

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Crossing the Jordan River (cont.)

The Gemara continues its citation of the Baraisa that elaborates on the crossing of the Jordan River.

At different points in its citation of the Baraisa the Gemara clarifies unclear points of the Baraisa.

One of the tangential points that is clarified is how the spies carried the fruit they brought from Eretz Yisroel to show to Klal Yisroel.

R' Ami and R' Yitzchok Nafcha disagree about the exact point that is disputed by R' Yehudah and R' Shimon ben Elazar in the earlier-cited Baraisa.

### 2) The incident of the spies

The Gemara begins to elaborate on the pesukim related to the incident of the spies.

Included in this discussion is an exposition related to the names of the spies.

The reason Kalev and Yehoshua were protected is explained.

A description of the giants is mentioned.

The significance of Chevron is discussed. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. What caused the waters of the Jordan River to reverse their course?  
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2. How much weight can a person lift onto his shoulder himself?  
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3. Why didn't Yehoshua daven by the graves of the Avos?  
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4. What is the relative quality of the land of Chevron?  
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By Dr. & Mrs. David Mael  
In loving memory of their father  
ר' יחיאל מיכל בן ר' יהושע, ע"ה

## Distinctive INSIGHT

*The prayer of Moshe on the behalf of Yehoshua*

יהושע כבר בקש משה עליו רחמים שנאמר ויקרא משה ליהושע בן נון יהושע—קה יושיעך מעצת מרגלים

In his commentary to Chumash, Rashi cites our Gemara (Sotah 34b) which expounds upon the verse (Bamidbar 13:16) "And Moshe called Hoshea bin Nun Yehoshua." Moshe prayed that Hashem should save Yehoshua from the counsel of the spies. However, if that was truly Moshe's intention, why did he only offer this prayer on behalf of Yehoshua and not for Calev or others in the group as well?

HaRav Shimon Schwab, zt"l, explains that the answer seems to lie in the relationship between Moshe and Yehoshua. Yehoshua was the primary disciple of Moshe Rabbeinu, and the nature of such a relationship is that the disciple not only acquires the knowledge that the mentor possesses, but also attempts to emulate the middos of his master. Since Moshe Rabbeinu was the most humble person on the face of the earth, as stated in Parashas Behaaloscha (Bamidbar 12:3), Yehoshua also strove to reach an extremely high level of humility and tolerance. Moshe understood that due to this character trait, there was a grave danger that Yehoshua would ignore his own good judgment and follow along with the complaints of the other spies. After all, the other spies were well respected men and leaders of Bnei Yisrael (13:3). Therefore, Moshe prayed that Hashem should help Yehoshua to know when not to be humble and to stand against these ten great men. This prayer of Moshe was very necessary. We can see this by analyzing how Calev managed to side against the spies. The verse says (14:24), "And My servant Calev, because he had a different spirit within him and has followed after me, I will bring him into the land..." The Or HaChayim Hakadosh explains that Calev indeed had a different spirit inside of him to follow along with the other spies, until he decided to visit the graves of the forefathers, where he became inspired to withstand the evil influence of the other spies. If Calev was almost enticed to agree with the others, how much more so Yehoshua would be tempted to let his humility take over and bend to the will of the other spies. ■

## HALACHAH Highlight

### Visiting a grave after not visiting for an extended period of time

מלמד שפירש כלב מעצת מרגלים והלך ונשתטח על קברי אבות  
It teaches that Kalev separated himself from the plans of the spies and went to prostrate himself on the graves of the Avos

Teshuvos Yosef Daas<sup>1</sup> was asked to comment about the custom that one who did not visit his ancestor's grave for twenty years should no longer go to visit the grave. Yosef Daas wrote that our Gemara seems to indicate that the custom has no basis. Our Gemara reports that Kalev went to visit the graves of the Avos even though more than twenty years passed during which he did not visit those graves. In contrast, Mishmeres Shalom<sup>2</sup> wrote that the custom applies only when time passes between one visit and another but in a case where one has never visited the grave, it is permitted to visit the grave no matter how much time has passed. Accordingly, Kalev's visit to the graves of the Avos does not disprove the custom since it was a case where Kalev had never before visited these graves.

Teshuvos Duda'ai Hasadeh<sup>3</sup> draws a distinction between visiting the graves of one's ancestors and visiting the

graves of tzadikim. When a person did not visit the grave of an ancestor that he should visit as part of his kibud av v'em obligation it is reasonable to assume that the deceased relative is upset (מקפיד) by this behavior and may not pay attention to the tefilos his descendant recites at his grave. This concern, however, does not apply to the graves of tzadikim. The reason is that since there is no obligation to visit the graves of tzadikim they do not become upset if someone does not visit for a long period of time and thus one can always visit regardless of how much time may have passed without this person's visiting their grave.

Teshuvos Afraksta D'anya<sup>4</sup> suggests that the concern applies only when no one visited the grave for an extended period of time. The reason is that when the soul of the deceased descends on the day of the yahrtzeit for a number of years and no one is there, the soul will cease to descend into this world since its presence is not valued. If, however, someone from the family visited during that time it is permitted and valuable for the son to visit the grave even if he has not visited for an extended period of time since the soul of the deceased remains connected with family as a result of the one who did visit. ■

1. שו"ת יוסף דעת סי' שנה"ה
2. משמרת שלום שמחות אות ל"ב
3. שו"ת דודאי השדה סי' ל"ח
4. שו"ת אפרקסתא דעניא ח"א סי' קס"ח

## STORIES Off the Daf

### "My fathers, plead for mercy for me!"

אבותי בקדו עלי רחמים

It is an ancient Jewish tradition to visit the graves of tzaddikim or of one's ancestors. The Chidah, zt"l, records that as a very young man, he accompanied his rebbi, the Ohr Hachaim Hakadosh, zt"l, to the graves of tzaddikim in Yerushalayim.

When Rav Yonasan Eibeschutz, zt"l, was appointed Av Beis Din of Metz, he arrived much later than the community in Metz had anticipated. Since he expected that his new community would be waiting for him, he

sent a message forward to Metz to explain his tardiness. "I have a chovas gavra, a personal duty, to go to Eibeschutz in distant Silesia to prostrate myself at the graves of my forefathers. They will surely petition Hashem for mercy on my behalf."

The Chasam Sofer, zt"l, recounted that before the Gaon, Rav Mordechai Bennet, zt"l, died he said, "If the community needs anything after I am gone, they should come to pray at my grave..." When commenting about the status of a cemetery the Chasam Sofer remarked, "It is likened to a shul, since the living often pray there."

The Maharil, zt"l, writes that although the custom is to pray at the holy graves of tzaddikim, one must be very careful not to place his trust in

the dead. One should petition Hashem in the merit of the departed righteous. Although this is brought in the Chayei Adam and the Mishnah Berurah, when someone once asked Rav Shmuel Hominer, zt"l, regarding this issue he said, "I never understood this psak. In Sotah 34 it says clearly that Kalev went to the graves of the Avos and said to them, "My fathers! Plead for mercy from on high that I be saved from the wicked advice of the meraglim!"

Rav Huminer concluded, "We see from here that one may even ask the tzaddik to daven on his behalf as Kalev did. Surely if there was anything improper about this the gemara would have mentioned it!" ■

