

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Epilepsy

R' Nachman rules that epilepsy is considered a concealed blemish.

The Gemara qualifies this ruling.

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah discusses the defects of the husband that could affect the marriage.

3) Clarifying the language of the Mishnah

Yehudah maintains that the correct wording for the Mishnah is that the blemishes developed after the marriage whereas Chiya bar Rav maintains that the correct wording is that they were present before the marriage.

The implications of their respective opinions are explained.

R' Yehudah's wording is unsuccessfully challenged.

4) Clarifying the opinion of R' Shimon ben Gamliel

R' Shimon ben Gamliel gives examples of major blemishes and minor blemishes.

R' Yochanan and R' Nachman dispute whether halacha follows Rabanan or R' Shimon ben Gamliel.

The Gemara challenges the assertion that R' Yochanan follows the position of R' Shimon ben Gamliel.

The Gemara agrees that there are two versions concerning R' Yochanan's position.

5) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah continues to discuss the blemishes of the husband that may affect the marriage and concludes with a related incident.

6) Clarifying the blemishes

Two explanations of בעל פוליוס are presented.

A discussion regarding the exact nature of the blemish of המקמץ is recorded.

Two explanations are cited pertaining to המצרף נחושת.

Support for the second explanation is recorded.

7) A husband who refuses to support his wife

Rav rules that a husband who refuses to support or feed his wife must divorce and pay her kesubah.

Shmuel objected to this ruling.

A related incident is recorded.

8) Disqualified women

R' Assi is quoted as ruling that the only husband who is compelled to divorce his wife is one who married a disqualified woman.

Two versions of Shmuel's qualification to this ruling are presented.

The second version is unsuccessfully challenged.

9) שחין and ראתן

R' Yosi describes the affliction of שחין.

Distinctive INSIGHT

Symptoms and precautions related to ראתן

מכרוז ר' יוחנן הזהירו מזבוזי של בעלי רעתן. רבי זירא לא היה יתוב בזיקיה. רבי אלעזר לא עייל באהליה... ■

The Gemara discusses the disease known as ראתן, which is very contagious and unpleasant, and the precautions which some of the Amoraim took to avoid catching the disease.

Rabbi Yochanan used to announce that people should avoid the flies which swarm around people afflicted with this condition. This is because the Gemara earlier mentioned that flies are attracted to people with this disease. Rabbi Zeira would not sit in a spot downwind from anyone with this malady. Rabbi Elazar did not enter the room (or tent) in which a person with ראתן was situated. Maharsha explains that this was because a person with this illness is compared to a person with tzara'as, which has tumah of the dead, and the entire room in which he is sitting transmits this tumah.

Rebbe Ami and Rebbe Assi did not eat any eggs which came from the street where the afflicted person sat. Talmidei Rabeinu Yona explain that even though eggs have a shell, the degree to which this is communicable is high. They certainly refused to partake of other foods which might have become contaminated, as well.

The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 16:3) lists many precautions which were taken by the Amoraim in regard to tzara'as, many similar to what our Gemara lists in reference to ראתן, and some measures which were even more extreme. This is due to the symptoms of boils and skin lesions which are common in these diseases. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What are blemishes that require a husband to divorce his wife?

2. What are the two methods used to force a husband to divorce his wife?

3. Why wasn't R' Yehoshua ben Levi afraid of contracting a contagious disease

4. What natural phenomenon did not appear during the lifetime of R' Yehoshua ben Levi?

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HALACHAH Highlight

The mitzvah of bikur cholim for someone who is contagious

ר' יהושע בן לוי מיכרך בהו ועסיק בתורה

R' Yehoshua ben Levi attached himself to them and studied Torah.

The later authorities question the practice of R' Yehoshua ben Levi recorded in our Gemara. How could R' Yehoshua ben Levi put his life at risk to study Torah with people who have a contagious disease, isn't there a principle that one is not permitted to knowingly put himself into danger, even to perform a mitzvah, and rely on a miracle that Hashem will protect him? Rav Meir Simcha of Dvinsk¹, the Meshech Chochmah asserts that R' Yehoshua was so confident in his constant attachment (דביקות) to Hashem that he had no reason to fear anything in the world of nature. Rav Elchonon Wasserman² asserts that the restriction against putting oneself into danger to fulfill a mitzvah does not apply to the mitzvah of Torah study. Torah study is unique, as our Gemara relates, and he was allowed to rely on the power and protection of his Torah study (תורה לשמה).

Others³ suggest that he was allowed to be in their vicinity only because he was teaching Torah publicly and it was the merit of teaching Torah publicly that protected him from harm.

This question has bearing also on the question of a doctor treating a patient with a contagious disease. Rav Chaim Falagi⁴ was asked about a doctor who treated patients with communicable diseases and the members of his shul wanted to prevent him from davening with them due to the fear that he would bring a disease into shul. Rav Falagi ruled in favor of the congregants and instructed the doctor to distance himself from others be-

(Overview...Continued from page 1)

A Baraisa teaches the cause of ראתן and R' Pappa qualifies this teaching.

The symptoms and treatment are described.

The caution different Amoraim had concerning ראתן is recorded.

10) R' Yehoshua ben Levi

The Gemara digresses to discuss the greatness of R' Yehoshua ben Levi.

The incidents related to R' Yehoshua ben Levi's death and entrance to Gan Eden are retold.

A similar incident related to R' Chanina bar Pappa is recorded.

The Gemara digresses to discuss whether Abaye had a fence around his roof.

11) ראתן and שחין

A last statement from R' Yochanan about ראתן is presented. ■

הדרן עלך המזיר

cause of the fear that he would transmit to others a disease. He also ruled that people are not obligated to endanger themselves to fulfill the mitzvah of bikur cholim. Rav Eliezer Yehudah Waldenberg⁵, the Tzitz Eliezer, wrote that it is permitted for a doctor to treat a patient with a contagious disease and it is considered a great mitzvah and he does not have to fear becoming ill. ■

1. משך חכמה ויקרא כו:ו.
2. קובץ שיעורים אות רע"ז.
3. עי' מתיבתא לכתובות ח"ד לדף ע"ז: ד"ה ביקור חולה.
4. נשמת כל חי ח"ב חו"מ סי' מ"ט.
5. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר ח"ט סי' י"ז פ"ה. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The Rainbow

"נראת קשת בימך?"

The group was learning the Daf Hayomi as usual, and they were up to Kesuvos daf 77b. They had reached the Gemara's description of the meeting between Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. Rabbi Shimon asked Rebbi Yehoshua ben Levi, "Was the rainbow ever seen in your day?"

"Yes, it was," answered Rabbi Yehoshua.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai declared, "If so, you are not worthy of the proclamation that Eliyahu Hanavi had made earlier

on your behalf: 'Make way for ben Levi!'"

The Maggid Shiur said, "Rashi explains that the rainbow is a heavenly sign of the promise that Hashem made to spare the world from another flood. If there is a complete tzaddik living in the generation, there is no need for such a sign."

One of the members of the shiur interjected, "I don't understand this at all. A rainbow is the natural result of the refraction of light through a prism. How can we say that the presence of a tzaddik worthy of protecting the generation from a flood can be seen in the absence of a rainbow? Isn't it just a natural part of creation?"

The Maggid Shiur replied, "The Rema answered this question in a very

beautiful and simple way. In the years before electric lighting, the only way that a rainbow could be seen was when it rained during the day—that is the sunlight just after a rainstorm refracting through the remaining moisture in the air. The Gemara in Taanis 23a and the Sifrei in Eikev explain the verse, 'ונתתי מטר ארצכם'—and I will send the rain of your land in its proper time,' to mean that when the Jewish people are worthy, Hashem will only send rain on Tuesday night and Leil Shabbos.

The Maggid Shiur concluded, "This is why the rainbow is not seen when there is a true tzaddik in the generation. When we are zocheh through the great merit of a very elevated tzaddik, it rains at night when there is no light!" ■

