rabbi Eliezer the son of Ya'akov: One who prays must align his legs, as it says: 'And their legs are a straight leg.'”

Rabbeinu Yonah¹ states that there are those who have the custom to join together their heels, while the front of their feet are set apart. They base this practice upon the continuation of the verse from Yechezkal (1:7) which states: וכף רגליהם ככף רגל עגל—and the sole of their foot was like the sole of a calf's foot. A calf's foot is split, thus this is simulated by spreading the front of the feet one from the other. However, Rabbeinu Yonah rejects this practice saying that our Gemara mentions only that the feet be joined together to resemble one foot. Rav Yosef Karo quotes this Rabeinu Yonah in the Beis Yosef² without any argument, evidently indicating that this opinion is accepted.

However, some early Acharonim posit that following this custom is dutiful (מדת חסידות). This position is challenged by the Eliyahu Rabba³ based upon the previously cited view of Rabbeinu Yonah who seemed to reject this custom, and not accept it as meritorious. Others⁴ suggest that Rabbeinu Yonah intent was not to entirely reject this custom, rather he meant to dismiss this as an obligation.

Intriguingly, many Rishonim⁵ based upon a Yerushalmi present the custom quoted by Rabbeinu Yonah as an interpretation of this Gemara. Based upon these Rishonim there may be place for leniency if one desires to follow this view⁶. It should be stated that the custom of the Yemenites is in accordance with this view⁷. ■

1. דף ה' ע"א בדפי הרי"ף ד"ה המתפלל
2. ס"י צה
3. שם ס"ק א'. וכדבריו כתב המגן גבורים (אלף המגן ס"ק א'). וכן ראה בישועות יעקב (ס"ק ב').

(Overview...continued from page 1)

Hashem is praised as the one who brought together זקיהו and ישעיהו הנביא together.

The gemara also tells us why זקיהו thought ישעיהו would die and how זקיהו refused to give up hope and decided to daven.

6) זקיהו's actions

A זקיהו tells about six things that זקיהו did and that three of them were acceptable and three were not.

7) Attributing success

A person who attributes his success to his own merit will find his success attributed to others and a person who attributes his success to others will find his success attributed to himself.

8) Elisha HaNavi

We discuss the story of Elisha HaNavi and the wife of one of the nevi'im.

9) Three statements related to davening are recorded from ר' יוסי בר' חנינא משום ר' אליעזר בן יעקב

- One should stand in a low place when davening.
- One should daven with their feet together
- One may not eat before davening.

10) The time for Krias Shema

The gemara paskens that one must say קריאת שמע within the first three hours of the day

If קריאת שמע is said after the first three hours the brochos are still recited.

11) MISHNA: Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai debate about a person's body position while reciting קריאת שמע and the Mishna tells the story of R. Tarfon who put himself in danger to follow Beis Shamai's opinion. ■

4. מאמר מרדכי (ס"ק א') ועי' בס' תורת חיים סופר (ס"ק ג) ועוד
5. עי' בס' המכתם ובמאירי וברשב"ץ כאן. וכן הובא הדעה בארחות חיים (הלי תפלה ס"י ד') מתוך ס' האשכול (עמ' 71) ועוד טובא. עי' רשימה בס' הלכה ברורה (ס"י צה) בבירור הלכה אות א'.
6. עי' בהלכה ברורה שם בשם אביו הגרי"ע יוסף.
7. עי' בס' שו"ע המקוצר (ס"י טז אות ה') ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The Clothes of a Talmid Chacham

ותאמר אל אישה הנה נא ... מנא ידעה רב ושמואל חד אמר שלא ראתה זבוב עובר על שולחנו וחד אמר סדין של פשתן הציעה על מטתו ולא ראתה קרי עליו

Whenever R' Chaim Soloveichik traveled, it was his custom to dress in plain clothes instead of the rabbinical clothing he wore while he was home in Brisk. On

one particular occasion he was traveling by train and he met a Chassidische Rebbe with whom he was friendly. When the Rebbe saw R' Chaim dressed in simple clothes he exclaimed, "Holy Brisker Rov! Why are you dressed this way?"

R' Chaim responded that in Tanach it is evident that clothing was not an indication of a holy man. In the story of the Isha HaShunamis the pasuk quotes her conversation with her husband where she declared (Melachim 2 4:9): "I now know that it is a G-dly, holy man who visits us all the

time." The Gemara Brachos asks how the Isha HaShunamis knew that Elisha HaNavi was holy and two opinions are mentioned. One opinion says it was when she realized that she never saw a fly around his table, and the second opinion suggests that she noticed that his sheets were clean in the morning. From here, explained R' Chaim, it is obvious that Elisha HaNavi did not dress in a way that reveal his stature while he traveled. That is why she realized his special stature from other indicators. ■