

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Precipitation

Rava mentions the value of different varieties of precipitation.

Rava likens a young scholar to a seed under a clump of dirt.

2) Torah scholars

A young scholar who becomes heated, explains Rava, is heated by the Torah.

R' Ashi asserts that Torah scholars must be hard as iron and two different sources for this concept are identified.

Rava mentions that despite the excuses to become angry one must train himself to be calm.

3) Three individuals who made improper requests

R' Shmuel bar Nachmani in the name of R' Yochanan said that three people made improper requests; two were answered properly but one was answered improperly.

R' Berechyah added the Jewish People to the list of those who made an improper request but were answered properly.

4) Identifying the author of the Mishnah

Two versions of a discussion are recorded where the Gemara demonstrates that the Mishnah could follow R' Yehoshua or R' Eliezer.

5) Clarifying R' Yehudah's opinion

A contradiction is noted between our Mishnah and a Beraisa as far as R' Yehudah's opinion regarding the last time to ask for rain.

R' Chisda suggests a resolution that is rejected by Ulla.

Ulla's suggestion is unchallenged.

R' Yosef offers a resolution that is unsuccessfully challenged.

An alternative resolution is presented by Rabbah which is rejected in favor of Ulla's suggested resolution.

R' Assi in the name of R' Yochanan rules in favor of R' Yehudah's opinion, i.e., we begin to mention rain in Mussaf on Shemini Atzeres.

This ruling is challenged from another, seemingly contradictory ruling, stated by R' Elazar.

Two resolutions are suggested.

After successfully challenging the second resolution, an alternative resolution is presented.

6) Mentioning rain in the Diaspora

Rav and Shmuel disagree when those in the Diaspora begin to mention rain in their tefilos. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

The trial arranged by Eliezer to find Rivkah

אמר רב שמואל בר נחמני אמר רבי יונתן שלשה שאלו שלא כהוגן...אליעזר עבד אברהם

The Beis HaLevi explains that Eliezer was looking for a woman who would display the traits of generosity, wisdom, and sensitivity to others. This would be the proper wife for Yitzchak. His "test", if passed, would display these middos.

Since Eliezer did not have a cup that he owned, he planned to ask the girl if she would "tip over her jug" for him to drink. He wanted to see whether or not she would let him drink and render the remaining contents undesirable for others to drink. This would show her kindness and generosity. The girl still had more tests to pass. Next, Eliezer wanted to see what the girl would do with the leftover water. Would she pour it out, possibly hurting his feelings, because it would appear that she thinks he is filthy, or would she take it home to her family, thus indicating a lack of wisdom, for what if the water was contaminated by him? Still, would she do the smart and sensitive thing and pour out the rest of the water for the camels? Nevertheless, even if she passed these tests, it would not necessarily prove that she was the correct wife for Yitzchak. Therefore, Eliezer prayed to God that if the girl did these things, it should be a sign from heaven that this was the right girl.

Rivkah passed all the tests and even went above and beyond what Eliezer had hoped to see. She showed an even greater sensitivity to the servant's feelings. She did not say, as Eliezer had prayed for, "Drink, and I will also give your camels to drink," implying that she would pour out the remaining water for the camels. Rather, she responded (Bereshis 24:18-19), "Drink...and I will also draw water for your camels." Rivkah felt it might possibly offend Eliezer if she made it so obvious that she did not want to use the leftover water for human drinking but rather for the camels, so she offered to draw extra water.

We learn an important lesson from Rivkah. When someone is performing a kindness for another person, it is not enough simply to perform the act of kindness, but rather the greatness of the chesed is measured by the true sensitivity shown to the recipient. The amazing thing is that often we feel that we have done someone a favor, when actually it may be a "test" for the giver. Rivkah passed the "test" and became one of the mothers of the Jewish people. We can also pass the "test" and earn a great reward. ■

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HALACHAH Highlight

Marrying the daughter of a kohen

ואמר רבא האי צורבא מרבנן. פרש"י בחור חריף וכו' תלמיד חכם זקן לא קרי צורבא מרבנן אלא ההוא מרבנן קרי ליה

And Rava said: A young student of Torah. Rashi explains, "A sharp young student etc." An older scholar is not called **צורבא מרבנן**; rather he is called **ההוא מרבנן**.

Shulchan Aruch¹ rules that an Am HaAretz may not marry the daughter of a kohen and if they do marry the marriage will not be successful. Furthermore, one of them will die or they will endure another tragedy. Accordingly Rav Moshe Shik², the Maharam Shik, inquired about the relevance of this halachah nowadays from another halachah. Rav Moshe Isserles³, the Rema, rules that the halachic category of a talmid chacham no longer exists and even if it did we can be certain that a young man who has limited experience learning is not going to have attained the status of a talmid chacham by the time of his wedding. Seemingly, it should be prohibited for a non-talmid chacham to marry the daughter of a kohen.

Maharam Shik answers that even though the category of talmid chacham no longer exists, nonetheless, it does not place everyone into the category of an Am HaAretz and the restriction prohibits specifically an Am HaAretz from marrying the daughter of a kohen. Furthermore, Rav Yaakov Reisher⁴, the Shvus Yaakov, writes that although the status of talmid chacham may no longer exist, the status of **צורבא מרבנן** does exist which Rashi in our Gemara (cited above) defines as a young sharp student. Although Rav Chaim Yosef Dovid Azulai⁵, the Gaon Chida, disagrees as to whether there are special privileges that are granted

REVIEW and Remember

1. What effect does Torah have on young scholars?

2. What were the two improper requests made by the Jewish People?

3. Why was Ulla critical of R' Chisda's resolution to the contradiction between two statements of R' Yehudah?

4. Explain the dispute between Rav and Shmuel.

the **צורבא מרבנן**, nonetheless, there is agreement that he is not an Am HaAretz and thus the restriction does not apply. Therefore, concludes Maharam Shik, if the young man excels at learning and possesses fear of Heaven there is no need for caution and the marriage will succeed. Rav Ovadiah Yosef⁶ adds that although Maharam Shik mentioned that if the young man excels at learning it is permitted, the truth is that even if he doesn't excel it is permitted as long as he is not categorized as an Am HaAretz, as Maharam Shik himself mentions. ■

1. שו"ע אה"ע סי' ב' סע' ח'
2. שו"ת מהר"ם שי"ק חאה"ע סי' ב'
3. רמ"א יו"ד סי' רמ"ג סע' ב'
4. שו"ת שבות יעקב ח"א סע' קמ"ד
5. ברכי יוסף חו"מ סע' ט"ו אות ג'
6. שו"ת יחזה דעת ח"ה סע' ס"א ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The three who asked improperly

שלושה שעאלו שלא כהוגן

The Maharsham of Barzan, זת"ל, was once asked a very delicate question. A certain young man had been dating a young lady for a long time. They had already written a **תנאים** contract and set the day for the wedding, when suddenly the young man decided to back out of the engagement. He claimed that he did not want to marry the girl because she was lame in one foot. When asked why he had gotten engaged to her and written **תנאים**, he responded that he hadn't known about her infirmity before be-

cause the girl had been seated during all of their meetings.

The girl's side claimed that he must have noticed her impairment long before the actual engagement because they had been seen strolling around a number of times by many witnesses. Her family claimed that it was obvious that the young man had originally been willing to marry her as she was, and that he had subsequently changed his mind. They felt that the contract was therefore binding, and that he either had to pay the penalty outlined in it, or marry her as agreed.

The Maharsham said, "We see from Taanis 4a that the young man's claim is justified with regard to her limping. The Gemara recounts that three people asked for things inappropriately: one of them

was Eliezer, the servant of Avraham, when he said that he would choose the very first girl to bring him water. What if it had turned out to be someone lame or blind? Tosafos then remarks that perhaps because Eliezer had only said was that he would choose the girl whom he tells to bear her vessel and give him water, he would be able to rule out a girl with an obvious infirmity ahead of time. Tosafos dismisses this possibility by saying that it is even possible for a girl with a wooden leg to walk with her vessel without it being immediately noticeable. So we see from here that even a wooden leg is not necessarily noticeable right away. This chossan might very well have gone out for a stroll with the girl in question and failed to notice her impediment!" ■