

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) R' Akiva entering the orchard (cont.)

Rabbah bar bar Channah in the name of R' Yochanan presents the exposition R' Akiva used to avoid looking at the Divine Presence.

2) Characteristics of demons and people

A Beraisa identifies six characteristics of demons, three of which are shared by angels and the other three by humans and six characteristics of humans, three like angels and three like beasts.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

R' Yochanan and R' Elazar explain why it is inappropriate to inquire what was before the world.

Two explanations are offered for the Mishnah's statement regarding "those who are not concerned about the honor of the Creator."

The sources for these two explanations are presented.

The explanation related to sinning in secret is unsuccessfully challenged.

Two teachings from R' Yehudah the son of R' Nachmani are presented, the first of which relates to the topic of gazing at a rainbow.

A difference of opinion is recorded concerning who will testify against a person who sinned in the privacy of his home.

4) MISHNAH: The Mishnah records a debate that spanned generations concerning performing semicha on a Korban on Yom Tov.

5) Identifying the Nasi and Av Bais Din

A Beraisa presents a dispute between R' Meir and Chachamim regarding who, in each pair, was the Nasi and who was the Av Bais Din.

A Beraisa is cited that is initially thought to be consistent with R' Meir but the Gemara demonstrates that the matter is inconclusive.

6) Menachem

Abaye and Rava dispute where Menachem went that left a position available for Shammai.

7) Semicha

A teaching cited in the name of R' Yochanan emphasizes the weight of Rabbinic interdictions because semicha on a Korban involves only a Rabbinic prohibition and nonetheless it was debated by the sages of five generations.

Rami bar Chama infers from this debate that semicha involves leaning all of one's weight on the Korban.

This assertion is unsuccessfully challenged.

R' Pappa infers from this discussion that it is prohibited to use the side of an animal the same way it is prohibited to use the back of the animal. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

The stones of the house come to testify

שמה תאמר מי מעיד בי, אבני ביתו של אדם וכו' שנאמר אבן מקיר תזעק וכפיש וגו'

In his sefer **עולם**, the Chofetz Chaim elaborates to explain this Gemara which tells us that the materials of a person's house come to testify regarding his deeds.

Some wonder because we see that a person's house remains intact even after the person dies, and they do not seem to go anywhere to testify about anything. Nevertheless, we can illustrate this with a parable. When a person is photographed, the picture usually focuses on the person, but the picture often does not include the entire surroundings at that moment. For example, if we were to photograph a person holding a twig while standing in front of a large forest, the photo may fail to display the immense woodland behind the subject. This is not the purpose of the photo, nor within the capacity of the camera.

In the heavens, however, a picture of an event has the capacity to include a complete picture, featuring the multiple facets of the situation. For example, let us consider a person who steals from his friend. The picture of this incident in the heavens shows the victim and the thief, and how he snatched the item. The details of where they were standing and who was standing nearby are all part of the reenactment of the event as it is portrayed as part of the judgment.

Therefore, on the day of judgment, if a person attempts to deny his misdeed, the entire assembly of the heavens rises up in unison and confronts him. "How can you dare say that you did not do that? Don't you see that beam next to where you were standing? We all see the brick in the wall next to where the object was sitting! There are the clothes you were wearing and the movements you made during the act!" This is the meaning of the Gemara as it reports how the house of a person will be present to testify about his deeds. ■

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By Mr. and Mrs. Joey Zimmerman
In memory of their son
יחיאל דוב, ע"ה בן ר' יוסף יהודה

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In memory of
מרת עלקא בת ר' מנחם מנדל, ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

Gazing at rainbows

מאי היא ר' אבא אמר זה המסתכל בקשת

What is it [the person mentioned in the Mishnah who is not concerned about Hashem's honor]? R' Abba says that it refers to one who gazes at a rainbow.

Rabbeinu Dovid Avudraham¹ writes that Rabbeinu Asher ben Yechiel, the Rosh, was asked how a person is permitted to gaze at a rainbow in order to recite the appropriate berachah when it is prohibited to look at a rainbow and one who does so will suffer from weakened vision. Rosh responded that there is a difference between gazing (הסתכלות) and looking (ראייה). Gazing involves looking at an object intently as opposed to looking which only involves a superficial glance at the object. The restriction mentioned in our Gemara involves gazing at a rainbow but it is permitted and even necessary to look at a rainbow in order to recite the berachah.

Rav Avrohom Danzig², the Chaye Adam, cites earlier authorities who maintain that one should not inform others about the appearance of a rainbow since the appearance of a rainbow is considered to be a form of bad news that one does not share with others. Other authorities³ write that the common custom is to inform others that a rainbow is visible. The reason is that it provides others with an opportunity to repent and to praise Hashem for establishing this covenant that He will not bring another flood like the one from the time of Noah.

Rav Yair Chaim Bachrach⁴, the Chavos Yair, rules that if

STORIES Off the Daf

"The Beams of a Person's House..."

...אבני ביתו של אדם מעידין ומכריזין
עוונותיו ביום הדין..."

In Israel, many families invest in an apartment for their children who are about to marry. This ensures that the young couple will be able to stay afloat financially since many couples try to stay in full-time learning for at least a few years after marriage. Experience proves that a kollel check cannot possibly support the family and pay rent too. Even those who do have an apartment of their own often just manage to cover minimal expenses.

Once the Imrei Emes, zt"l, had a short exchange with a new chosson to see

how he was adjusting to married life and to spur him on to take a moral inventory.

"How is your learning going?" the Rebbe asked.

"Good, Boruch Hashem."

"And how do you like your new neighborhood?" the Rebbe queried.

"Excellent," the young man answered.

"And are you pleased with your new apartment?" the Rebbe probed.

"Very!"

"And how is your new apartment pleased with you?" mused the Imrei Emes.

"What does the Rebbe mean?" the young man wondered.

The Rebbe explained, "In Chagigah 16a we learn that the stones and beams of one's house bear witness against him on the day of judgment!"

REVIEW and Remember

1. What are the six characteristics of humans?
2. What was the first dispute among the sages?
3. How did the Av Beis Din position open up for Sham-mai?
4. How and where on the animal is semichah performed?

one is informed that there is a visible rainbow outside one is not obligated to go outside to be able to recite the beracha and certainly a person who is studying Torah should not interrupt his studies to go outside to recite this beracha. He finds support for this ruling from a comment of Rav Shmuel Eliezer Eidel, the Maharsha, on a Gemara in Berachos⁶. Maharsha notes that being able to recite a berachah on the appearance of a king was not enough to obligate a person to see the king if it were not for the additional factor, mentioned in the Gemara, that it provides the ability to distinguish between Jewish and non-Jewish kings. Consequently, regarding rainbows where this additional factor is not present there is no obligation to make an effort to see a rainbow in order to recite the berachah. ■

1. הובא דבריו בב"י או"ח סי' רכ"ט ד"ה ואסור.

2. חיי אדם כלל ס"ג סעי' ד'.

3. ספר ברית כהונה מערכת הקו"ף אות ג'.

4. בספרו מקור חיים סי' רכ"ט סעי' א' בקיצור הלכות. ■

We find a similar incident with Rav Naftali Nossan Nata, zt"l, the Av Beis Din of Hosikov. When he knew that someone was acting in a way that did not become him, the Gaon would say, "It says in the verse (Eicha 3:40): נחפשה דרכינו ונחקרה... Although this literally means that we should search out our ways and investigate them, it is possible to understand the word ונחקרה as the conjunction of two small words. ונה קורה –and the beam (of the house) will be serene. In Chagiga 16a we find that the beams of one's house bear witness against him. So the verse can mean that if we will only search out our ways and change, the beam of the house will be able to relax and refrain from submitting incriminating evidence to the heavenly court!" ■

