

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Calculating dates from the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash (cont.)

The Gemara recounts an incident of what seemed to be a postdated document and R' Nachman explained how there are two different ways to calculate the year.

Support for this principle is found in a Baraisa.

R' Acha bar Yaakov unsuccessfully challenges R' Nachman's position.

Ravina infers from a Mishnah proof to R' Nachman's position.

### 2) Ginusya day

R' Yehudah explains the meaning of the Ginusya day festival.

This explanation is successfully challenged.

An alternative explanation of the day is suggested.

This explanation is also successfully refuted.

A final explanation of the meaning of the Ginusya festival is offered.

The Gemara elaborates on the appointment of Asveirus.

### 3) Rebbi and Antoninus

A number of conversations between Rebbi and Antoninus are recorded.

The Gemara describes how Antoninus served Rebbi and recounts their conversation whether Antoninus will enter the World-to-Come.

The story of the Roman minister Ketiah bar Shalom is retold.

The Gemara relates the reaction of Rebbi upon the death of Antoninus who served him and the parallel reaction of Rav upon the death of Adarkan who served him. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. In exile, are years dated from the exodus from Egypt or from the era of the Greek kings?  
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2. What is Ginusya day?  
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3. What steps did Antoninus take to assure that no one would find out about his secret meetings with Rebbi?  
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4. What caused Rebbi to cry?  
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## Distinctive INSIGHT

### *The amazing end of the life of Ketia bar Shalom*

יצתה בת קול ואמרה קטיעה בר שלום מזומן לחיי העולם הבא

Rebbe maintained a cordial and productive relationship with Antuninus, a Roman officer. The Gemara relates a discussion between these leaders, where Antuninus asked Rebbe about himself if he would merit a portion in the world to come. When Rebbe assured him affirmatively, Antuninus asked him about the verse in Yechezkel (32:29) which says that among those who will descend to Gehinnom will be "Edom, its kings and all its princes." Antuninus was concerned that the verse clearly includes him among those who are doomed. Rebbe explained that Romans which the verse condemns are "its kings," but not all its kings. It lists "all the princes," but not all the officers. Therefore, Antuninus was not included in the verse. Although Antuninus was a king, he would not go to Gehinnom. In addition, Ketia bar Shalom, a Roman officer, would be spared this fate.

The Gemara tells the story of Ketia bar Shalom, who was a Roman officer. One of the Roman kings was considering killing the Jews in his empire, and he consulted with his officers. Many of them encouraged him to implement his cruel plot, but Ketia bar Shalom discouraged him. Ketia pointed out that not all Jews lived under his control, so he would not be able to eliminate them all. He also noted that it was not practical for the world to exist without Jews. Finally, he convinced the king that other countries hosted Jews. The murderous plan would leave his own kingdom with a void, and everyone would refer to it as a kingdom which was lacking.

The king accepted his argument, but decreed that Ketia had embarrassed him, and was therefore deserving to be put to death. As he was being lead to his death, Ketia bar Shalom did two remarkable things. First, he performed a bris milah upon himself. Second, he declared that all his possessions should be given to Rabbi Akiva and his disciples. As his soul left his body, a heavenly voice declared that Ketia bar Shalom was **מזומן לחיי העולם הבא**—he was invited to enter the World to Come.

Tosafos in Kesubos (103b) teaches that whenever this particular expression is used—**מזומן לחיי העולם הבא**—it indicates that the person's soul will enter the next world without the need for judgment or any suffering.

Ben Yehoyada explains that Ketia bar Shalom was especially deserving of the reward to enter the World to Come because he fulfilled his mission by supporting Torah with

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Bearing bad news

*One should not report back with bad news*

**T**he Gemara describes the quandary that R' Chanina bar Chama found himself in. He was instructed by Antoninus to check on a slave who was dead. He didn't want to report back that the slave was dead since it is not proper etiquette to be the bearer of bad news. On the other hand he couldn't ignore the request since that itself would be disrespectful. He davened to Hashem and brought the slave back to life. The principle that one should not be the bearer of bad news is recorded in Shulchan Aruch<sup>1</sup> in the following case. If someone's relative died and he is unaware of that relative's death, there is no obligation for others to inform him that his relative died, even if it is his parent for whom he would recite kaddish. Someone who does share that bad news is considered a fool (see Mishlei 10:18). If, however, the person asks whether his relative is still alive one is not permitted to lie that the relative is still alive. One may use language that could be understood in two ways even though it could mislead the person into thinking that his relative is still alive.

Sefer Chassidim<sup>2</sup> writes that the restriction against sharing bad news applies only when there is no future benefit from knowing the bad news. If, however, a positive outcome

אין משיבין על הקלקלה

(Insight...continued from page 1)  
his possessions. This was his partnership with Torah study which is so essential to completing one's soul's journey through this world. This is also why Rebbe cried out and declared, "Here, he bought his way into the World to Come in one moment." This acquisition completed his mission. The acronym of "עקיבא" is **יש קונה עולמו בשעה אחת**. ■

will emerge from knowledge of the bad news it is appropriate to relate that bad news. One example is that it was permitted for the escapee to inform Avrohom Avinu the bad news that his nephew was taken captive since relating that news allowed Avrohom Avinu to take the necessary steps to free Lot from his captures. Similarly, Rema<sup>3</sup> writes that the custom is to inform a son of the passing of his parent so that he should be able to recite kaddish for the deceased parent. Maharam Shik<sup>4</sup> also writes that a child should be informed of his parent's death so that he could recite kaddish and offers the following rationale. If there is a mitzvah to save a person's body from possible harm there is certainly a mitzvah to save a person's soul from potential harm and the recitation of kaddish, we are taught, redeems a person's soul from Gehinom and lightens his punishment. As such it is considered a mitzvah to inform a son that his parent passed away. ■

1. שו"ע יו"ד סי' תי"ב סעי' י"ב.

2. ספר חסידים סי' תת"ב.

3. רמ"א יו"ד הנ"ל.

4. שו"ת מהר"ם שיק או"ח סי' כ"ו. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## The World in an Instant

"יש קונה עולמו בשעה אחת..."

**R**av Yerucham Levovitz of Mir, zt"l, wondered how a person could possibly acquire his spiritual world in one instant. After all, a world so acquired would presumably be of little worth, since what could possibly be accomplished in such a short time? He offered his own explanation, "This means that in even an instant, one can do teshuvah from love and transform his sins to merits. If one manages this, he has acquired a prodigious amount of spiritual acquisitions for the next world since every sin becomes an asset..."<sup>1</sup>

Rav Shach, zt"l, once asked why Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi cried when making this pronunciation. "After all, shouldn't he be happy for all the good acquired in so short a time? Rav Yosef Yehudah Leib Bloch of Telz, zt"l, explained that he must surely cry for all the many hours squandered. If he could accomplish so much in one short hour, how much could he have done if he had used his time properly?"<sup>2</sup>

Rav Zelig of Mashranchik, zt"l, explained differently. "Rebba cried since if one can acquire his entire world in one hour, surely he can lose it again in half the time..."<sup>3</sup>

The Aryeh Sha'ag, zt"l, would recount that the Baal Shem Tov explained this statement in a very deep way. "We find in Sefer Chassidim that one who

learned Talmud will associate with those who learn Talmud in the next world. Those who learned Mishnah will have contact with those who learned Mishnah. And one who used his time in this world to write seforim will have contact with other authors. Similarly, the Baal Shem Tov, zt"l, explained that one who earned his ultimate reward by doing one mitzvah completely but his only pleasures in this world were physical in nature will enjoy a very physical gan eden. For example, a wagon driver whose only pleasure in this world is riding his horses may find himself riding horses for his gan eden. What else can he relate to? Is this not something to cry about?"<sup>4</sup> ■

1. מובא במכתב מאליהו

2. מרן הרב ש"ך, ח"א, ע"י 231

3. בית קוצק, ע"י רכ"ח

4. אריה שאג, ע"י קי"ט ■