



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1. Some dreams represent a person's thoughts from that day

The Gemara retells two stories that indicate that a person's dreams may be nothing more than a reflection of his thoughts that day.

2. The story of Bar Hedyah and his interpretation of Rava and Abaye's dreams

It is related how Rava and Abaye had similar dreams and Bar Hedyah would interpret Abaye's dreams positively because he paid for the interpretation and Rava's dreams negatively because he did not pay for the service.

After Rava paid for his dream interpretation he received more positive interpretations.

The Gemara relates how Rava cursed Bar Hedyah when he realized what was happening and the eventual death of Bar Hedyah in the hands of the Romans.

3. Dream interpretations

Two stories are told of Tannaim interpreting seemingly negative dreams positively.

R' Yishmael interpreted a tzeduki's dream as indications of the different sins committed by that tzeduki.

The meaning of some dreams is based upon pesukim that relate to the image seen in the dream.

Certain visions can have positive and negative interpretations and the Gemara advises reciting specific pesukim to effect the positive interpretation.

Other dreams about plants, animals and specific people are interpreted. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why did Abaye receive positive dream interpretations whereas Rava received negative interpretations?

2. Why did Bar Hedyah not wish to travel with Rava?

3. Are dreams of body parts falling off a bad sign?

4. If a dream could have two meanings, how does one affect the positive outcome?

Gemara GEM

The River, the Pot and the Bird

אמר רב חנן שלש שלומות הן-נהר ציפור וקדרה

If in a dream one sees a pot, the message being conveyed is one which portends peace, just as a pot causes peace and co-existence between water in the pot and the fire below it. If one sees a river in his dream, once again the message foretells peace. A third item, when appearing in a dream, is also a symbol of peace. This is when one sees a bird.

The Gemara, however, is not equating these visions of a pot, a river or a bird. Indeed, they all represent peace and tranquility, yet each of them symbolizes a different aspect of this concept. The pot symbolizes shalom bayis, peace and tranquility within the household and the family unit, which eats and lives together. A river flows and provides blessings over a wide area, but it still does not cover the world. The river represents peace between man and his immediate associates and community. This blessing is more beneficial than that which is contained within a private home. A bird, however, moves about and travels near and far. There are no bounds or limits to its flight. So, too, may peace spread without hatred, and may understanding prevail and expand both near and far.

The Midrash (Bamidbar Rabbah 11:7) clearly detects that the blessings of HaKadosh Baruch Hu, as delivered through the kohanim, reflect this three-tiered blessing. When the kohanim conclude and say וישם לך שלום—Hashem shall bestow the blessing of peace for you," the Midrash states: "Peace when you go in, peace when you go out, peace with every person." This parallels the house (when you go in), the local community the river), and the world at large (the bird). ■

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מרת מרים הינדא בת ר' שמואל ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

Can a dream disqualify a witness?

אמר ליה ההוא צדוקי לרבי ישמעאל: ראיתי שאני משקה שמן לזיתים. אמר ליה: בא על אמו

A certain Sadducee said to R' Yishmael: I saw in a dream that I was pouring olive oil onto olives. R' Yishmael said to him (responding in the third person): He has had an incestuous relationship with his mother.

In his sefer שליט"א,¹ Rav Yitzchak Zilberstein recounts a very atypical situation. Reuven summoned Shimon to court in order to force him to pay an outstanding debt. Reuven brought a witness called Tzadok to testify that he had witnessed the alleged loan. Shimon, on the other hand, maintained that the claim was baseless. In regard to the testimony of Tzadok, Shimon stated that Tzadok was not a credible witness, since he was a frivolous and shallow personality, suspected of having committed serious sins. Upon hearing this, Tzadok responded with strong incredulity, and with profound sincerity he defended himself relating that he had dreamt that he was pouring olive oil onto olives. Upon relating this dream to his friends, he was told that the Gemara² interprets this very positively, that one who sees olive oil in a dream should anticipate grasping the light of the Torah. Therefore Tzadok reasoned that being that he was awaiting the inspiration of the light of the Torah, he should not be victim of these disparaging remarks. The Rabbinic judges heard this with great shock, because although the Gemara states anticipating Torah knowledge in regard to seeing olive oil in a dream, however the exact dream that Tzadok related has a very different and very negative interpretation; specifically the dream of one pouring olive oil upon olives signals an incestuous relationship with one's mother ח"ו.

The judges investigated the background of Tzadok, and

they were able to verify that he was a superficial individual, and that there was talk of his being a person involved with sin. The question became could the judges add Tzadok's self-reported dream to the evidence they had gathered to invalidate Tzadok's testimony from the proceedings. After all, he had volunteered a dream which corroborated that which people were alleging about him.

The Shulchan Aruch³ rules that one can not establish himself as a sinner. Yet, Rebbi Akiva Eiger⁴ notes a situation in which a person in his endeavor to clear his name presents the judges with information. The judges actually recognize from his self-reported information that he had sinned. When presented with the analysis of the judges, the individual relented and admitted his guilt. In such a case, says Rebbi Akiva Eiger, we do not apply the rule that a person can not incriminate himself. Rav Zilberstein references other sources on this matter, but concludes that the majority rules that under these conditions a person could incriminate themselves.

Rav Zilberstein raises the matter of the verification of rumor through a dream. He cites a responsum of the Tashbetz⁵ who identifies the dream as a questionable tool. It can not be relied upon conclusively, since there are dreams that are not trustworthy. If so, a dream creates a state of doubt. In a state of doubt, money can not be extracted from its current possessor. In application to our case, possibly Tzadok's dream can be utilized to freeze the money in the hands of its present possessor (namely Shimon), by invalidating Tzadok as a witness.

However, Rav Zilberstein does not rule decisively in this matter, since possibly the rule⁶ of a witness being accepted in a state of doubt could apply here. ■

1. כאן עמי שנג
2. ברכות נז ע"א
3. חו"מ סי' לד סכ"ה
4. רעק"א בגליון בשם שו"ת דבר משה חאו"ח סי' ה'
5. שו"ת תשב"ץ ח"ב סי' קכח. ועיי גם שם סי' קכט
6. עיי ב"ב לא ע"א ■

STORIES off the Daf

Look Forward to Wisdom

תנו רבנן הרואה קנה בחלום יצפה לחכמה

Based upon this Gemara, the Alshich HaKadosh explains one of the peculiar responses of Yosef as he interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh. First, Yosef told Pharaoh that his dreams foretold of seven years of plenty to be

followed by seven years of famine. But

then, Yosef offered what seems to be unsolicited advice to Pharaoh. Yosef told Pharaoh that it would be prudent to appoint a special officer over the land to manage and direct operations during those first seven years when food should be collected and stored (Bereshis 41:33). Yosef was only brought in to interpret the dreams, and that is what he did. Why, then, did Yosef assume the role of advisor and

consultant to the king as well?

Our Gemara provides an insight to this episode. "When a person sees reeds in a dream, he should anticipate wisdom." Yosef heard that Pharaoh dreamed about seven ears of grain growing on one stalk. Yosef immediately understood that the stalk indicated that wisdom was to follow, and that the dream demanded that appropriate advice be given. ■

