

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Building structures (cont.)

The Baraisa continues to recount the incident of R' Eliezer's trial and his search for the sin that precipitated this incident.

Tangential to this incident the Gemara presents a dispute whether one is obligated to distance himself from the entrance of a harlot's door.

It is reported that Ulla kissed his sisters and the Gemara notes how this practice seemed to contradict one of his teachings.

2) Heresy

Two expositions related to heresy are recorded.

The second exposition, namely that one who repents from heresy dies immediately, is unsuccessfully challenged.

The second exposition is again challenged but this time by demonstrating that one who repents from other sins will also die immediately.

As a follow up to the previously-cited incident the Gemara relates that Rabbi noted that some people acquire their World-to-Come in a moment and that former sinners are assigned the title of rebbi.

An incident involving R' Chanina and R' Yonason is presented that relates to choosing to pass a house of idolatry or a brothel.

3) R' Elazar ben Parta and R' Chanina ben Teradyon

The Gemara elaborates on the arrest and trial of R' Elazar ben Parta and R' Chanina ben Teradyon. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Is there an obligation to distance oneself from a harlot's door?

2. What observation did Rabbi make concerning ba'alei teshuvah?

3. How do Chazal perceive one who only engages in Torah study?

4. What was R' Chanina ben Teradyon's defense for teaching Torah?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The study of Torah without acts of kindness

שאת עסקת בתורה ובגמילות חסדים ואני לא עסקתי אלא בתורה בלבד

The Baraisa tells the tragic story of when R' Elazar ben Parta and R' Chanina ben Tradyon were captured by the Romans. R' Elazar noted that R' Chanina had been accused of one charge, while he, R' Elazar, was being accused of five crimes. Nevertheless, R' Chanina pointed out that even though he was captured and charged with one crime, he would not survive, whereas R' Elazar was sure to survive the ordeal. R' Chanina explained, "You were involved in Torah and good deeds (גמילות חסדים), but I involved myself in Torah alone." The Gemara points out that R' Chanina was certainly involved in many great deeds throughout his life, nevertheless he felt that it was not so much as he could have or should have done, and as a result he would be lacking the merit necessary to overcome the danger he faced.

R' Huna says about anyone who is involved in Torah only, and not in acts of kindness as well, that "it is as if he has no Lord - דומה כמי שאין לו אלוהים." Meiri explains that this means that through the study of Torah a person becomes closely familiar with Hashem's greatness and of Hashem's tremendous love of all Jews and mankind in general. If he still limits his service to study without action, it is as if he ignores Hashem's will. This is worse than someone who does no mitzvos, because this one who studies Torah knows better, and he still does not act.

Iyun Yaakov writes that the world was created for Torah and acts of kindness. The verse in Tehillim (89:3) states: "The world was created with kindness." The Gemara (Megilla 9a) tells the story of Ptolemy, a Greek king, who forced the Jewish sages to translate the Torah into his language. Among the miraculous events surrounding that episode was that all the sages translated the first verse of the Torah as "God created the Beginning," as if it was written in a reverse order of the way it appears ("The beginning, God created.") They did this to avoid a possible misinterpretation that some deity named "Beginning" created God.

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Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
 By Mr. and Mrs. Ira Arthur Clair and family
 In loving memory of their father's
 10th Yaharzeit
 Mr. Sholem Clair z'l
 ר' שלום שכנא בן ר' ברוך ז"ל

HALACHAH Highlight

Kissing in shul

אומרי לה אבי חדייהו

And some people say that it was on their chests

Rema¹ rules that it is prohibited for a person to kiss his children in shul. The rationale behind this restriction is that one should set in his heart that there is no love like the love of the Omnipresent. Ben Ish Chai² cites Rema's ruling and adds the following qualification. Kissing the hand of a Torah scholar is permitted since this practice is an expression of honor and love of Torah. Similarly, the practice that some people have to kiss their father, rebbi or other relative one is Biblically obligated to honor is permitted since one who follows this practice does so because of the Biblical obligation to give honor to these people. Kissing other relatives, however, is prohibited. Similarly, it is prohibited for a servant to kiss his master since the prohibition is that one should not demonstrate respect to people in such a sanctified location.

Teshuvus Beis Yisroel³ also cites Rema's ruling and raises the following question. People have the practice of kissing their rebbi or father when they greet them in shul. Similarly, when people take leave of their rebbi or father it is common to give them a kiss even though they are in shul. In light of Rema's ruling how could this practice be justified? He answers similar to the approach of Ben Ish Chai that kissing in

(Insight...continued from page 1)

What was the nature of this possible error? It was that the world was based on two distinct concepts, intelligence and kindness (Torah and action). We proclaim that the world is blended together as a conglomerate of Torah and action, and that they are inseparable. Accordingly, one who only studies but does not involve himself in kindness is tragically demonstrating that there is a separate and distinct level of Torah alone without acts of kindness. This is an expression which denies God's true essence in His creation of the world. ■

these circumstances does not violate the prohibition against kissing someone in shul. The prohibition is kissing one's children which is an expression of love. Shul is a place to focus on one's love of Hashem, therefore, to demonstrate love for someone other than Hashem is disrespectful. Kissing a rebbi or a parent is not an expression of love, it is a sign of respect, to show subservience to that person. There is no restriction against showing subservience to other people while in shul. This concept is found in Rashi's commentary to our Gemara where he mentions the practice of kissing the hand of a parent or one who is greater when leaving shul as a sign of respect. ■

1. רמ"א אומ"ח ס"י צ"ח סעי' א'.
2. בן איש חי שנה ראשונה פרשת ויקרא אות י"ח.
3. שו"ת בית ישראל (לאנדא) אומ"ח ס"י ט'.
4. רש"י ד"ה אבי חדייהו. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

"All Those Who Go to Her Do Not Return..."

כל בואיה לא ישובון ולא ישיגו ארחות חיים

The Aryeh Sha'ag, zt"l, once gave a fiery derashah on the importance of teshuvah. "Rav Chaim Volozhiner, zt"l, would say that teshuvah is paramount even in a situation of פיקוח נפש. He proved his statement from the Gemara in Avodah Zarah 17. There we find that one who pulls himself away from heresy or other sins that require a great struggle to overcome can even die in the process.

He explained, "This teaches that teshuvah can sometimes be life-

threatening. It seems obvious that the average baal teshuvah must struggle mightily to resist falling back into sinful behavior. Nevertheless, everyone who has sinned is required to do teshuvah. Even though one must die to avoid transgressing only the three cardinal sins, we nevertheless see that one must do teshuvah. And this is no less true even if he knows that doing teshuvah will literally endanger his life..."¹

Yet one may wonder why we see so many baalei teshuvah who struggle mightily to return and do not come to any danger as a result of this. The Ohev Shalom of Kaminka, zt"l, answers this question. "Teshuvah is only dangerous for one who does not immerse himself in Torah. But if one who does teshuvah also accepts upon himself the yoke of

Torah by increasing the time he learns, the merit of the Torah will protect him from any danger that would have come due to teshuvah.

"We can understand this from the very verse that the Gemara cites to teach that the danger to life exists. The verse states, 'כל בואיה לא ישובון'—All those who go to her [heresy and sin] do not return—but it limits this curse to when — לא ישיגו ארחות חיים '— They did not attain the paths of life [Torah]. This teaches that the problem is only when one does not make efforts to learn more. But if one grasps the ways of life, that is the Torah, he will be spared."² ■

1. אריה שאג—מידות, ע"ק"מ
2. אוהב שלום—קאמינקא, ע"כ"ז ■