

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Clarifying the Mishnah (cont.)

The Gemara continues to analyze the first ruling presented in the Baraisa cited by R' Sheishes.

Abaye and Rava suggest different explanations of the Baraisa.

The Gemara explains the rulings of R' Yehudah referenced by Rava.

2) Dragons

A Baraisa describes the appearance of the dragon mentioned in the Mishnah and Baraisa and this description is confirmed as halacha.

A related incident is recorded and three conclusions are drawn from the incident.

R' Chanina challenges R' Elazar HaKappar's ruling in this incident.

Abaye explains the reasoning behind R' Elazar HaKappar's ruling.

3) Images of celestial bodies

A Mishnah is cited that relates that R' Gamliel had numerous pictures of the moon in his possession.

The permissibility of having these pictures is challenged.

Abaye explains why it was permitted for R' Gamliel to have ownership of these pictures.

This explanation is challenged and the Gemara records an exchange related to the prohibitions of making different images.

At the end of this discussion the Gemara gives three explanations why it was permitted for R' Gamliel to have pictures of the moon in his possession.

4) Dignified and common utensils

Rav and Shmuel offer different explanations of R' Shimon ben Gamliel's reference to "dignified" and "common" utensils.

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

(Continued on page 2)

REVIEW and Remember

1. According to Chazal, how does a dragon appear?

2. How did R' Gamliel confirm that witnesses indeed saw the new moon?

3. What is derived from the words **לא תעשון אתי**?

4. What types of utensils are considered "dignified"?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The chart of pictures of the moon in Rabban Gamliel's attic
 דמות צורות לבנות היה לו לרבן גמליאל

Rashi explains that the correct text of the Mishnah is that Rabban Gamliel had "forms of moons" (plural) in his chamber which he used to show to the witnesses who came to testify about the sighting of the moon. The emphasis of Rashi is that Rabban Gamliel had a chart with many forms on it, not just one.

Chasam Sofer explains that we might have thought that Rabban Gamliel limited himself to one form of the moon—a circle which was half black and half white. When he used to quiz the witnesses, he would cover up parts of the picture and ask the witnesses to identify what they claimed to have seen. Rashi is coming to teach us that this was not the case. The Gemara later (43b) concludes that the reason it was permitted for Rabban Gamliel to have any forms of the moon was that the halacha allows forms that are for educational or demonstrative purposes. Therefore, it was permitted for him to have several crescent forms, which are partial moons, and to use them to quiz the witnesses, rather than to have one full form of the moon, which is more realistic, but unnecessary. Nevertheless, even these slivers of the moon would have been prohibited if not for educational purposes, because although they do not match the form of the moon, the appearance of the moon to our eyes does seem to be a sliver when the month is beginning.

Chasam Sofer brings another proof to show that the images on Rabban Gamliel's chart were slivers of the moon and not a full picture of a sphere. The conclusion of the Gemara (ibid.) is that the chart was made by non-Jews. Tosafos says that Rabban Gamliel instructed them to make this chart. This should have been prohibited due to the law of **אמירה לנכרי**, we may not instruct a non-Jew to do an act which is prohibited for ourselves to do. Nevertheless, for the sake of a mitzvah this was allowed. Rashi holds that instructing a non-Jew to make such a chart was not allowed, even for a mitzvah, but the case was that the non-Jews had already made this chart for themselves, without being told to do so, and Rabban Gamliel bought it from them. Now, according to Rashi, if the picture was that of a full moon, Rabban Gamliel would not have been able to buy it from them, as he would have had to suspect that this fully-formed image of the moon might have been used for worship, as the Mishnah reports that images of the moon are prohibited. Obviously, the pictures on the chart were of partial sections of the moon, but they were still prohibited because the moon appears to our eye in slivered form. This is why Rabban Gamliel did not make this chart for himself, but he bought it from non-Jews who had made it for themselves. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Making the image of an angel

“לא תעשון אתי” לא תעשון כדמות שמשי המשמשין לפני במרום
 “You shall not make with me” [meaning] that you should not make images of those that serve me on high

Rambam¹ writes that it is forbidden to make an image of the sun, moon, constellations or angels even if the image does not protrude from the surface upon which it is drawn. Ran² expresses surprise that Rambam ruled that one may not even draw a two-dimensional image of heavenly bodies or angels. The prohibition against making the image of a person, heavenly bodies and angels are derived from the same verse **לא תעשון אתי** and as such, the prohibitions should be the same. Consequently, just as the prohibition against making an image of a person is violated only when it protrudes the same thing should be true for the prohibition against making the image of an angel. He suggests that perhaps Rambam maintains that the prohibition is violated when one recreates the image as it appears to us. Since angels do not have bodies and even the sun, moon and constellations appear to us as two-dimensional, the prohibition is violated when one makes a two-dimensional image of them. People, on the other hand, appear to us in three dimensions; therefore, the prohibition is violated only when one makes a three-dimensional image of a person.

Minchas Chinuch³ quotes Kessef Mishnah who notes that Tosafos also holds that when it comes to the prohibition

5) MISHNAH: R' Yosi and Rabanan disagree about different methods of disposing of idols.

6) The dispute between R' Yosi and Rabanan

The Gemara begins to cite a Baraisa that elaborates on the dispute between R' Yosi and Rabanan. ■

against making an image of heavenly bodies it does not matter whether the image is three dimensional or two dimensional. Minchas Chinch then suggests that there is a difference between Rambam and Tosafos. According to Tosafos the prohibition against making an image of an angel is violated only when it is a three dimensional image. Since angels do not have bodies the only description we have is the way they are described by the prophets and those descriptions are three dimensional. Rambam, however, maintains that it is only the image of a person that must be made three dimensional for the prohibition to be violated but the prohibition against making the image of an angel is violated even if it is only a two dimensional image. This raises a difficulty for Shulchan Aruch⁴ who rules that the prohibition against making the image of an angel is violated only when it protrudes. Why did Shulchan Aruch not mention Rambam's stringent position that it is forbidden to make an image of an angel even if the image does not protrude? Minchas Chinuch leaves this question unresolved. ■

1. רמב"ם פ"ג מהל' עכו"ם הי"א.
2. ר"ן י"ט: בדפי הר"ף בראש העמוד.
3. מנחת חינוך מצוה ל"ט.
4. שריע יו"ד סי' קמ"א סעי' ד'.

STORIES Off the Daf

"Find Another Table!"

”כל הפרצופות מותרין...”

When people go out to purchase a dining room table, they generally consider the size of the table and how sturdy it is built. But the legs of the table do not really occupy their attention. It may be interesting to consider that even the legs of a table can have spiritual ramifications.

For example, when a certain elderly couple purchased a table second-hand, they only thought about the impression it made, its size, and how strong it was. But they failed to notice that on each leg of the table was carved a handsome lion's

head. The likeness was quite nice and they were set on buying it until a friendly neighbor, who was also at the sale, wondered aloud whether there was a halachic problem with this.

When the couple asked a rav he replied that they were better off finding another table. “Even though the Rambam and Shulchan Aruch rule from the Gemara in Avodah Zarah 43 that even forms of wild animals are permitted, the Ramban and the Ran rule differently and conclude that having an image is a violation of **‘לא תעשון’**.”¹

“Even though there are those who are lenient in this regard even regarding shuls, others prohibit, especially since a lion is one of the animals on the merkavah.”²

“Of course, you may argue that this

is not an image, merely a table with a lion carved on its legs. Rav Nisim Karelitz, shlit”a, writes that those who make a paroches with a lion and the like on it rely on this argument, and possibly a table is no different. Nevertheless, Rav Karelitz concludes that one should not make such a paroches l’chatchilah and the same is true regarding purchasing such a table.”³

“In addition, Rav Yonasan Eibshitz, zt”l, writes that one should not have such images in his home, even the ones that are supposedly permitted, if he can possibly help it.”⁴ I therefore suggest you find another table.” ■

1. רמב"ם, הל' ע"ז, פ"ג, ה' י"א, ש"ע יו"ד סי' קמ"א, סי' ו', חכ"א, כלל פ"ה, סי' ז"ח.
2. אבקת רוכל להב"י, סי' ס"ג.
3. חוט שני, דיני עשיית צורות (נספח בסוף חוט שני הל' פסח).
4. יערות דבש, דרוש ב'.