

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Ilfa and R' Yochanan

The Gemara relates the story of Ilfa and R' Yochanan. When their finances become too difficult to bear they prepared to engage in business. R' Yochanan heard a voice that deterred him from entering the business world, but Ilfa did not. R' Yochanan returned and eventually became Rosh Yeshiva whereas Ilfa became a professional, but he did not lose his learning.

2) Nachum Ish Gam Zu

A story is retold where the merit of Nachum Ish Gam Zu was used to prevent a broken building from collapsing.

Nachum Ish Gam Zu told about the story that led him to his life of terrible suffering.

The origin of the nickname Ish Gam Zu is explained.

3) Plague

A Baraisa elaborates on the parameters of what is considered a plague.

4) Tragedies

R' Nachman bar R' Chisda decreed a fast when three people from Derokart died from a plague on the same day.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok explained that he was following R' Meir's position rather than that of the Mishnah.

The incident regarding R' Nachman bar R' Chisda's invitation to R' Nachman bar Yitzchok to live in his town is recorded.

Two incidents are recorded that relate how the merit of a tzadik protected others.

The Gemara explains R' Yehudah's thinking when he decreed two fasts that were seemingly unnecessary.

Additional stories of Amoraim decreeing fasts are presented.

5) Abba the doctor

It is related that Abba the doctor received Heavenly greetings every day, Abaye once a week, and Rava on every Erev Yom Kippur.

The Gemara relates the practices which produced such a degree of merit for Abba the doctor.

Abaye begins to investigate the behavior of Abba the doctor. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Ilfa and his attempt to earn a living

אתה שהוא סבא תנא ליה

Ilfa climbed to the top of the mast of the ship, and announced that he could find a source in a Mishnah to identify the author of any Baraisa. A "certain old man" came along and challenged him to name the author of a Baraisa which discussed the halachah of how a person is to distribute money to an orphan based upon the particular instructions which the father gave. Ilfa was able to recognize that the author was Rabbi Meir.

Tosafos (Chullin 6a, ד"ה אשכחיה) states that whenever the Gemara refers to "ההוא סבא—a certain elderly man", it is a reference to Eliyahu Hanavi. In our Gemara, this means that the one who challenged Ilfa was Eliyahu Hanavi. Chasam Sofer points out a difficulty with using this interpretation in the context of our Gemara. Could it be that Eliyahu did not know that Ilfa was able to name the author of the Baraisa? Why did Eliyahu come and ask this question?

The Baraisa cited is found in Kesuvos (70a), and it presents the case of a father who gave instructions that his son be given a shekel each week, whereas the true needs of the son were actually double that—he needed a sela (double the amount of a shekel). Does the father want the son to get only a shekel and to struggle, or does the father want the son to be given a full sela, and his instructions were stated in a limited manner in order that the sons not become complacent?

Ilfa had just expressed an interest to leave full-time learning in order not to remain destitute. His attitude was that a person should not live with deprivation, and, accordingly, his interpretation of the Baraisa would be that the father's words should not be understood literally, and that he actually wants his son to be fully supported. This would not be according to Rabbi Meir, who says that we must follow the instructions of the father literally. When Eliyahu challenged him, Ilfa said that the Baraisa was the opinion of Rabbi Meir. Chasam Sofer explains that, in effect, Ilfa was retracting his initiative to leave learning, and thus admitting that the approach of Rabbi Yochanan was correct. The father did want his sons to live without full financial support, and that they instead be trained to delve into Torah, being ready to ignore all other calculations. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Performing chalitzah in a village

תנו רבנן עיר גדולה (ע' בב"ח) המוציאה חמש מאות ואלף רגלי כגון כפר עכו וכי

The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: A large city that produces one thousand five hundred men on foot, like Kefar Acco etc.

Teshuvos Avnei Tzedek¹ was asked whether chalitzah may be performed in a village. The basis for the question is that Chazal² rule that chalitzah must be performed at the height of the city because that place will publicize the matter and perhaps a village will not provide sufficient publicity. Furthermore, the Torah³ refers explicitly to the "Elders of the city - זקני עירו" and perhaps we should infer that the Torah is particular that chalitzah should take place in a city. Avnei Tzedek responded that a Mishnah⁴ explicitly addresses this matter because the Mishnah writes that R' Hurkanus performed a chalitzah in עכו - כפר - the Village of Acco. Rav Yaakov Emden⁵ writes that עכו was a village that was located near the city of Acco. Since the village was owned by the city it was called, "The Village of Acco," meaning the village that belonged to Acco. Thus, the fact that R' Hurkanus performed chalitzah in עכו כפר seemingly demonstrates that chalitzah can be performed in a village.

Teshuvos MiPaneach Ne'elamim⁶ challenges this conclusion from our Gemara. Our Gemara cites עכו כפר as an example of a large city that will produce fifteen-hundred soldiers⁷. This assertion that עכו כפר was considered a city can be understood in light of a comment of Rashi in Sotah 8. Rashi there writes that

REVIEW and Remember

1. What caused Nachum Ish Gam Zu to live a life of suffering?
2. How did Nachum Ish Gam Zu earn the title "Ish Gam Zu"?
3. What protected Rav's neighborhood from a plague?
4. What behavior earned Abba the doctor daily heavenly greetings?

כפר was part of the name of the city and not a description of its size. In other words the name of the city was עכו כפר and the word כפר was not an explanation of the type of municipality it was. If עכו כפר is a large city rather than a village the proof that chalitzah may be performed in a village is refuted. ■

1. שו"ת אבני צדק אה"ע סי' ס"א ומובא דבריו בשו"ת מפענח נעלמים דלקמן
2. ספרי פר' תצא פסקא רפ"ט
3. דברים כ"ה ז' ח'
4. משני יבמות קו. לפי גירסת הרי"ף והרא"ש שם
5. הגהות היעב"ץ יבמות מה
6. שו"ת מפענח נעלמים סי' ב'
7. ע' ר"ח שכתב דרלי היינו יוצאי צבא
8. רש"י סוטה מג. ד"ה כפר עכו ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Hearing the message

אילפא ור' יוחנן... מדשמעי אנה ואילפא לא שמע ש"מ לדידי קיימא לי שעתא

In the year 5554, the Av Beis Din of Pressburg passed away. The city sent a formal invitation to Rav Yitzchak of Samavor, ז"ל, offering him the post. Instead of sending it to the Rav directly, however, the leaders of Pressburg chose to send it to one of their counterparts in Samavor, Reb Yona, with a request that he deliver it to his Av Beis Din.

When a letter arrived with the enclosure and its instruction, Rav Yona deduced what it must be. Since he had a very close relationship with Rav Yitzchak, Reb Yona couldn't bear the thought of his Rav mov-

ing to Pressburg. He chose to keep the letter to himself.

Time passed, and the leaders of Pressburg assumed that Rav Yitzchak's failure to respond was meant to signal refusal. They then sent an invitation to Rav Moshe Meshulam, ז"ל, the Av Beis Din of Tismanitz, who agreed to assume the position.

When Rav Moshe Meshulam heard that Rav Yitzchak had never sent as much as a reply, he decided to investigate. Soon afterward, Rav Moshe traveled to Samavor.

When Rav Moshe arrived, the entire town came out to greet him, and Rav Yitzchak planned a gala meal in his honor to which all of Samavor's prominent citizens were invited.

During the festivities, Rav Moshe asked Rav Yitzchak, "Why didn't you respond to the invitation to become the Av

Beis Din of Pressburg?"

Rav Yitzchak was taken aback. "What do you mean?" he asked. "I never heard from them."

Reb Yona could no longer contain himself. He blurted out, "They sent a letter but I kept it. I couldn't bear to think that our beloved Rav might leave us!"

Rav Moshe said, "Rav Yitzchak, the post is still yours. After all, they sent you the invitation first."

Rav Yitzchak's response surprised everyone. "When Rav Yochanan and Ilfa were traveling, Rav Yochanan heard one angel say that one of them is destined for greatness. Since only Rav Yochanan heard this, he concluded that it was meant for him. Since you, not I, received the letter, it must be that you were destined to be the Av Beis Din of Pressburg." ■