

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) The visit of the angels to Avrohom Avinu (cont.)

The Gemara continues to elaborate on the visit of the angels to Avrohom Avinu.

The description comes to a close with the birth of Yitzchok.

The Gemara relates that Avrohom introduced old age, Yaakov introduced illness and Elisha introduced recovery from illness.

A Baraisa describes Elisha's illness.

### 2) Clarifying the Mishnah

Two points regarding the Mishnah are explained.

3) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah presents the guidelines for determining which workers are permitted to eat the employer's food and which workers may not.

### 4) An employee's right to eat

The Gemara develops the expositions that set the guidelines for the halacha that mandates that an employee may eat the produce while he is working with that produce.

After the Gemara finds an exposition that includes all varieties of produce, the Gemara wonders why the verse concerning the vineyard was necessary.

Rava answers that the verse teaches other halachos, and he then cites a Baraisa that presents numerous halachos derived from this verse.

A point in the Baraisa is clarified. ■

## REVIEW and Remember

1. How do we know that Sarah was extremely modest?  
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2. Why did Avrohom introduce old age to the world?  
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3. What is the source that a worker is permitted to eat the produce in the field while he is working?  
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4. Is a worker permitted to take produce from the field and store it in a utensil for a later time?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Distinctive INSIGHT

### *Tzaddikim say little, but they do much*

אמר רבי אלעזר מכאן שצדיקים אומרים מעט ועושים הרבה

When the servant of Avrohom, whom Chazal identify as Eliezer, came to find a wife for Yitzchok, he approached Rivka and asked for water for himself. Rivka did indeed fulfill the task about which Eliezer spoke. The verse (Bereshis 24:18-19) tells us: "And she said: 'Drink, my lord,' and she hurried, and she lowered her jug to her hand and gave him drink. And when she finished giving him drink she said: 'I will draw [water] even for your camels until they have finished drinking.'" She gave water for him, and later for the camels as well.

It is interesting to note, however, that Rivka performed this task only in stages. She first offered water for Eliezer, and only after he drank did she suggest that she would give water for the camels. Earlier, Eliezer had stipulated that the girl he would meet would give water for him and for the camels, but he did not mention any pause between the offers (see verse 14). What can we learn from this?

The Chafetz Chaim points out that Rivka only told Eliezer that which she was able to accomplish at one time. Her first statement was that she would give water for him. Once this was accomplished, she was now able to proceed and give the camels water as well. This is why she then stated that she was prepared to give water to them as well. This is why Rivka made her two offers to give water in two steps, and not all at once.

The great Rabbi Naftoli Trop, zt"l, explained that this scenario is a demonstration of the dictum of our sages in our Gemara (Bava Metzia 87a): "The righteous say little." The righteous do not overstate their intentions. They are careful to verbalize only that which is practical and relevant for the moment. Anything that is not for the immediate situation has no purpose in being mentioned, and the righteous avoid unnecessary and exaggerated words. ■

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By Mr. and Mrs. David Binter  
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הרב גרשון זאב בן ר' מרדכי דוד, ז"ל  
Rabbi Gershon Futерko o.b.m.

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Refusing a lesser person

מכאן שמסרבין לקטן ואין מסרבין לגדול

From here we see that one may refuse a lesser person but not a greater person

**S**efer Orach Yescharim<sup>1</sup> explains that the inference R' Elazar drew from the different responses of the angels to the offers made by Avrohom and Lot is not related to haughtiness. The thought behind this advice is to be able to test the sincerity of people's offers. If a lesser person makes an offer to share food or something similar he may be making that offer because he feels compelled to do so, while he might not be truly sincere. To accept an offer under such conditions is incorrect. Therefore, R' Elazar advised to initially refuse the offer. If the one who made the offer actually did not want to tender the offer in the first place he will accept the refusal and will not try and apply pressure. Someone who was sincere will ask a second and a third time until the person finally agrees. When a greater person makes an offer there is no reason to doubt his sincerity, because if he was not sincere he would not have made the offer. Therefore the offer may be accepted without an initial refusal.

Shulchan Aruch<sup>2</sup> rules that someone who is not the regular *sh'liach tzibbur* who is asked to daven should refuse a little, but not too much. This means that the first time he is asked he should refuse. If asked a second time he should indicate that he is getting ready to stand and on the third request he should rise to lead the prayers. If, however, the one asking is a great person the offer should not be refused, and the one being asked should immediately rise to lead the prayers. Beis Yosef<sup>3</sup> cites authorities who point to our Gemara as the source for this ruling of Shulchan Aruch.

Teshuvos Torah Lishmah<sup>4</sup> addresses an interesting related question. A man was given a fruit to eat and before he had a chance to eat it his son walked into the room and the father offered the fruit to his son. The son did not want to take the fruit because he wanted his father to eat the fruit, but on the other hand perhaps he is not permitted to refuse the offer made by his father who is greater. Torah Lishmah answered that it is evident from our Gemara that a child should not refuse an offer tendered by a parent since in addition to the Gemara's statement that one should not refuse one who is greater, there is also the issue of *kibbud av v'em*. ■

1. ספר אורח ישרים (טאקסין ד"ה ויפצר).
2. שו"ע או"ח סי' נ"ג סעי' ט"ז.
3. בית יוסף שם.
4. שו"ת תורה לשמה סי' ער"ה. ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## One refuses a person of small stature

"ויפצר בם מאד מכאן שמסרבין לקטן..."

**O**n today's daf we find that the angels originally refused Lot's offer of hospitality because he was of small spiritual stature.

Most religious Jews are certain that they have nothing in common with Lot in Sodom. Yet Rav Shalom Shwardron, zt"l, would explain that the story of Lot is sadly the story of many observant Jews today.

"On the surface, the story of Lot seems very strange. On the one hand, the sages told us that he left Avrohom with the statement, 'I want nothing to

do with Avrohom and his God.' Yet even in Sodom, Lot brought guests into his home with tremendous self-sacrifice and even observed the laws of Pesach, as Rashi explains. So why isn't he considered a tzaddik?"

Rav Shalom continued, "The answer is clear. Lot did not say that he did not want Avraham and his God; he used the term 'אי אפשר' which also means, 'I cannot.' He claims that he cannot be like Avrohom. He can do many mitzvos even with great self-sacrifice, but he cannot cut himself off from his predominately materialistic focus on life. Lot was not willing to give up on any of his desires, claiming this to be beyond him. Lot personified the verse (Mishlei 18:1): 'לתאוה יבקש'—Desire seeks out the loner, the

one who sets himself apart.<sup>1</sup>

"Unfortunately, I myself have met many Jews who resemble Lot in this way. In America, many people focus on materialism twenty-four hours a day. People are always thinking about food or other physical desires, or the all important 'tachlis'—making money in business. I once gave a lecture in a shul there. After the speech, I walked with a group of people and we were required to stop for a red light. As we waited, one of the men escorting me turned to me and quipped, 'Rav Shalom, we are waiting for green, for the green stuff. Don't you get it? One who has the green can go places in life...' What a waste! Is that what life is all about?"<sup>2</sup> ■

1. נזיר כ"ג
2. להגיד, ח"א, עי 126-128 ■