

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1. An explanation why negligence in these mitzvos can lead to death (cont.)

The Gemara completes its explanation why a woman may die in childbirth for the three mitzvos listed in the Mishnah.

A number of different parables are given to explain why the punishment comes during childbirth.

Reish Lakish teaches that men are similarly vulnerable for their sins when they are in potentially dangerous situations. The Gemara relates how different Amoraim took precautions to avoid becoming vulnerable to judgement.

R' Yitzchok the son of R' Yehudah taught that a person should daven to not become ill because once they are ill it is harder to be set free.

A Baraisa begins with the topic of confessing for one's sins before they die and continues to mention that even one merit can save a person from death.

A Baraisa presents differing opinions regarding the fate of women who don't keep the three mitzvos mentioned in the Mishnah. Either they will die in childbirth or, according to R' Eliezer, they will die young. R' Acha states that women can die young for washing excrement from their children's garments or for calling the Aron Kodesh a chest. An additional Baraisa is quoted which also emphasizes the importance of referring to holy objects with respectful names.

2. Negligence in various mitzvos

A series of Baraisos are quoted which relate the consequences for negligence in various mitzvos. The mitzvos discussed are: Hekdesh, Terumah, Maaser, Vows, Torah study, Mezuzah, Tzitzis, Sinas Chinam, Challah and Theft. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What is the consequence of a person who experiences a miracle?

2. What ratio of advocates to prosecutors is necessary to save a person from death?

3. Sinas chinam brings what consequences?

4. Which sin can lead to a person eating their own children?

Distinctive INSIGHT

Things which Bring Death to an Am Ha'aretz

בעון שני דברים עמי הארץ מתים

Rebbi Elazar tells us that the Amei Ha'aretz die because of two sins: they call the Aron Hakodesh "Arana" and they call the Beis Knesses (shul) the "Beis Am" (national house). The Maharsha explains that the term Beis Knesses connotes a place of gathering, which can mean a place for Hashem and Bnei Yisrael to gather together. When a person calls it Beis Haam, he is saying that this is only a social club for the people, not for Hashem.

However, Rebbi Elazar's statement seems difficult. Amei Ha'aretz are people that are infamous throughout the Gemara as people who are not careful about many laws, especially the laws of Tumah and Taharah. Not keeping these laws can lead to serious punishments, and even death. Why would Rebbi Elazar say that the Amei Ha'aretz die specifically because of these two sins? Is he saying that they do not die because of their other sins?

The Yavetz explains that it is possible that an Am Ha'aretz who was born to an Am Ha'aretz has a slight excuse why he does not keep the mitzvos. He will say that he never learned and therefore thought that the Rabbis were just piling a bunch of stringencies upon him. Though this is ultimately not an excuse (see Rashi in Vayikra 26:14), it could be that Hashem would not kill him prematurely for this reason alone. However, this does not apply to denigrating holy objects. When a person denigrates holy places or objects he is openly showing that he is rebelling against Hashem. ■

Gemara GEM

Miracles and Merits

ואם עושין לו נס מנכין לו מזכויותיו

Maharal explains that the merit one earns for his mitzvos are not a natural commodity. They are a quantity of substance which are reserved for the eternal existence which the soul will enjoy. When Hashem deals with a person in a supernatural manner by performing a miracle for him, this treatment is afforded at the expense of the mitzvah merits he has accrued, which are also supernatural. This is measure for measure, because the fact that he is benefiting in this world from that which was reserved for the world-to-come is not natural.

Sifsei Chaim adds that this exchange is only how things are handled for a person who is not deserving of Hashem's direct and miraculous attention. In this case, being treated in a miraculous manner is undeserving, and it is only provided if the person has the merit to have exceptional actions done for him. However, there are great tzaddikim who conduct their day-to-day lives on a supernatural plane. For them, miracles and "nature" are one and the same. They see everything around them as manifestations of Hashem's divine actions. They live with the inspiration of a sun-

(Continued on page 2)

HALACHAH Highlight

Caution in referring to people as ailing

אמר רב יצחק בריה דרב יהודה: לעולם יבקש אדם רחמים שלא יחלה, שאם יחלה אומרים לו: 'הבא זכות והפטר'.

Rav Yitzchak the son of Rav Yehuda said that a person should always beseech for mercy that he not become ill, for once a person has actually become ill, in Heaven they tell him that he must proffer a proof that he is worthy of healing before he is healed

Rav Chaim Elazar Shapira¹, the Munkatche Rebbe, mentions the practice of his grandfather, Rav Shilomo Shapira, the *Shem Shlomo*, and of his father, Rabbi Tzvi Hirsh Shapira, the *Darchei Tshuva*, who refrained from referring to individuals as ill while reciting the prayer for the ill; rather they would simply recite the name of the person without adding *החולה* (the ill one). The Munkatche explains this with our passage where we learn that a person should pray that he not become sick, because an ill person necessitates more merit to be healed. The Munkatche explains that his fathers extended this concept to include even being identified as sick. Once an individual is acknowledged as being ill, he already requires a different level of merit to be worthy of healing. Thus, to refer to the person in the prayer for the ill as being ill concedes that he requires a higher level of merit. There is record² of the fact that the Munkatche himself followed in the footsteps of his illustrious fathers in his regard. Similarly, Rav Shaul Brach³ was cautious not to refer to someone as ill, but rather "not healthy". Rav Yehuda Tzadka⁴, Rosh Yeshiva of Porat Yosef, even refrained from saying about someone that "he **does** not feel well", rather he would say that "he **did** not feel well."

Rav David Yoel Weiss⁵ שליט"א points out that in fact the roots of this concept can be found in the writings of Rav Tzvi Elimelech of Dinov, the Bnei Yisachar, the head of the Chasidic dynasty from which the Munkatche descends. The Bnei Yisachar writes⁶ that he received a tradition to explain the Jewish custom of referring to ill Jews as *Krank* (ill in Yiddish), while referring to ill gentiles as ill (*חולה* in Hebrew). He explains that Hebrew has a unique quality by which statements made in Hebrew have a greater prospect of being fulfilled. Thus, since people do not want the declaration of someone as

(Insight...continued from page 1)

rise and a baby crying as if they are witness to open miracles. These special individuals live with a trust of Hashem that is tangible and real. If this person finds himself in a crisis, and he is saved by a miracle, his merits are not diminished. For him, life is an extended experience of miraculous events even under "normal" conditions. If Hashem performs a miracle to save him, this would not be in the realm of the supernatural and to be considered exceptional that it would have to be at the expense of his merits which are reserved for a later, eternal world. ■

ill to be "fulfilled", the statement is made in Yiddish.

Rav Yaakov Chaim Sofer references the words of the Munkatche and remarks that people are generally not careful about this. He then cites the Gemara that when Rava would take ill, if the illness persisted he would send out his attendant to announce: "רבה חלש" - Rava has taken ill⁷. It thus seems that Rava himself would announce that he was ill, which seems to contradict the above stated concept. Rav David Yoel Weiss responds to this that although *חלש* denotes illness, it may be a borrowed term implying a general weakness, but not true illness. Elsewhere⁸ though we find that when Rav Chelbo became ill, Rav Kahana announced "רב חלבו באיש" - Rav Chelbo is ailing. Rav Weiss points out that this term is more directly linked to illness⁹, and thus Rav Kahana was pronouncing Rav Chelbo's illness publicly. Rav Weiss resolves this according to the distinction of the Bnei Yisachar that the apprehension is to refer to someone as ill in the Hebrew language. Rav Kahana announced the state of Rav Chelbo and Rava had his condition announced in Aramaic, not in Hebrew, thus the concern is abated. ■

- 1 ס' חמשה מאמרות (מאמר נוסח התפלה אות יט, עמי קעד בדפוס ירושלים תשמ"א)
- 2 דרכי חיים ושלוש (אות רכ, עמוד ע')
- 3 מובא בס' שארל בחי' ה' (דף קצ) [ובא לציון בסי' זרע יעקב (סי' י' אות ג, עמי סח) בסי' מגדים חדשים כאן.]
- 4 עי' בסידור עוד יוסף חי (הלכות מי שבידך לחולים, עמי' תו במהד' תשנ"ה) שהמהדיר ראה לרבי יהודה צדקה שהיה נזהר מלומר על חולה ש"לא מרגיש טוב", אלא אמר "לא הרגיש טוב."
- 5 מגדים חדשים כאן (ד"ה לעולם יבקש, דף קו)
- 6 דברים נחמדים (אבות פ"א משנה יג, עמי' קלו בנדמ"ח)
- 7 וכדפירש רש"י שם
- 8 נדרים דף לט סו"ע"ב
- 9 כך פירש הר"ן ובפירושו המיוחס לרש"י שם. עי' רש"י לעיל (ל ע"א ד"ה באישא) ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Epidemics Among the Gentiles and Prayer
שמואל לא עבר אלא במברא דאית ביה עכו"ם,
אמר - שטנא בתרי אומי לא שליט

Shmuel only crossed the river on a ferry boat upon which gentiles were riding with him. He determined that the Destroyer cannot punish Jew and gentile together, so he could be secure that the boat would not capsize.

An epidemic had begun to spread in a part of a country where gentiles lived, and

the Jews who lived farther away were concerned, because they lived in an area to which the disease could conceivably spread. They asked whether their concerns were well founded, and whether they should begin to daven to be spared from this plague, or whether they should be assured that everything would be fine, especially in light of the statement in our Gemara that a gentile and a Jew will not suffer the same fate.

The רשב"ש told his community that it was appropriate to declare a fast and to daven that the disease not spread to the Jewish community. He writes (Teshuva #60)

that although the plague had only affected gentiles up until that point, and according to the Gemara in Shabbos destruction cannot be visited upon two nations at the same time, nevertheless, this is a relatively weak assurance. We also have a stronger consideration, and that is that whenever permission is given to the Destroyer to wreak havoc, he does not discern between those who are righteous and those who are guilty. There are times we find that a person may meet his demise before his time. He encouraged his community to react to the crisis with fasting and prayer. ■

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