

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Disputes between Nachum HaMadai and Chachamim (cont.)

R' Acha bar Minyomi concludes explaining why he is not satisfied with Abaye's response to his complaint that Nachum HaMadai's positions are summarily dismissed.

Related to this discussion, Rav is cited as ruling that although one may ask for his needs during the beracha of **שומע תפילה**, nevertheless, one may also add a request related to that beracha at the end of each beracha.

Two more related rulings are presented.

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah enumerates major idolatrous festivals. A dispute between R' Meir and Chachamim is presented whether the anniversary of the death of an emperor is a festival. A list of minor festivals are compiled, during which the restriction against business is limited to only the day of the festival and only with the person celebrating.

### 3) Calenda and Saturnalia

R' Chanan bar Rava identifies the festivals of Calenda and Saturnalia.

A Baraisa presents the historical background to these festivals.

This Baraisa is used to unsuccessfully challenge the opinion that the world was created in Nissan.

Further discussion about the day Adam was created is recorded.

R' Masna asks whether the cities that surround Rome are bound by the restriction against business during the Calenda festival.

R' Yehoshua ben Levi maintains that it is prohibited for all the surrounding cities that pay taxes, whereas R' Yochanan holds that it is prohibited only to those that worship Calenda.

A Baraisa is cited that supports R' Yochanan's position.

R' Ashi finds additional proof for R' Yochanan from our

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## Distinctive INSIGHT

### R' Yehuda b. Bava submits his life to confer semicha

מה עשה רבי יהודה בן בבא הלך וישב בין שני הרים גדולים

The Gemara relates the tragic period which led up to the destruction of the second Beis HaMikdash. Forty years before the actual destruction, the cruel Roman control over Eretz Yisroel necessitated that the Sanhedrin began a period of exile. The Gemara tells us that had it not been for the courageous and heroic efforts of R' Yehuda b. Bava, the laws of fines would no longer have been judged, due to the risk of the abolishment of the institution of Semicha. Nevertheless, R' Yehuda b. Bava managed to teach Torah and confer semicha despite the threat of death for doing so. The Romans announced that any sage who awarded semicha would be killed, the student would be killed, and the city and area where the procedure took place would be destroyed. R' Yehuda distanced himself from all villages, and taught and conferred semicha upon five disciples who transmitted Torah further. R' Yehuda was caught, however, and the Gemara describes his tortured death.

The halacha only requires that one offer his life in order to not commit any of three cardinal sins, which are idolatry, murder, and adultery. Teaching Torah is not in this list. Iyun Yaakov (to Sanhedrin 14a) discusses this episode, wondering why R' Yehuda b. Bava submitted himself to die in order to teach and confer semicha. He answers that the rule limiting Kiddush Hashem to three cases is under "normal" circumstances. However, in a time of religious persecution (שמד), one must submit his life to defend any and every mitzvah, even if it is not one of the three cardinal sins (see Sanhedrin 74a-b).

Kesef Mishnah (to Hilchos Yesodei HaTorah 5:4) analyzes this case further. The halacha to submit one's life for kiddush Hashem in time of religious persecution only applies to negative commandments. A Jew must not violate a sin if he is forced to do so as a matter of principle. However, if the government decrees that the Jews must abolish the fulfillment of a positive command, such as teaching Torah, the mitzvah may be temporarily dismissed. The Rishonim point out that the gentiles have the ability to manipulate conditions to cause this to occur, for example if they would place a person in prison without tefillin or without matzah. So, we must understand why R' Yehuda b. Bava put himself at risk and actually paid the ultimate price in order to fulfill the positive commandment to learn and teach Torah.

Pri Chadash (ibid.) explains that R' Yehuda b. Bava knew that the institution of semicha was a communal mitzvah (מצוה דרבים), and he was concerned that it would be abolished. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. Why did Adam become frightened as winter approached?  
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2. What is the point of dispute between R' Yehoshua ben Levi and R' Yochanan?  
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3. How did the Romans succeed at defeating the Greeks?  
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4. Who were the Tannaim who received semicha from R' Yehuda ben Bava?  
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# HALACHAH Highlight

## Restoring semicha

ברם זכור אותו האיש לטוב ור' יהודה בן בבא שמו

Indeed, that man should be remembered for good and R' Yehudah ben Bava was his name

**M**ahari Bei Rav<sup>1</sup> advocated reinstating the semicha that began with Moshe Rabbeinu. The means to restart semicha without its being passed from someone with semicha is based on Rambam<sup>2</sup> who writes that semicha could be reestablished if all the Torah scholars of Eretz Yisroel gather together and choose someone to receive semicha. Once that person has semicha he can then give semicha to others. Maharlbach<sup>3</sup> opposed this suggestion for a number of different reasons. One reason he rejected the suggestion was that he maintained that semicha must be given from someone who received semicha and there is no mechanism to renew semicha by gathering together all the scholars of Eretz Yisroel. One proof to this is from our Gemara. The Gemara relates that were it not for R' Yehudah ben Bava semicha would have been lost. The reason is that a decree was issued outlawing semicha and R' Yehudah ben Bava sacrificed his life to give semicha to five or according to a second version, six Tannaim. If it were possible to gather together all the scholars of Eretz Yisroel and reinstitute semicha he should not have risked his life. He should have relied on the assumption that eventually the decree would pass and the scholars of Eretz Yisroel would gather together and reinstitute semicha. It must be, concluded Maharlbach, that this was not an option.

Mahari Bei Rav rejected all the proof proposed by Maharlbach. Concerning the proof from our Gemara he cited the resolution to this from Rambam. Rambam writes that the Jews of that generation were scattered and it would not have been possible to gather them together. Since it was not clear when the Jews

Mishnah.

### 4) An idolater's wedding meals

R' Shimon ben Elazar states that eating at the wedding meal which an idolater makes for his son is considered as though he is worshipping idolatry.

Rava clarifies the exposition.

The guidelines are discussed regarding how long before and after the wedding this restriction remains in force against joining their celebratory meal.

### 5) Krateisim

R' Yehudah in the name of Shmuel traces the origin of the Krateisim festival.

This explanation is unsuccessfully challenged from a Baraisa.

R' Dimi further elaborates on the Roman defeat of the Greeks.

R' Kahana begins to prove that the Romans kept their word for twenty-six years and did not subjugate the Jews.

R' Kahana's proof is built on the timeline formulated by R' Yishmael the son of Yosi.

The Gemara asserts that the significance of the timeline was to establish when the Sanhedrin stopped adjudicating penalty cases.

This assumption is successfully challenged and revised to mean that the timeline was to establish when the Sanhedrin stopped adjudicating capital cases. ■

would be gathered together again to be able to reinstitute semicha R' Yehudah ben Bava felt compelled to risk his life to give semicha to the next generation of Tannaim. ■

<sup>1</sup> שו"ת מהר"י בי רב סי' ס"ג.

<sup>2</sup> רמב"ם פ"ד מהל' סנהדרין הי"א.

<sup>3</sup> קונטרס הסמיכה שנדפס בשו"ת מהר"י בי רב הנ"ל. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## The Natural Order

"מנהגו של עולם הוא..."

**W**hen World War I first broke out, people were very worried about the future. Many went around in a mood of despair brought on by what seemed a never-ending series of calamities. When the Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, noticed a group of people obviously in the grips of despair, he encouraged them with a statement on today's daf.

"Why do you seem to have given up

on our deliverance? Our sages in Avodah Zarah 8 recount that when the sun went down on the first day of Adam's life he said, 'Woe is me! I have defiled the world and brought upon it a terrible darkness as a consequence of my unseemly deed. Because of me, the world will surely revert to chaos and void. Surely this is the death which Hashem has decreed upon me due to my actions!' Adam cried and fasted the entire night. When the day dawned he said, 'This is the natural way of the world.'"

The Chofetz Chaim continued, "We see from here that Adam was so upset only because he had no experience with dark-

ness. But the moment he saw that light was restored he understood that the darkness was not permanent since light will follow the darkness. My brothers, is this darkness that now encompasses the earth the first darkness our nation has ever endured that we must feel such despair because of it? We have had many terrible troubles since we became a nation and endured every one until the light eventually returned. We must know and believe that no darkness is forever and every hardship comes to an end. We must see that such hardship is nothing more than the natural order of the world."<sup>1</sup> ■

1. מאיר עיני ישראל, ח"ב, ע' 276. ■