



# OVERVIEW of the Daf

- 1) **Speaking ill of the deceased and Talmidei Chachamim**  
The deceased don't care if spoken about negatively.  
Hashem punishes severely one who speaks negatively about a Talmid Chacham.  
Even if one sees a Talmid Chacham commit an aveira they can feel certain that the Talmid Chacham did teshuva.
- 2) **Excommunicating to defend the honor of a Talmid Chacham**  
R. Yehoshua ben Levi maintains that there are 24 instances when a person was excommunicated to defend the honor of a Talmid Chacham and R. Elazar was only able to find three such examples.
- 3) **Details regarding the exemptions from krias sh'ma for those involved with a funeral**  
Except for an adam chashuv a funeral should not begin near the time of krias sh'ma.  
The procedure for sh'ma and shmone esrei for those involved in the eulogy is clarified as well as the concept of not opening one's mouth for the Satan.  
The parameters for krias sh'ma and the shura are spelled out; including which people in the shura will be exempt.
- 4) **אין חכמה ואין תבונה ואין עצה לנגד ה'**  
The issue of suspending a mitzvah for another's honor is discussed. ■

# REVIEW and Remember

- 1. What period of time must elapse before one must assume that a talmid chacham did teshuva?

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- 2. How did Beis Din "stone" a person's casket?

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- 3. What is the specific Torah law that can be suspended because of human dignity?

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- 4. Why is the exemption from returning lost objects not a precedent to teach us that in all cases one's dignity should override a Torah law?

# Distinctive INSIGHT

*The Judgment of the Master of the Worlds*  
תנו רבנן: העוסקים בהספד... והוא אומר רבון העולמים חטאתי לפניך ולא נפרעת ממני אחד מני אלף

The ספר עיני יצחק points out a number of curious elements of this statement. How can a person declare that Hashem has not visited upon him even a fraction of his iniquity? Does this statement seem to suggest that Hashem is unfair, or that He is willing to overlook things? The Gemara (Bava Kamma 50a) sharply criticizes such an attitude, as a person is not allowed to say "Hashem dismisses factors in judgment." Furthermore, the more common reference to Hashem in prayers such as these is רבונו של עולם - Master of the World, yet here the title used is an unusual one - רבון העולמים - Master of the Worlds. What is the significance of this?

Referring to Hashem as "Master of the Worlds" is an acknowledgment that He is in control of this world and the World to-Come. Accordingly, if we notice that Hashem has not settled one's judgment fully in this world, this does not suggest that anything is overlooked at all, for Hashem is in no hurry, and retribution is sure to come in the next world. There is no place to hide, and we are certain that Hashem will fulfill His promises as He wishes. He is the צור עולמים - the trusted one of both worlds. ■

# Gemara GEM

*The Awesome Power of Words*  
לעולם אל יפתח אדם פיו לשון

Rashba (תשובות הרשב"א ה"א תח) discusses those who used a philosophical approach which attributes everything that happens to natural reasons. But, it seems quite clear based upon verses in the Torah and throughout the wisdom of our sages that this is not the case. Things that happen around us are affected by secret and hidden causes about which we are not fully aware. The Gemara (Moed Kattan 18a) tells us: "A covenant is arranged with the lips." We also find that the Gemara says (see Kesuvos 62b) that a slip of the tongue regarding portending unfortunate events make an impact, and such a statement once was "as an erroneous message which was discharged from the officer (verse borrowed from Koheles 10:5), and Rabbi Yehuda died."

This is also a major factor in understanding the damaging effect of a curse and the helpful and desirable nature of a blessing. The Gemara (Megilla 15a) alerts us not to underestimate the power of a blessing, even from a common-

(Continued on page 2)

# HALACHAH Highlight

## To Gaze Upon the Visage of a Gentile King

"תא שמע, דאמר רבי אלעזר בר צדוק: מדלגין היינו על גבי ארונות של מתים לקראת מלכי ישראל, ולא לקראת מלכי ישראל בלבד אמרו אלא אפילו לקראת מלכי אומות העולם, שאם יזכה - יבחין בין מלכי ישראל למלכי אומות העולם."

"Rav Elazar bar Tzadok said: We used to leap over the graves of the dead in order to greet the kings of Israel. And not only to greet the kings of Israel did they do this, but as well to greet kings of foreign nations. Why? So that if he merit, he will be able to see the King Mashiach and differentiate between Jewish kings and kings of other nations."

Rashi<sup>1</sup> explains it is important to see kings of other nations so that when King Mashiach arrives one will have the opportunity to compare how much more honor there is for those that do the will of Hashem compared to the honor bestowed upon gentile kings now.

The Shulchan Aruch<sup>2</sup> codifies this statement by stating: "It is a Mitzvah to endeavor to see kings, even gentile kings." Our Rabbis<sup>3</sup> esteemed this concept so much that they permitted even expending time from Torah study in order to see gentile kings for the first time. If a king who one has already seen will return with an even larger entourage and military accompaniment, then one may expend Torah study time to go and see him again. Reflecting on the language of this Halacha "to run to encounter gentile kings", Rav Shmuel Vozner writes<sup>4</sup> that it is possible that there is a Mitzvah even if one does not actually see the king, but only his honor guards etc., since he will still have witnessed enough to be able to compare to the honor of King Mashiach.

The Poskim discuss the Halachic status of rulers in our times. The Mishnah Berura<sup>5</sup> writes that one need not have the title of king to be suitable for this blessing. The benchmark is

(Gem...continued from page 1)

er. If everything was of a natural order only, we would not have to be concerned about curses or blessings. People could say whatever they wanted, and Hashem would do what He pleases. However, this is not the case, and words do make a difference.

There are many healing devices that are beneficial, as described in the Gemara and as used in practice, and scientists have no way of explaining how many of them work. This is further evidence of the spiritual world, and its connection to things that happen around us regularly.

This is the underlying meaning of the Gemara's caution that one should never verbalize portending disastrous situations, lest the שטן use the opportunity to follow through in some way. ■

whether the ruler has the power to impose a death sentence at his will. Some Poskim<sup>6</sup> write that rulers who have the power to prevent execution thru bestowing amnesty are within the parameters of eligibility for this blessing. However, generally our rulers are dressed very much like the rest of the citizens, and they do not wear lavish garments. As well, they are not surrounded with the same extravagance, pomp and fanfare as kings of old, therefore many Poskim<sup>7</sup> rule that one does not recite the blessing upon them. ■

1. לקמן נח ע"א ד"ה יבחין. עי גם לעיל ט ע"ב ד"ה שאם יזכה
2. סי רכד ס"ט
3. סי חסידים סימן תתקנ הוב"ד במג"א שם ס"ק ז ובמשנ"ב שם ס"ק ט
4. שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"א (סי לה)
5. משנ"ב שם ס"ק יב ע"פ הרדב"ז ח"א (סי רצו). השווה לשו"ת שבט הלוי ח"א (סי לה)
6. עיי שו"ת יחזה דעת ח"ב (סי כח) בשם תורת חיים סופר (סי רכד אות י) ושו"ת אפרקסתא דעניא ח"א (סי לב). ע"ש.
7. עיי שו"ת יחזה דעת שם וראה גם בס' פסקי תשובות (סי רכד אות ו - ח) נקודות נוספות. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## The Face of a King

"תא שמע, דאמר רבי אלעזר בר צדוק: מדלגין היינו על גבי ארונות של מתים לקראת מלכי ישראל, ולא לקראת מלכי ישראל בלבד אמרו אלא אפילו לקראת מלכי אומות העולם, שאם יזכה - יבחין בין מלכי ישראל למלכי אומות העולם."

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kings of other nations."

It was the year 1898, and there was much commotion in the holy city of Yerushalayim. The much anticipated visit of Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany was the cause. As the city prepared to greet this visiting ruler, even some Torah scholars of the city were preparing for his visit. Some felt that it was appropriate to set out to see this ruler in order to fulfill the words of our Chachamim that those who see the honor and pomp of non-Jewish kings may be worthy one day of comparing that honor to the honor of King Mashiach.

Interestingly, the great Rav of

Yerushalayim, Rav Yosef Chaim Sonenfeld, did not go to see the Kaiser. His students asked him why he had not gone out to see this ruler.

Rav Sonenfeld responded to them and said that he had a tradition from his Rebbi, Rav Yehoshua Laib Diskin of Brisk traced to the Vilna Gaon, that there are certain facial features that are unique to Amalekites. Rav Sonenfeld explained that Kaiser Wilhelm exhibited some of these features. Rav Sonenfeld concluded by saying that he would not go out to greet an Amalekite king, and surely not to make a blessing upon seeing him! ■

1. (עיי שו"ת שבט הלוי ח"א סי קמט ועוד)

