

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Clarifying the Mishnah

The implication of the Mishnah that non-relatives do not mourn the loss of a Torah scholar or upright person is unsuccessfully challenged.

An incident related to rending one's garment upon the loss of a Torah scholar is recorded.

2) R' Huna's funeral and procession

The events related to R' Huna's funeral are presented in detail.

A very brief description of the events following R' Chisda's passing are recorded.

3) Eulogies

The Gemara retells the account of the passing of Rabbah bar Huna and R' Hamnuna.

One of the eulogies given in honor of R' Hamnuna is recorded.

The eulogy for Ravina is presented.

Numerous incidents involving inappropriate eulogies are recorded.

The Gemara presents miraculous events that occurred following the deaths of different Torah scholars. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. When is the correct time to rend a garment in honor of a Torah scholar who passed away?

2. What were R' Chaga's qualifications to enter R' Chiya's crypt?

3. Why did the Arab camel driver decide that Rabbah bar Huna should go first?

4. For how long does one mourn the loss of a Torah scholar?

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
in celebration of Howard Jackson's 40th birthday.
MAZAL TOV!!

This week's Daf Digest is dedicated by the family of
מרת חנה בת ר' דוד, ע"ה רובין
Mrs. Ann Ruben o.b.m.

Distinctive INSIGHT

Appreciating leadership

דרבי יעקב אתחמיאו כוכבי ביממא

Our Gemara tells us that when Rabbi Yaakov died, the stars in the sky were visible in the middle of the day. Rashi explains that the sorrow was so great that the regular world order was shaken. This was expressed in terms of the stars becoming visible during the day. We can also use an allegorical approach to understand this Gemara. There are situations in which a leader must be firm and unyielding. If the head of the community detects that corruptive influences which is contrary to Torah values threaten to infiltrate his domain, he must not allow them to have an effect. Rabbi Yaakov was very firm and constant in his views and philosophy. There were times when people around him were convinced that their approach was correct, and that their understanding of a particular situation to proceed was bright and clear. Yet Rabbi Yaakov was prepared to hold his own and challenge what seemed to be a universally accepted perspective of tolerance. He would be ready to stand alone in opposition, claiming that what may have seemed to be clearly acceptable was, in fact, a condition which would lead to darkness and doom. He would show the community that what they felt was bright and clear was instead only the dim glimmer of starlight, and that darkness lay ahead. When Rabbi Yaakov died, the heavens miraculously displayed a signal that this great man demonstrated this proper trait.

There are other types of situations, however, when the leader should wisely feel the pulse of public opinion, and he should proceed accordingly.

When Avraham Avinu died, all of the great people of the generation stood up and declared (Bava Basra 91b): "Woe to the world which has lost its leader; woe to the ship that has lost its captain." There are those who lead on dry land, and there are those who lead upon the waters. The dry land represents times of stability and security. A capable administrator with a qualified team of helpers can guide a nation in times of peace and tranquility. The captain who navigates a ship upon the stormy waters is faced with a completely different set of problems as he steers his ship and its passengers to safety. Those around him are in a state of panic, and he must hold the rudder firmly in order to keep his goal in sight. He must deal with many issues as he responds, minute by minute to the new challenges which arise. Avraham was seen as the role model to all of the heads of the world at that time, as he exhibited stellar qualities of leadership during many and varied times, both those of tranquility as well as those of turmoil ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Standing before those who perform a mitzvah

אמר ליה יהודה לחזקיה קום מדוכתך דלאו אורח ארעא דקאים ר' הונא

Yehudah said to Chizkiyah, "Rise from your place because it is not proper etiquette that R' Huna stands [and you are lying down]."

Tur¹ cites a Yerushalmi that states that when one stands before a dead body it is not to honor the deceased that one stands, but rather to give honor to those that bestow kindness to the deceased. This ruling is also found in Shulchan Aruch² where it states that one is required to stand at a funeral even if the deceased will not be transported. Rav Dovid Halevi³, the Taz, explains that the reason to stand is to give honor to those that bestow kindness to the deceased.

Taz proceeds to challenge this ruling from our Gemara. Our Gemara reports that Yehudah told his brother to stand when R' Huna's body was brought into the crypt. This clearly indicates that it is necessary to stand and show honor to the deceased rather than to those who accompany the deceased. To resolve this challenge Taz explains that the Yerushalmi refers to a person who is not a Torah scholar, therefore, it is those who accompany the deceased that are deserving of honor. If, however, the deceased was a Torah scholar, as in the incident involving R' Huna, one must stand to show honor to the deceased as well.

Another point raised by Taz from the Yerushalmi is that it can be inferred that it is appropriate to stand before any person who is performing a mitzvah. This concept is supported by the Gemara in Kiddushin⁴ that highlights the significance of standing for those people who are transporting their bikkurim to Yerushalayim. Another example of this is mentioned in Teshuvos Yad Eliyahu⁵ where he writes that one must stand before people who collect tzedaka without receiving remuneration. Dayan Yitzchok Yaakov Weiss⁶, the Minchas Yitzchok qualifies this ruling of Yad Eliyahu. If a tzedaka collector is assigned to collect a fixed sum from each member of the community it is logical to distinguish between one who performs the task for free and one who is paid to do that job. If, however, the tzedaka collector also has the task of convincing others to pledge money to tzedaka, like most of the tzedaka collectors nowadays, it is necessary to stand before them even if they are paid for their service. The reason is that they are considered to be performing a mitzvah, i.e. convincing others to donate to tzedaka, and remuneration does not detract from their status as one performing a mitzvah, who is deserving of honor. ■

1. טור יו"ד סי' שס"א בסוף הסימן (סעי' ד').
2. שו"ע יו"ד סי' שס"א סעי' ד.
3. ט"ז שם סק"ב.
4. גמ' קידושין לג.
5. יד אליהו (מלובלין) סי' נ"ד.
6. שו"ת מנחת יצחק ח"י סי' פ"ו. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Nights Like Days

נשים לילות כימים על משים לילות כימים..."

On today's daf we find that Ravina's eulogizer said that his mourners should spend day and night lamenting, just as Ravina immersed himself day and night in Torah study.

Like Ravina, the Steipler Gaon, ז"ל, immersed himself in Torah study day and night. While the Steipler served as the Rosh Yeshiva of the Novaradohker Yeshiva in Pinsk, his regular schedule was to learn the whole night and then continue on to Shacha-

ris in the morning.

When the Steipler's daughter was born, she would cry unless she was rocked. Since the Steipler was a good father, as much as he was a Gaon in Torah, he would assume the burden of soothing her much of the time. Since he preferred to study uninterrupted in the outer room with all the seforim while rocking her, he found that the solution was to attach a string from her cradle to his own leg. That way he could comfort her without having to disturb his own studies.

Although the Chazon Ish, ז"ל, generally hesitated to send people on errands for him for fear of undercutting their time for Torah study, he had no reservations about sending the

Steipler. When asked why, he responded, "He never wastes a second even while his body is busy doing something else. Sending him will certainly not cause him to waste a moment!"

One of the Steipler's sons-in-law passed away at a relatively young age and the Gaon was left to help his daughter raise the grandchildren. He would often take one of his young grandchildren out for long walks in a carriage, but this didn't distract him from his learning in the slightest. While the Steipler pushed the carriage, he could always be heard reciting Mishnayos from memory! ■

