

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Tzedaka collectors (cont.)

R' Ashi mentions that it was unnecessary for him as a tzedaka collector to stipulate that he could distribute the tzedaka funds as he sees fit.

2) Violating communal enactments

An incident is related regarding a butcher who violated an agreement made among the butchers.

Rava ruled against the butchers who punished the violator.

Rava's ruling is unsuccessfully challenged.

3) Tzedaka collectors (cont.)

A Baraisa discusses whether we require tzedaka collectors or administrators of the Beis HaMikdash to report and account for the money under their control.

R' Elazar offers cautious advice concerning dealing with treasurers.

4) The poor

R' Huna rules that we investigate those who seek food from charity but not those who seek clothing.

Two sources are cited for this position.

R' Yehudah asserts that we investigate those who seek clothing but not those who request food.

Two sources are cited for this position.

A Baraisa in support of R' Yehudah is quoted.

A Mishnah in Peah is cited that presents the criteria for determining eligibility for different forms of tzedaka.

Points mentioned in the Mishnah are clarified.

A related incident is recorded.

5) Tzedaka limits

R' Assi establishes the minimum amount that one must give to tzedaka annually.

R' Assi presents a related exposition.

6) Tzedaka

Two statements from R' Elazar related to tzedaka are presented.

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REVIEW and Remember

1. How often is a tzedaka collector audited?

2. What is the minimum amount that one should give to tzedaka annually?

3. What act can one perform that is greater than Moshe Rabbeinu's actions?

4. How many berachos does one receive for putting the mind of a poor person at ease?

Distinctive INSIGHT

Giving tzedaka discreetly

אמר רבי אלעזר: גדול העושה צדקה בסתר יותר ממשה רבינו, כתיב כי יגורתי מפני האף והחמה ואילו בעושה צדקה כתיב מתן בסתר יכפה אף

According to Tosafos, R' Elazar taught that one who gives tzedaka secretly is able to dispel anger to a greater degree than Moshe Rabeinu was able to do through his prayers. The proof to this is based upon two verses. The verse in Mishlei (21:14) states that one who gives tzedaka secretly can vanquish anger, whereas Moshe is quoted as saying (Devarim 9:19), "I was frightened by the wrath and blazing anger." Tosafos asks, however, that Moshe also performed countless acts of tzedaka, many without fanfare or public recognition. Although his prayers were not as powerful as his acts of kindness, Moshe Rabeinu should have relied upon the tzedaka that he performed to quell these destructive forces. Why was he afraid of the wrath and anger?

Tosafos answers that perhaps Moshe was terrified at this point in his life, as the merit of these acts of tzedaka were already exhausted and depleted. Metzudas David explains that the acts of tzedaka and kindness to which Tosafos refers were the acts of benevolence which Moshe had performed to his fellow Jews in Egypt, when they were enslaved and tortured by the evil taskmasters. The comment of Moshe that he was afraid of the wrath and anger was made in reference to the story of the Golden Calf. At that point in the desert, it was not possible for Moshe to perform tzedaka for his fellow Jews, because everyone was receiving the manna bread, and everyone's clothing was preserved and refreshed by the clouds. Therefore, the earlier merit of providing assistance and aid to fellow Jews might have been used up.

נפש דוד asks why R' Elazar made a comparative statement by saying that giving tzedaka secretly is "better than the prayers of Moshe Rabeinu." If his purpose was to emphasize how wonderful it is to give tzedaka in a discreet manner, he could have simply said that it is better to give tzedaka quietly than it is to give it publicly. The way it is presented might mislead a person to believe that he is greater than Moshe Rabeinu.

He answers, based upon the writings of the אר"י ז"ל, that one who is ill is lacking in "the fiftieth gate." The numerical value of the word חולה is forty-nine, which is just deficient of a full fifty. Our sages have also taught that "the fiftieth gate" was not revealed to Moshe Rabeinu. This could result in a people who is ill becoming saddened, thinking that if Moshe Rabeinu did not achieve the "fiftieth gate," how could he possibly recover and attain the fiftieth level which he needs? This is why R' Elazar teaches that by giving tzedaka discreetly, a person can indeed attain the fiftieth gate, something that Moshe Rabeinu did not. ■

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מרת רחל לאה בת ר' אברהם צבי חיים ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

The reward for encouraging others to give tzedaka

גדול המעשה יותר מן העושה

Greater is the one who encourages others than the one who performs the mitzvah

Tur¹ writes that someone who does not have the means to give tzedaka but can convince others to give tzedaka is rewarded as greatly as those who personally give tzedaka. Bach² challenges Tur on this matter since the Gemara tells us that one who convinces others to give tzedaka receives a greater reward than those who give tzedaka, yet Tur writes that his reward is only equal to those who donate. He therefore suggests that there is a printer's error and the correct reading is that the reward for those who encourage others to give tzedaka is greater than the reward for those who give tzedaka.

Perisha³ suggests that the Gemara's statement that those who convince others to give tzedaka is greater than the reward for those who give tzedaka is limited to those who give tzedaka without a full heart, but those who convince others to give tzedaka receive reward equal to those who give tzedaka with a full heart. Taz⁴ rejects this explanation based on Shulchan Aruch⁵ who rules that one who gives tzedaka with a sour face loses his reward. How then could Perisha assert that the reward for those who convince others to give tzedaka is equal to the reward of those who give unwillingly, when those who give unwillingly do not receive reward? In defense of Perisha, Ma'aseh Rokeach⁶ suggests that there is a difference between one who gives tzedaka with a sour face and one who gives tzedaka unwillingly but does not show that to the poor person. The one who gives tzedaka with a sour face loses his reward since he causes the poor person to become embarrassed. In contrast, the one who gives tzedaka unwillingly

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Rava and R' Chanina give illustrations to explain how even small contributions are valuable to tzedaka.

The Gemara explains why Rava referred to R' Sheishes with an unusual title.

A third statement from R' Elazar concerning tzedaka is presented.

The Gemara presents two versions of R' Yitzchok's alternative exposition to the verse cited by R' Elazar.

Two statements from R' Yitzchok related to tzedaka are recorded.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok suggests an alternative exposition of the verse cited by R' Yitzchok.

R' Yehoshua ben Levi enumerates the rewards for those who give tzedaka regularly. ■

but does not show the poor person a sour face does not lose his reward.

Shelah⁷ offers a novel explanation for Tur. The reason the reward for the one who convinces others to give tzedaka is greater than the reward for those who give tzedaka is that he convinces many people to give tzedaka, and all of that merit accrues to his benefit. The intent of Tur is that the reward for convincing one person to give tzedaka is equal to the reward for the person who gives tzedaka. The Gemara which states that his reward is greater refers to a person who convinced many people to give tzedaka and his accrued merit is greater than the merit of any one of the people who gave tzedaka. ■

1. טור יו"ד סי' רמ"ט.
2. בי"ח שם ד"ה ומ"ש שכרו.
3. פרישה שם סק"ו.
4. ט"ז שם סק"ב.
5. שו"ע שם סעי' ג'.
6. מעשה רוקח פ"י מהל' מתנת עניים הי"ו.
7. שלייה ח"א ענין צדקה ומעשר ד"ה בפ"ק. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Speaking kindly to the poor

ויהמפייסו בדברים מתברך ב"א ברכות..."

Once Rav Zusia of Anapoli, ז"ל, went to collect tzedakah with another rav. They went to visit a certain miser whom the rav knew never donated to any cause, no matter how worthy. When the two were invited into the wealthy miser's home and he refused to donate a penny, Rav Zusia asked him why.

"What do you mean, why?" asked the man. "I learned this from a clear Gemara in Bava Basra 9. We find that while one

who gives charity receives six blessings, one who speaks kindly to the poor gets eleven. Isn't it better to honor the poor man without giving a cent? After all, one who does so is granted almost double the blessing, so obviously he is doing the main avodah!"

While the rav who had accompanied Rav Zusia stood speechless at the man's callousness to the plight of others, Rav Zusia replied, "You have not learned the Gemara correctly. After all, why would the one who honors the poor be afforded greater blessing when the actual money feeds him and literally saves his life?"

"The root of your error is that you think that the money you give the poor is a gift from your resources, but in truth this

is not so. We find in many sources that the money that the wealthy man gives the poor is actually the poor man's which has been deposited with the wealthy man for the express purpose of returning it to the poor person. One who gives the deposit back is blessed, but someone who refrains from donating to a worthy cause when he can well afford it is nothing less than a thief. If, besides giving a donation, a person also speaks kindly to the poor man he is afforded extra blessings since in this manner he gives the poor man from his own. He has gone beyond merely returning the poor man's property that has been entrusted with him from on high!"¹ ■

1. מובא בסי' שרפי קודש, ע"ר רע"א. ■