

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Rebbi (cont.)

Another quote from the book of Adam is presented.

2) Rabbah bar Nachmani

It is reported that Rabbah bar Nachmani died out of fear of religious persecution.

The events surrounding his death are spelled out.

One statement regarding R' Shimon ben Chalafta is presented.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

The Gemara explains what is included with the phrase of the Mishnah **הכל כמנהג המדינה**.

It is noted that the incident in the Mishna is contradictory to the stated halacha.

The Gemara answers that the Mishnah is missing a phrase and with that phrase the Mishnah makes more sense.

4) The meals of Avrohom and Shlomo

The previous discussion leads the Gemara to contrast the meals of Avrohom and Shlomo Hamelech.

The phrase **ברבורים אבוסים** is explained by different Amoraim.

R' Yochanan identifies what is the best meat and what is the best fowl.

R' Yehudah in the name of Rav offers an explanation of one of the verses related to Avrohom Avinu's meal.

This explanation is unsuccessfully challenged.

R' Tanchum bar Chanila'i derives from the incident of Avrohom Avinu the importance of not deviating from local custom.

R' Yehudah in the name of Rav notes that what Avrohom Avinu did for the angels himself, Hashem did for Bnei Yisroel and what Avrohom Avinu had an agent perform, Hashem did for Bnei Yisroel through an agent.

It is noted that R' Chama the son of R' Chanina disagrees with this statement.

5) The visit of the Angels to Avrohom Avinu

The Gemara elaborates on some of the verses related to the meal Avrohom served the angels.

This discussion leads the Gemara to describe the event of the angels. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

The many favors which Avraham Avinu provided for the angels

אמר רבי יהודה אמר רב כל מה שעשה אברהם אבינו למלאכי השרת בעצמו עשה הקב"ה לבניו בעצמו

Our Gemara (Bava Metzia 86b) tells us that Avraham Avinu was rewarded for each activity that he performed as he worked to host the angels who came to visit him. In response to each action he performed on his own, Hashem performed a corresponding favor directly on behalf of the Jewish people, the descendants of Avraham. For each action which Avraham delegated to others to do, Hashem arranged that it be done "on the part of a messenger" on behalf of the Jewish people. For example, Avraham himself ran to prepare meat (Bereishis 18:7), and as a reward, Hashem later directly sent the pheasant birds for the Jews (Bamidbar 11:31). Avraham brought butter and bread (Bereishis 18:8), and the Jews were provided with heavenly manna directly from Hashem (Shemos 16:4). However, he sent someone to bring water to the guests (Bereishis 18:4) when he said, "Let some water be brought, please, and wash your feet, and recline beneath the tree." As a result, the Jews were furnished with water only via a messenger, through Moshe, as we find in Shemos 17:6.

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein notes that we might wonder why the actions of Avraham Avinu are considered deficient and somewhat lacking in his appointing a messenger to take care of bringing water to the guests. Avraham was very diligent in all his actions, and he certainly intended to see that everything was done efficiently. In fact, after he brought the cattle, he gave them to "the lad" to prepare them. Rashi identifies this lad as Yishmael, and he explains that Avraham handed them to Yishmael in order to train him in the mitzvah of accommodating guests. Here, too, in reference to the water, we can be assured that Avraham intended to train this messenger in the mitzvah. Why, then, is this gesture indicative of some degree of a failure on his part?

We see, though, that in order to fulfill the mitzvah of training others to do mitzvos, the best method is for a son or a student to witness his father or mentor himself being involved in the mitzvah. It is never enough for the parent or teacher to merely lecture or instruct others on what they should do. Therefore, there was no excuse for Avraham to delegate these actions which were necessary to accommodate the guests. The best way to educate is to serve as a role model, a consistent and steady image of commitment and loyalty, one which is there to be observed and to be emulated. ■

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
 By Rabbi and Mrs. Makhlof Suissa
 In loving memory of their father
 ר' יעיש בן ר' דוד, ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

The status of animal created through kabbalistic means

ואל הבקר רץ אברהם

And Avrohom went to the cattle

Malblim¹ writes that the animal that Avrohom Avinu served to the angels was created with the Sefer Yetzira that Avrohom Avinu himself authored. This amazing explanation allows him to explain the verses that describe Avrohom's behavior in a very interesting manner. The verse first states that Avrohom ran after the cattle to provide his guests with meat. The pasuk then goes on to tell us **וימהר לעשותו** –and he was quick to make it. Conventionally, this is understood to mean that Avrohom took the animal and prepared it quickly for the angels to eat. Malblim explains the verse differently. When the guests first came Avrohom went to the pen of animals to take three animals but one of them fled and ran all the way to Ma'aras Hamachpela. Since Avrohom Avinu did not want to make his guests wait for him to retrieve the animal from Ma'aras Hamachpela he decided that it would be permitted for him to make use of these mystical powers to create a new animal. Accordingly, when the pasuk relates **וימהר לעשותו** it can be understood literally, meaning Avrohom Avinu decided that in order to be quick he could make the animal using the wisdom of the Sefer Yetzira.

Once we accept that the calf Avrohom served the angels was created by Avrohom we could answer another question commentators ask about our verses. The verse relates that Avrohom took butter and milk together with the meat. How could

REVIEW and Remember

1. What was the indirect cause of the death of Rabbah bar Nachmani?

2. How did Abaye, Rabbah, and the other rabbis find the body of Rabbah bar Nachmani?

3. How many wives did Shlomo Hamelech have according to the Gemara?

4. According to R' Chama the son of R' Chanina, what was the act that granted Bnei Yisroel the manna, Clouds of Glory and Miriam's well?

Avrohom Avinu serve milchigs and fleishigs together? If we accept the premise of Malblim the question is answered. The prohibition against mixing meat and milk is limited to cases of meat that comes from an animal born to its mother. There is no prohibition against mixing milchigs with meat that comes from an animal that was created used kabbalistic means. Another possible leniency Poskim² note regarding an animal created kabbalistically is that such an animal may not require slaughtering before the animal may be consumed. Similarly, commentators³ discuss whether an animal created in such a fashion may be offered as a korban. ■

1. מלבים בראשית י"ח: ז.
2. עי פתחי תשובה סי' ס"ב סק"ב.
3. עי פרדס יוסף בראשית ל"ז: ב. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Local customs

"אל ישנה מן המנהג..."

The Maggid of Dubno, zt"l, would often travel to different locations to give over his inspiring parables and teachings. On one journey, the Maggid stopped at the home of a villager who had rooms for rent, but he was very surprised when they did not serve supper.

"We do not really serve food since we are so poor," the proprietor explained.

The Maggid ruefully went up to his room to try to sleep, but he had no food with him and was wracked with hunger pains. Some time after he had gone to his

room, the Maggid heard what appeared to be the family eating their evening meal. Sure enough, when he walked out of his room he found that the proprietor did have food to serve everyone else; he just did not want to be bothered with feeding his paying guest. So they had waited quite some time and only ate when they were sure their honored guest was fast asleep.

The Maggid would retell this story and say, "Through this experience I understood the Gemara in Bava Metzia 86 which teaches that one should always follow the local custom, since our teacher Moshe did not eat or drink for forty days when he ascended on high to receive the Torah. This seems strange. Why not say that he didn't sleep for forty days since

one cannot naturally live without sleep for even three days, while one can live without food for longer? The answer is that if Moshe didn't eat since the angels did not, it is clear that he also didn't sleep—if he had, perhaps they ate while Moshe slept!"¹

The Modzhitzer Rebbe, zt"l, would learn a very inspiring lesson from this very same Gemara. "The Gemara tells us, **אל ישנה אדם מן המנהג**—one should not deviate from the prevalent custom.' We can learn from this that no matter how he is treated from heaven he should not complain and say that he wishes things were different!"² ■

1. גן יוסף, עי ל"ח
2. דברי ישראל, כללי אורייתא, דף ז', טו"ב