

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Taken without justice (cont.)

The Gemara concludes the incident involving the woman who was taken to die without justice.

2) The reaction of R' Yochanan to different verses

Different verses that caused R' Yochanan to cry together with related incidents are presented.

One of the discussions related to Hashem taking young righteous men to protect them from future sin.

Another discussion relates that Hashem's judgment includes even seemingly minor offenses.

3) Expounding verses in Devarim Ch. 31

Following R' Yochanan's reaction to one verse from Devarim Ch. 31 the Gemara explains another difficult verse in that chapter.

A related incident involving Rava is recorded.

Another verse in Devarim Ch. 31 is explained with a related incident involving R' Yehoshua ben Chanayah and his skill at refuting heretics.

A discussion related to the accounting everyone will make for the words he spoke is presented.

The issue of Hashem's concealment is analyzed which leads to a discussion of the impact on Hashem and the Jewish people of the destruction of the Beis Hamikdash.

An incident involving Rabbi and R' Chiya is recorded.

The incident of the "Yeshiva student for a day" is presented. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What happens to the extra years of a person who was taken before his time?

2. What are the hidden matters that are part of a person's judgment?

3. What was R' Yehoshua ben Chananyah's specialty?

4. What groups of people cause Hashem to cry every day?

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By Mr. and Mrs. Michael Allen
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HALACHAH Highlight

Encountering evils and distresses

רבי יוחנן כי מטא להאי קרא בכי והיה כי תמצאן אותו רעות רבות וצרות. עבד שרבו ממציא לו רעות וצרות תקנה יש לו?

The Gemara relates that when Rabbi Yochanan would reach the verse (Devarim 31:21) "And it shall be that when many evils and distresses will encounter them," he would begin to weep. He exclaimed, "If a master places many evils and afflictions upon his servant, does this slave have any hope?" The commentators are puzzled by Rabbi Yochanan's strong reaction to the difficulty of this slave. There are many distresses enumerated in the Torah. In addition, we know that a slave actually can achieve his freedom if his owner causes injury to any major limb. (see Shemos 21:26-27)

Rabbi Meir Shapiro answered these questions based upon the Gemara (Berachos 5a). We derive the concept that suffering absolves a person's sins from the law that a slave is granted his freedom if his master wounds him (שן ועין). If the pain suffered in one organ sets the slave free, certainly when a body is fully consumed with pain, this ordeal serves to cleanse his soul and relieve it of further suffering. Yet the slave is released only if he claims that his master caused his injuries. He is not eligible to be set free when the blow happened by chance. In a parallel fashion, suffering decreases our sins when the person realizes that his sins were the source of his affliction. When a person convinces himself that his problems are coincidental, his liabilities remain unchanged.

Rabbi Yochanan cried for the members of humanity who view personal problems as "merely having come upon him" and consequently have no relief for those afflictions. He hoped that every slave would comprehend that difficulties are messages from Hashem that he should do teshuva. ■

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Distinctive INSIGHT

Walking in a public domain wearing a handkerchief around one's neck

ושמואל אמר זה הרק בפני חבירו בנמאס

And Shmuel said [the verse] refers to one who spits in front of his friend [who becomes] disgusted by this.

Teshuvos Keren L'Dovid¹ was asked whether it is permitted for a person to walk in a public domain with a handkerchief around his neck on Shabbos since there are authorities who prohibit the practice because they consider it to be a violation of transporting an item הוצאה. In response to the inquiry, he notes that Shulchan Aruch² rules that it is permitted for a person to walk in a public domain with a talis around his neck. The Magen Avrohom³ explains that it is permitted because this is the way the talis is worn, even inside the home; consequently, it is considered a normal manner of wearing the garment and thus permitted. Similarly, it is permitted to wear a handkerchief around one's neck since people commonly wear kerchiefs around their necks. And although one may claim that it is not this type of kerchief that people commonly wear around their neck, but rather fancy kerchiefs that are designed to be worn around the neck, nevertheless, Shulchan Aruch⁴ rules in a similar type of case that as long as some people wear a garment in a particular fashion it is permitted even for others to wear that gar-

ment in that fashion.

Another reason for leniency, suggested by the Keren L'Dovid, is based on the ruling in Shulchan Aruch⁵ that permits transporting items if a person's dignity is at risk - משום כבוד הבריאות - if the prohibition is only Rabbinic in origin. It is certainly a matter of a person's dignity to have the ability to wipe his nose as Shmuel indicates in our Gemara when he declares that a person will be judged for spitting in front of his friend who becomes disgusted by this. Furthermore, since most Poskim maintain that our public streets do not meet the halachic definition of a public domain, the infraction would only involve a Rabbinic violation, thus the necessary factors are in place to permit transporting a handkerchief in this fashion.

Rav Binyomin Zilber⁶, אז נדברו, writes at length on this topic and concludes that it is permitted to walk in a public domain wearing a handkerchief around one's neck. Additionally, he refutes what was alleged to be a strict position held by the Chazon Ish on this matter and writes that he confirmed with those who were close with the Chazon Ish that he permitted the practice. ■

1. שו"ת קרן לדוד או"ח סי' צ'
2. שו"ע או"ח סי' ש"א סע' ל'
3. מג"א שם ס"ק מ"ג
4. שו"ע שם סע' כ"א
5. שו"ע או"ח סי' ש"ב סע' א' וע' רמ"א שם
6. שו"ת אז נדברו ח"א סי' ס"ה ס"ח ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Hashem cries over three...

על שלשה הקב"ה בוכה בכל יום

Once, the Ahavas Shalom, zt"l, came to visit at the home of his wealthy uncle in Kolomaya. To his distress, he noticed that this uncle didn't give charity as a man of his means ought. At the same time, the man did learn Torah with tremendous diligence.

The Ahavas Shalom approached his host one day and said, "In Chagigah 5b we find that Hashem cries over three people: one who can learn but

fails to, one who can't learn and does, and a leader who lords it over the community. The well known question is, why does He cry for one who cannot learn but does anyway? What is this person doing wrong?

The Ahavas Shalom mused, "One possible answer is that each person comes to this world to correct his flaws. A person who has no assets and can learn is apparently here to learn and teach Torah. One who has great assets but has difficulty learning is primarily here to give charity. One who has the capacity to learn and also has a lot of money is here to do both. For such a person, one without the other is simply

not enough. If such a person learns and thinks that this absolves him of his obligation to give tzedakah, he is tragically mistaken. Hashem cries over the fate of that man! Unless he changes his ways, this person will not do what he needs to in this lifetime and will be forced to return again to this world to rectify his neshamah. We see something similar from the fact that Daniel told Nevuchadnezzar that his sins would only be absolved through charity.

The Ahavas Shalom then turned to his uncle and proclaimed, "Don't you understand? For a man of your means, learning alone is simply insufficient!" ■

