

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Purifying the Shulchan and Menorah (cont.)

The Gemara explains why the Shulchan is not susceptible to tumah because of its gold plating.

R' Yochanan and Reish Lakish expound on the pasuk in Yechezkel cited in the previous discussion.

### 2) The susceptibility of the altars to tumah

The source for R' Eliezer's position that the altars are not susceptible to tumah because they are like the earth is identified.

The statement of the Chachamim that the altars are not susceptible to tumah because they are plated is challenged since the plating is a reason they should be susceptible to tumah.

Two explanations of the meaning of Chachamim's statement are presented.

### 3) The fire of Gehinom

R' Avahu in the name of R' Elazar teaches that the fire of Gehinom will not rule over Torah Scholars.

Reish Lakish teaches that the fire of Gehinom will not rule over the sinners of Israel.

הדרן עלך חומר בקודש  
וסליקא לה מסכת חגיגה  
וסדר מועד



## REVIEW and Remember

1. How do we secure atonement without the altar?  
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2. Is the menorah "wood" or "gold"?  
.....
3. What is a salamandra?  
.....
4. How do we know that fire will not rule over Jewish sinners?  
.....

## Distinctive INSIGHT

### *All Jews are filled with merit*

אפילו פושעים שבישראל מלאים מצוות כרמון

Hashem remembered Noach (Bereshis 8:1), and Hashem remembered Rachel (Bereshis 30:22). The Midrash (Bereshis Rabba 33:3) points out that Hashem remembered how Noach provided for the animals for the whole twelve months in the Ark. The Midrash also notes that Rachel was remembered for being silent as her sister Leah was being taken to marry Yaakov.

The Midrash probes to discover the merit of Noach for which he was saved and what virtue resulted in his being remembered. It would seem obvious, however, that Noach deserved to be delivered due to his being "a completely righteous man who walked in the way of God" (ibid. 8:9), as the parasha states at the beginning. Why did the Midrash have to search for new reasons for his deliverance? Additionally, when the Midrash examines the worthiness of Rachel, this also seems superfluous. After all, it was she, together with Leah, who built the house of Yaakov and the foundations of the Jewish nation.

It is common for people to look upon others and to make general conclusions. If a person sees someone acting in an unusual way, whether he is conducting himself in an unflattering manner or doing something wrong, the observer sometimes is quick to judge and deem his neighbor as a "bad person." Contrastingly, when Hashem reviews a person's actions, although this is done in one swipe, each move and every thought of a person is weighed individually. There is no such thing as a person being classified as "good" or "bad" due to one act alone. Rather, certain attitudes are noted, and actions are recognized, which are indicative of general outlooks. No detail is overlooked. Our Gemara says (Chagiga 27a): "Even transgressors among the Jewish people are filled with mitzvos, just as a pomegranate is filled with seeds." This would not be the case if they were regarded in a general fashion. Yet because every merit is noticed, the Gemara can say that even those who seem to be sinners are, in fact, quite worthy in their own way.

It is incumbent upon each of us to emulate the ways of Hashem. We must avoid broad judgment of others and placing them into general categories of being "insensitive," "unfriendly," or "uncaring," etc. Every person is multi-faceted, each with countless polished and sparkling traits. ■

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Leaving a knife on the table for bentching

ר' יוחנן וריש לקיש דאמרי תרוייהו בזמן שביית המקדש קיים מזבח מכפר על אדם עכשיו שלחנו של אדם מכפר עליו.

R' Yochanan and Reish Lakish both said: When the Bais Hamikdash is extant the altar atones for a person but nowadays a person's table atones for him.

Rav Yosef Karo<sup>1</sup>, the Bais Yosef, cites authorities who maintain that one must cover the knives on the table while reciting Birkas Hamazon. The rationale for this practice is that regarding the altar the Torah states<sup>2</sup>, "You shall not raise iron upon them." The reason the Torah restricts raising iron on the stones of the altar is that it is inappropriate for something that shortens life, namely iron in the form of weapons, to be used to make something that extends life, namely, the altar. Since according to our Gemara the table stands in the place of the altar it is logical to assume that a similar restriction will apply. Rabbeinu Tzidkiyahu Bar Avrohom the Doctor<sup>3</sup>, the Shibolei Haleket, cites another rationale for the practice of removing the knife. One time a person was reciting Birkas Hamazon and when he reached the third beracha he became so emotional over the destruction of the Bais

Hamikdash that he grabbed the knife and stabbed himself in the stomach. Consequently the practice developed to remove the knives from the table while reciting Birkas Hamazon.

there is a practical difference between these two approaches. Rav Avrohom Avli Gombiner<sup>4</sup>, the Magen Avrohom, writes that according to the first reason mentioned by Bais Yosef, there is no reason to cover the knives on Shabbos. Since the altar cannot be built on Shabbos there is no connection between the restriction of using a knife to build the altar and by extension to the table. On the other hand, Bais Yosef<sup>5</sup> mentions that following the logic of Shibolei Haleket there is no reason to distinguish between Shabbos and a weekday. Later authorities debate which practice should be followed. Shulchan Aruch<sup>6</sup> writes that the custom is that people do not cover knives on Shabbos and Yom Tov. Magen Avrohom,<sup>7</sup> however, cites the Levush who writes that we do not distinguish between Shabbos and Yom Tov. ■

1. ב"י או"ח סי' ק"פ ד"ה כתב רוקח.
2. דברים כז:ה.
3. שבלי הלקט סי' קנה ומובא דבריו בב"י הנ"ל.
4. מג"א שם סק"ד.
5. ב"י הנ"ל.
6. שו"ע שם סעי' ד'.
7. מג"א שם. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## "My Name is Chagiga..."

"הדרן עלך מסכת חגיגה והדרן עלן..."

A certain pious man had the practice of sequestering himself in a certain place to study Maseches Chagiga, and it was his way to review it over and over again. After he knew it well, he committed it to memory. Although the man was not learned in any other tractate, he spent all his days in the study of Chagiga until he had fully mastered it.

When the man passed away he was all alone in his home and no one knew of his demise. A strange woman soon arrived on the scene and stood over his body in a posture of grief. She raised her voice in a lament until all the townspeople gathered together to investigate her loud and mournful cries.

She called out to the people of the town, "Come, let us eulogize this man and bury him and honor his memory. Let us merit the life of the World-to-Come! For this man honored me all his life long, and saved me from being abandoned and forgotten."

Immediately, all of the women came to sit with her, and the town gathered and mourned him with great honor. The men provided shrouds and arranged his burial, and they honored him greatly at the funeral.

All the while, the mysterious woman cried and wailed and could not be consoled.

Finally, the people of the town asked her, "Who are you?"

She said to them, "Who am I? My name is Chagiga."

As soon as the pious man was buried, the woman disappeared. All of the townspeople knew that they had been

visited by Maseches Chagiga in the form of a woman, who had come to them to ensure the honorable burial of her devoted student. (Medrash Tanchuma HaYoshon, as brought in Menoras HaMaor, Ner 3, VIII:3:5)

The Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, would say: "Anyone who does a single mitzvah acquires a heavenly advocate. How much more is this so when a person studies a massechta so many times until he masters it and commits it to memory! Imagine to what extent it petitions on his behalf in the upper world to save him from Gehinnom and from all of the evil forces that pursue one's soul. Imagine to what extent it uplifts him to attain all good, and to be bound eternally together with Hashem!"

Hadran Alach Massechta Chagiga, V'Hadrach Alan! ■