

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Rebbi and Antoninus (cont.)

The story of another righteous Roman, Onkolos, is presented.

R' Yehudah in the name of Rav explains how the report to Rivkah regarding her twins referred to Rebbi and Antoninus.

The health benefit of cucumbers is challenged and then clarified.

### 2) Burning the king's belongings

It is noted that the Mishnah implies that there is a dispute whether there is an idolatrous ritual to burn the king's belongings.

Rabanan's position that burning the king's belongings is an idolatrous ritual is successfully challenged.

An alternative explanation of the dispute is presented.

A Baraisa teaches that burning the king's belongings is not considered an Amorite practice.

A point in the Baraisa is clarified.

The Gemara clarifies which of the king's belongings are burned.

### 3) Shaving his beard and cutting his hair

The Gemara inquires whether shaving the beard and cutting the hair is one case or two.

Two Beraisos are cited, one considers them one case and the other considers them as two cases.

### 4) Roman festival

R' Yehudah in the name of Rav describes another pagan festival not mentioned in the Mishnah.

R' Ashi mocks the declaration associated with this festival.

The reason this festival is not mentioned in the Mishnah is explained.

### 5) Other festivals

Festivals of other nations are enumerated.

A list of temples of idolatry that are in constant use is presented.

The meaning of the term קבועין is explained.

Shmuel declares that in exile it is only prohibited to do business with idolaters on the day of the festival.

The assertion that on the day of the festival it is prohibited is unsuccessfully challenged.

**6) MISHNAH:** Additional aspects of the prohibition of engaging with idolaters on the day of their festival are presented.

### 7) Outside the city

R' Shimon ben Lakish in the name of R' Chanina defines the phrase "outside the city" used in the Mishnah.

According to a second version R' Shimon ben Lakish was asking a question of R' Chanina. ■

## Distinctive INSIGHT

*Shmuel rules that a one-day limit of business is enough*

אמר שמואל בגולה אינו אסור אלא יום אידם בלבד

The sages prohibit engaging in business with idolaters up to three days prior to their holidays (Mishnah, 2a). Shmuel rules that the time frame of three days prior to these holidays only applies in Eretz Yisroel, but throughout the rest of the world it is only prohibited to deal with the idolaters on the day of their holiday itself, but not on the days before the holiday begins. The commentators provide reasons for the distinction between the idolaters in Eretz Yisroel and the rest of the world.

Rashi explains that outside of Eretz Yisroel, our livelihoods depends upon the gentiles, so abstaining from doing business with them would be too difficult for us. Rashi also notes that the gentiles have the upper hand and are in control of the governments. If they were to detect that we were avoiding dealing with them before their holidays in order to diminish their sense of business success, they might harm us. Our diminished give and take with them on the one day of their holiday itself will not be so noticeable, especially when that is the time they are very busy and preoccupied with their celebrations.

On 7b, Rashi points out another factor, and that is for the gentiles outside of Eretz Yisroel there is only a concern that they might go and thank their god for their business successes of the very day of their holiday itself, but they will not pray on their holiday and refer to successes they might have had on earlier days. This is based upon the Gemara in Chullin (13b) which says that the idolaters outside of Eretz Yisroel do not worship their gods wholeheartedly. They only go through the motions and follow the customs of their fathers. Their worship is super-

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## REVIEW and Remember

1. Are cucumbers a healthy food to eat?  
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2. What property of the Nasi is burned upon his death?  
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3. How did the Romans observe the festival celebrated every seventy years?  
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4. What was intended by characterizing some houses of worship as קבועין?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated  
 Rabbi and Mrs. Shiya Wechsler  
 In loving memory of his mother  
 מרת פרומט בת ר' אהרן ע"ה

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Touching the mezuzah as one enters or leaves

הזא מוֹזוֹתָא דמנחא אפתחא אותיב ידיה עלה

He saw the mezuzah that was affixed to the doorway and he placed his hand on it

Rema<sup>1</sup> writes that according to some opinions, when a person leaves his house he should put his hand on the mezuzah and recite a short prayer. Similarly, when a person arrives home he should put his hand on the mezuzah. Rav Akiva Eiger<sup>2</sup> comments that the practice of putting one's hand on the mezuzah has no source in the Talmud and therefore it should not be practiced when it could violate a prohibition. Thus, for example, if the parchment is not covered one should not place his hand on the mezuzah since there is a restriction against directly touching sacred writings. To touch the mezuzah parchment in accordance with Rema's ruling would constitute a mitzvah that comes about thru a transgression – מצוה הבאה בעבירה and thus should not be done.

Teshuvos Be'er Moshe<sup>3</sup> expresses surprise that Rav Akiva Eiger would assert that the practice of touching the mezuzah as one enters and exits has no source in the Talmud when the source is the famous story of Onkelos the convert that is recorded in our Gemara. This, in fact, is the source cited by Maharil<sup>4</sup> who is the source for Rema's ruling. Be'er Moshe suggests the following explanation for why Rav Akiva Eiger rejected the incident of Onkelos as the source for the practice of touching the mezuzah as one enters and exits a room. The Caesar had sent two pairs of soldiers to retrieve Onkelos and Onkelos engaged them in conversation and with his great wisdom was able to get them to convert. When Caesar sent the third group he gave them explicit instructions not to have a conversation with On-

(Insight...continued from page 1)

ficial, so it does not include a full spectrum of appreciation.

Lechem Mishneh (to Hilchos Avodas Kochavim 9:1) writes that according to Rashi's first explanation of Shmuel, we can explain Shmuel's statement broadly. When the Jews inhabit Eretz Yisroel and the country is under their control, it would be prohibited to deal with the idolaters for a full three days prior to their holidays, both in Eretz Yisroel and throughout the world. However, when the Jews reside primarily in exile, and our livelihoods depend upon our interactions with the gentiles, it would only be prohibited to deal with the gentiles on the very day of their holidays in all places. Vilna Gaon adds (Y.D. 148: #8) that according to the second reason given by Rashi, that we are afraid that the gentiles will take reprisals against us, the limitation to doing business with the non-Jews is narrowed to one day, and there is no difference between Eretz Yisroel and the Diaspora.

Rambam rules according to Shmuel, and in Eretz Yisroel there is a three-day prohibition, but in the Diaspora it is only one day. He holds that the worship of the gentiles in Eretz Yisroel is genuine, while outside Eretz Yisroel it is superficial. ■

kelos out of fear that he would convince them to convert as well. When Onkelos realized they would not speak with him he had to figure out something outlandish to do to engage them in conversation. He decided to touch the mezuzah on the doorpost so that they would be intrigued by his unusual behavior. Being that Onkelos touched the mezuzah only to grab the attention of the Roman soldiers it cannot be used as a general precedent for the general obligation to touch the mezuzah. ■

1. רמ"א יו"ד ס"י רפ"ה סעי' ב'.
2. שו"ת רעק"א קמא ס"י נ"ח.
3. שו"ת באר משה ח"ב ס"י צ"ח.
4. מהרי"ל סו"ס מנהגים ליקוטים אות צ"א. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## "A Well-Stocked Table"

"לא פסקו מעל שולחנם לא וחזרת... ולא צנון"

A certain well known tzaddik once traveled with a group of chassidim to a distant place. On their way, they found accommodations in a pub owned by a Jew. This Jew did not provide food, but the group had come prepared with many potatoes and placed them in the oven to prepare them for dinner.

One chassid decided to have a quick taste, but had the misfortune of being noticed by his rebbe who gave him a few

choice words of rebuke based on today's daf.

"On Avodah Zarah 11 we find that Antigonus and Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi had radishes and chazeres on their table the whole year round. There is a reason the gemara tells us that these were specifically on their table. This is to teach that we must eat at the table and not standing up, which is a lack of common decency. As we find in Shulchan Aruch, one should not eat like someone who is starving..."<sup>1</sup>

The Rebbe of Pupa, zt"l, inspired his yeshivah to learn properly with the Chasam Sofer's explanation of this very same statement. "The Chasam Sofer, zt"l,

explains that radish is something sharp, and can allude to learning Torah in depth. Chazeres can be understood to refer to chazarah, reviewing what one has already learned. During the summer, people tend to put in the effort to learn in depth while during the winter it is often easier to review what one has already learned. The Gemara tells us that in both summer and winter both of these paths of learning were on Rebbe's table to teach that the path to success in becoming a talmid chacham is by delving in both iyun and bekiyus the whole year round!"<sup>2</sup> ■

1. אוצר שיחות צדיקים, ע"י רי"ב
2. פתח טוב, ע"י קני"ו ■