

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Flattery (cont.)

Two additional flattery-related statements from R' Elazar are recorded.

R' Yirmiyah bar Abba cites four groups of people who do not receive the Divine Presence, one of which are flatterers.

הדרן עלך אלו נאמרין

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah presents a description of encouraging words the kohen would offer the soldiers before they went out to war.

### 3) The Kohen anointed for war

The Gemara clarifies the Mishnah's proof that the Kohen spoke to the nation in Hebrew.

A Baraisa presents the source that a kohen had to be appointed specifically for the task of going out to war with the soldiers.

The Gemara unsuccessfully challenges this proof.

R' Yochanan in the name of R' Shimon ben Yochai explains why the kohen began with the words שמע ישראל.

A Baraisa states that the kohen spoke to the soldiers at two different times, once at the border and a second time at the place of the battle, and records the speech at each location.

### 4) Goliath

A number of statements from R' Yochanan regarding Goliath are recorded.

Additional expositions from the pesukim that deal with Goliath are presented.

This leads the Gemara to discuss the character of Goliath's mother.

This topic concludes with an explanation why Orpah merited having such strong sons and a teaching related to Goliath's spear.

### 5) Shovach/Shofach

Rav and Shmuel dispute whether Shovach or Shofach was his real name or his nickname.

Another dispute between Rav and Shmuel or R' Ami and R' Assi concerning Nevuchadnetzar's army is presented.

R' Meri comments about a person who suffers from producing excessive body waste.

A dispute between R' Ami and R' Assi about conquering worry is recorded.

### 6) The kohen's speech to the soldiers

The Gemara wonders why the kohen tells the soldiers that Hashem goes with Israel.

The Gemara answers that Hashem and his Nicknames are contained in the Ark that accompanies the soldiers to war. ■

## Gemara GEM

### *We rely upon the might of the Almighty*

הם באים בנצחוננו של אדם ואתם באים בנצחוננו של מקום

There is a designated Kohen whose job it was to address the nation before the soldiers approached the battle front. He tells the Jewish fighters, in לשון הקדש, (Devarim 20:3) "Fear not, nor tremble..." - Do not let your heart be faint at the neighing of the horses and the brandishing of swords. "Fear not" because of the crash of shields and the tramp of the soldiers' footwear. "Nor tremble" at the sound of trumpets. "Do not be afraid" at the sound of battle cries. "For Hashem your G-d goes with you." They come relying upon the might of flesh and blood, but you come relying on the might of the All-present.

We find a fascinating story told in II Melachim (Perek 6). The King of Aram was being frustrated in all of his attempts to attack the soldiers of Yisrael, for every time he set an ambush, the prophet Elisha would inform the King of Yisrael of his location. Finally, the King of Aram set his aim upon Elisha himself, as he amassed many horses and armaments at Dosan to attack. Elisha's assistant began to panic as he saw the forces building up against them, but Elisha assured him, "Our forces are greater in number than theirs!" The aide was puzzled, until Elisha prayed for Hashem to reveal the countless fiery horses and chariots which surrounded them as an invincible shield. The story ends with the army of Aram being defeated due to its utter confusion and being led away, never to return.

Chofetz Chaim on the Torah notes that we, too, should realize that "greater are the forces that are with us than are those that are with them". When we conduct ourselves according to the Torah, we are traveling along a secure and paved path, associating ourselves with thousands of Tannaim and Amoraim, and hundreds of prophets who preceded them. Even before them was the generation which witnessed revelation, a group consisting of over six hundred thousand, the least of whom was on a level higher than the prophet Yechezkel. This is truly an illustrious heritage with which we link ourselves as we travel along the path of trust and faith in Hashem.

The pitiful cry of latter-day scoffers pales without any foundation, as the scorners fabricate their various criticisms in order to rationalize their abandonment of Torah and to excuse their indulging in physical pursuits.

We must strengthen ourselves in our holy mission to the utmost of our ability. We should not be discouraged by any vicious assaults cloaked as philosophical arguments, as they are merely isolated complaints meant as mockery rather than a genuine pursuit of truth. ■

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Praising non-Jews

מכאן שאסור לספר בשבחן של רשעים

From here we see that it is prohibited to relate the praises of the wicked

**R**ambam<sup>1</sup> rules that it is prohibited to praise idolaters. Even to speak positively about their physical characteristics is prohibited and certainly to praise their behavior or words is prohibited. The rationale behind this prohibition is the concern that one will develop a stronger relationship with them which will ultimately lead to emulating their behavior. This ruling is also recorded in Shulchan Aruch<sup>2</sup> without dissent, which raises the question whether it is permitted to praise non-Jews for their accomplishments and achievements.

Teshuvos Tzitz Eliezer<sup>3</sup> addressed this question and presented a number of reasons for leniency. One approach for leniency is to distinguish between individual non-Jews and non-Jewish nations. The rationale for the prohibition is the fear that a Jew will decide to forge a relationship with that non-Jew that will ultimately lead the Jew to learn from the non-Jew's behavior. This concern, however, does not apply to an entire nation since it is not possible to forge a relationship with an entire nation. Thus we find, for example R' Akiva in the Gemara Berachos (8b) praising the behavior of different nations. A second circumstance in which it is permitted to praise non-Jews is about matters that relate to ethical and moral behavior. Rambam's concern is that a Jew may become endeared to the behavior of the non-Jew but when that behavior is good it is not prohibited to learn from their ways and certainly to praise them for that

# REVIEW and Remember

1. What four groups of people do not receive the Divine Presence?  
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2. Why did the Kohen Anointed for War begin with the words שמע ישראל?  
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3. What was the reason Goliath was called by this name?  
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4. Why was it permitted for the verse to praise Goliath?  
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behavior is permitted. Thus we find Torah scholars praising the wisdom of non-Jewish scholars. This rationale also permits praising the accomplishments and achievements of non-Jewish doctors and other scientific researchers.

Another basis for leniency, suggests Tzitz Eliezer, comes from our Gemara. The Gemara relates numerous positive attributes of Goliath and then derives from an exposition that all the praises that the pasuk relates does not even reach half the praises he deserves. This teaches that it is prohibited to praise wicked people and the reason the pasuk mentioned anything positive about Goliath was to praise Dovid Hamelech who had trust in Hashem despite the fact that he faced such a formidable foe. From this we see that when praise of a non-Jew will lead to greater praise of a Jew it is permitted. ■

1. רמב"ם יפ"י מהל' עכו"ם ה"ד
2. שו"ע יו"ד סי' קנ"א סע' י"ד
3. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר חט"ו סי' מ"ז ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## The cost of a lie

דובר שקרים לא יכון לנגד עיני

**O**n today's daf we find that liars are among the seven groups that are not worthy of receiving the Divine Presence.

A certain young man received a call from his mentor, Rav Shlomo Zalman Auerbach, zt"l. He explained that there was an elderly man who needed treatment who had been dismissed from the hospital because his doctors claimed they couldn't help him recover. The wretched man could not pay for private doctors and definitely needed treatment. Whether the treatment helped or not was up to

Hashem, but halachically he must be treated.

Rav Shlomo Zalman concluded, "You must think of a plan to get this unfortunate man admitted to the hospital."

The young man immediately devised a subterfuge. He picked the man up in a cab and drove with him to a different hospital. When he arrived, he approached an admissions officer and said, "I don't know this man's identity but I found him on Rechov Yaffo. It is clear to the meanest intelligence that he requires treatment. You must admit him immediately."

This plan worked. They found an identity card on him and admitted him.

The young man was very happy that his brilliant plan had actually worked. He

went to Rav Shlomo Zalman and reported glowingly how he had managed to completely fool the hospital staff. To his surprise, Rav Shlomo Zalman looked at him angrily.

The young man was completely at a loss and couldn't understand Rav Shlomo Zalman's censure. His bewilderment was obvious, so Rav Shlomo Zalman explained himself. "I appreciate your efforts on the unfortunate man's behalf, but why do you come to me with such a smiling face? You achieved your aim through sheker. It is true that the matter was pikuach nefesh and you had to lie to get the man admitted, but who permitted you to rejoice and gloat over such deception? You should have told me out of heartbreak, not elation!" ■

