

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Accepting medical treatment from an idolater (cont.)

A second version is presented of Rabbah bar bar Chana in the name of R' Yochanan's guideline to determine whether one may accept medical treatment from an idolater.

The difference between the two versions is identified.

2) Treating afflictions on Shabbos

Two rulings regarding the type of illness that allows one to desecrate Shabbos are recorded.

R' Ami defines an internal affliction as one from the lips inward.

R' Elazar inquires whether gums and teeth are considered an internal affliction.

Two unsuccessful attempts are made to resolve this inquiry.

The symptoms, cause, and treatment of צפדינא are identified.

The permissibility of a great person accepting treatment from an idolatress is discussed.

3) Afflictions and their remedies

The Gemara discusses different afflictions and their remedies.

In the course of this discussion the Gemara recounts a number of related incidents. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why didn't R' Yochanan violate against making a desecration of Hashem's name when he divulged the noblewoman's secret?

2. Why did R' Avahu's doctor want to kill him?

3. What is the procedure for obtaining fluid of the kidney to treat ear ailments?

4. Why is it permitted to treat a swollen eye on Shabbos with medicine?

Distinctive INSIGHT

An ailing eye is an indication of a life-threatening condition
 דשוריני דעינא באובנתא דליבא תלו

The Gemara presents several statements regarding health issues on Shabbos. Rav Yehuda ruled that it is permitted to put a certain blue medicine in one's eye if a person was suffering a particular ailment. R' Shmuel bar Yehuda was surprised to hear this, and he declared that anyone who followed this ruling would be violating Shabbos. Later, R' Shmuel himself suffered from this particular eye irritation, and when they sent a message to R' Yehuda for a ruling, he said that he had received his lenient ruling from Shmuel, the great doctor and posek. The Gemara brings a case of a maid-servant who was suffering from a bad eye on Shabbos, and when it was left untreated she lost it. Shmuel ruled that an eye that "rebels" on Shabbos must be treated, as pain in the eye is rooted in the cavity of the body under the heart, and one's very life is threatened if it is not treated. This is why medicine may be used for an eye ailment even on Shabbos, as this is a serious condition.

Rashi explains that one's vision is directly connected to the area around the heart (diaphragm), and if not treated, the ailment can easily spread to the heart and endanger the entire body. This is the ruling in Shulchan Aruch (O.C. 328:9, 17), and Mishnah Berura (notes 22 and 49), where he writes that although we do not allow violation of a Torah labor in order to save a limb which is in danger, a threat to the eye indicates a threat to life, and this is permitted. Rambam (Hilchos Shabbos 2:4) also rules that an ailing eye is a life-threatening condition.

Tosafos explains that one's vision is connected to the understanding of one's heart (הבנת הלב). We must understand, though, why this is a life-threatening condition that warrants violating Shabbos.

Or HaChama explains that Tosafos means that since understanding is rooted in one's heart, and vision is connected to understanding, there is a connection between vision and one's heart. This teaches us that an ailing heart can be detected in weakness of vision, and treating the vision problem can also cure the weakness of the heart.

Some want to explain that Tosafos holds that it is permitted to perform a Torah-level labor on Shabbos to save a single limb (סכנת אבר), and this is why an ailing eye may be treated, even though it does not indicate anything to do with the health of the heart. This is based upon the comment of Tosafos in Sukkah (26a, ד"ה ואפילו), where the Gemara discusses discomfort and other situations where a person is exempt from residing in a sukkah. Among them is where

HALACHAH Highlight

Treating eye ailments

עין שמרדה מותר לכוחלה בשבת

An eye that rebelled, it is permitted to apply ointment on Shabbos

The Gemara discusses a person who suffers from a swollen eye on Shabbos¹ and rules that one is permitted to anoint the eye with medication on Shabbos. Rashi explains² that the basis for allowing medical treatment of a swollen eye is that halacha considers the risk of an eye going blind to be a potential risk to the person's life. Tosafos³ makes a similar comment regarding the exemption of a person who is suffering from a non-life threatening illness from sitting in the sukkah. He writes that even one who is experiencing discomfort of the eye is exempt from sitting in the sukkah since it is treated like a life-threatening condition. Or Zarua⁴ disagrees with Rashi and Tosafos. He maintains that a condition that would only affect a person's vision is not reason to desecrate Shabbos. It is only when the eye is swollen and threatens to burst out of its socket may one desecrate Shabbos in order to provide medical treatment, since one's eyes are connected to the muscles of the heart.

Chochmas Shlomo⁵ was asked about a person who suffered from a condition that would leave him blind. There was one doctor who would be able to treat him in a way that would leave some of his vision intact. The problem was that

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"his eye is ailing." Tosafos comments, although this is not life-threatening, one may care for an endangered limb, just like on Shabbos, as we find in Avodah Zarah (referring to our Gemara). ■

in the location of the doctor the patient would have to eat non-kosher food since kosher food was not available. Chochmas Shlomo answered that at first glance it seems that it should be permitted since our Gemara maintains that eye ailments are considered life-threatening and that because one is permitted to desecrate Shabbos to save a person whose life is in danger, certainly to violate other prohibitions should be permitted. Upon further review, however, he changes his position. The concern in our Gemara is that a swollen eye may burst forth putting the patient's life in danger. In the case being asked, the concern was that the patient would be left blind, and the potential loss of the use of a limb alone does not warrant the desecration of Shabbos or other Biblical prohibitions. He then suggests a possible distinction between the loss of vision in one eye or both eyes and concludes that the patient should eat only small quantities at a time (פחות) (מכשיעור). ■

1. עי רש"י ד"ה שמרדה.
2. רש"י ד"ה אפילו מישחק ואיתויי כו'.
3. תוס' סוכה כ"ו. ד"ה ואפילו.
4. אור זרוע ה"י יוה"כ ס"י ר"פ.
5. הגהות חכמת שלמה לאו"ח ס"י שכ"ח סעי' ט'. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

To Save a Life

"מחללין עליה את השבת..."

Today's daf discusses when we are obligated to perform melachah on Shabbos.

When the Chazon Ish, zt"l, was asked whether a husband should travel with his wife to the hospital on Shabbos to give birth, he would reply in the affirmative. When he heard about a young man who allowed his laboring wife to travel alone to the hospital on Shabbos, he protested. "That was improper," the Chazon Ish declared.

When another person asked about his wife, also due to give birth, who absolutely refused to allow him to call a cab

on Yom Tov to take them to the hospital and insisted instead on walking to the other side of the city, he objected vociferously. "How can a ben Torah listen to such pleas? The woman is in a dangerous situation and must be driven to the hospital immediately."

A certain party asked for a definition of the exact boundary of pikuach nefesh. "What if my ambulance breaks down on Shabbos? Can I, clearly a Jew, repair it, since it is possible that there will be enough calls in Tel Aviv that having this ambulance in good repair will save a life? Or must I wait for a need before repairing my vehicle?"

The Chazon Ish's reply stunned him. "You must know that when pikuach nefesh broadens to cause an absolute disregard for the halachah for a danger which will come in the future, this makes

a chilul Hashem. Now when there is such a vast chilul Hashem, we say that this takes precedence over pikuach nefesh.

"This is why the Chasam Sofer, zt"l, and the Nodah B'Yehudah, zt"l, both forbid autopsies on Jewish bodies unless the sick person who will benefit directly is present and his life is endangered unless the autopsy is performed.¹

"Yet only the greatest sages of the generation can judge and determine when one is permitted to violate Shabbos in such a broad manner despite the chilul Hashem, or when this is prohibited. They must determine whether one is permitted to violate Shabbos or not on a case-by-case basis."² ■

1. שו"ת חת"ס, יו"ד, ס' של"ו, שו"ת נו"ב תנינא, יו"ד, ס' ר"י
2. מעשה איש, ח"א, ע' קל"ו. ועי' חז"א אוהלות, ס' כ"ב, ס"ק ל"ב ■