

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) A mouse that is half flesh and half earth. (cont.)

The Gemara concludes its citation of a Baraisa that discusses the tum'ah status of a mouse that is half flesh and half earth.

Two unsuccessful challenges to this Baraisa are presented.

2) צב

A Baraisa identifies subcategories of the sheretz named צב. Additionally the Baraisa describes R' Akiva's reaction to this creature.

Another Baraisa compares creatures of the sea and creatures of the land.

R' Zeira identifies the source for this concept.

R' Huna the son of R' Yehoshua points to a creature that lives only in the water.

3) Cities in Bavel

R' Pappa speaks critically of the residents of Narash.

R' Gidal in the name of Rav speaks critically about Narash and other cities in Bavel.

4) צב (cont.)

A story about the צב is recorded.

A detail in the story is unsuccessfully challenged.

A reaction in the story is clarified.

5) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah discusses the tum'ah status of dangling limbs and flesh.

6) Tum'ah status of dangling limbs and flesh

The Gemara infers from the Mishnah that dangling limbs and flesh are subject to tum'ah of food but not tum'ah of neveilah. The Gemara seeks the circumstance in which that would be true.

The Gemara pinpoints the circumstance in which this would be true and cites a Baraisa to that effect.

It is noted that the fact that dangling limbs are considered attached regarding the halacha of a limb from a living creature but are not attached as far as tum'ah of foods is concerned is a support to a similar ruling cited in the name of Shmuel concerning shriveled figs.

Another Baraisa is cited in support of Shmuel's ruling but the proof is rejected.

Another unsuccessful attempt to support Shmuel's ruling is cited.

7) Clarifying the dispute

Rabbah suggests one explanation of the dispute in the Mishnah between R' Meir and R' Shimon.

Abaye suggests a second interpretation of the dispute.

It is noted that R' Yochanan agrees with Abaye's understanding of the dispute. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

There is no weasel-like creature in the sea

תנו רבנן כל שיש ביבשה יש בים חוץ מן החולדה

The Baraisa states that every creature which exists on land has a corresponding creature that lives in the sea. The only exception to this is the weasel, which does not have a counterpart in the seas.

Sefer Chazon LaMoed writes that there are some things in the world that cannot be proven explicitly, yet, there are things that can be disproven through their inverse. As an example, he illustrates with our Gemara. The Baraisa makes what seems to be a very bold remark, that there is no creature in the sea which resembles a weasel. Critics might mock such a statement and say that it is preposterous. Yet, our sages have made such a statement, positioning themselves for the possibility to be confronted one day even by a child who might find such a creature in the waters. Who among the wise would ever make a statement which is subject to being disproven so easily anytime? Nevertheless, our sages were not reluctant to convey this testimony, even knowing that no one would jeopardize his integrity by declaring something as a fact when it can be demonstrated to be false.

The reason our sages made this remark is that it is not based upon empirical observations or experiments. It is not founded upon their observations or calculations. Their not having ever seen a weasel-like creature in the sea does not reflect upon such a creature not being present at some distant shore or at some deep depth. Rather, this statement, as many such statements of fact in the Gemara, are testimonies passed on to us as part of our tradition, taught to us through the Torah's transmission from Moshe at Sinai. Most of these facts are corroborated by our own observations and experiences, but everything our sages teach is the absolute truth, even things that cannot be proven or are not obvious to our perception.

In Kometz HaMinchah, however, R' Tzadok HaKohen explains this statement of our sages in terms of a parable, not that it is literally true. The Midrash (Yalkut Mishlei 938) compares this world to the dry land, while the world-to-come is compared to the vast ocean. Every aspect of this world possesses some element which reflects upon truth and eternal meaning, because nothing was created unless it has some meaning in the world of truth, which is the realm of the spiritual. However, this world is a domain of falsehood and imagination, and the true significance of things is not apparent to us—it is covered as the waters of the ocean hide its contents from view. Yaakov clings to truth, while Eisav dwells in the imaginary. The weasel represents the yetzer hara which hides in men's hearts, as a weasel hides in the corners of one's home. The yetzer hara is found in this world, but it will be absent and not to be found in the world-to-come. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Are the majority of Jews thieves?

פומבדיתאה לויך אשני אושפיזך

If someone from Pumbadisa accompanies you change your lodging

Tur¹ rules that someone who is an apostate for any transgression other than Shabbos and idolatry is not considered an apostate for other matters and if he slaughters an animal it is unnecessary to check his knife to assure that it was properly sharpened. Rambam² disagrees, and maintains that it is necessary to check his knife. Perishah³ questions how Tur can rule that if one's bird or animal was stolen and he later finds it slaughtered, if the place of the crime has a majority of Jewish residents he may assume the thief was Jewish and the bird or animal was properly slaughtered and it is permitted to eat it. According to Rambam, once the person stole the animal it is obligatory to examine his knife and if one cannot examine the knife it should be prohibited to eat the meat. He answers that one who sins does not become an apostate unless he violates a transgression publicly or numerous times, and since one who steals generally does so privately most thieves do not become apostates.

Bach⁴ rules that regarding other transgressions one should be stringent and require the examination of the knife even if the transgression was done in private and the person committed the transgression only once. This is based on the concern that once he gave in to his desires we are concerned that he will never put forth the effort to properly fulfill a mitzvah. However someone who steals to eat is an exception to the rule as the verse in Mishlei states (6:30), "A thief should not be disgraced if he stole to fill his soul when he is hungry." There-

REVIEW and Remember

1. What is derived from the word בשרץ?

2. What creatures are able to produce offspring with one another?

3. At what point does a dangling limb become a limb from a living creature?

4. Explain בהמה נעשית יד לאבר.

fore, even if he stole for food numerous times he is not considered an apostate. This must be so since Chazal teach (Avodah Zarah 70a) that most thieves are Jews and as such it would be necessary to suspect most Jews of being unfit to slaughter an animal.

Later authorities⁵ assert that Bach's indication that most thieves are Jews is clearly an error and Shach⁶, in fact reports that Bach himself instructed that line to be removed from his commentary since the statement of Chazal was made specifically in reference to the residents of Pumbadisa. This is evident from our Gemara's warning that it is only when traveling with someone from Pumbadisa must one find lodging elsewhere out of concern that he will steal and this concern was not expressed regarding other Jews. ■

1. טור יו"ד סי' ו'.
2. רמב"ם פ"ד מהל' שחיטה הי"ד.
3. פרישה שם אות י"ח.
4. ב"ח שם ד"ה משומד לאחת בקו"א
5. ספר הארוך מהש"ך ובגליון אלפס סוף מסכתין. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

An Opportunity

יושבי חלד

It was a shivah house. The relatives of the deceased required direction and chizuk and the author of the Otzar HaYir'ah, ז"ל, provided a generous helping of both.

"It is interesting that in Chullin 127 we find that everything which lives on the land has a corresponding creature in the sea, except for the chuldah. What can this mean? The word chuldah is a

term which can refer to this world, as the verse states, יושבי חלד. This world is called חלד — a word which also connotes rust — because in this world we are drawn to forgetting Hashem. After calling specifically to those who dwell in חלד to listen and pay attention, Dovid HaMelech explains that he wishes to impart wisdom and understanding. He then discusses death. This teaches that even though the entire world knows everyone will die, no one really accepts this. When a person visits a shivah house—and certainly for those who are actually sitting shivah, chas v'shalom—now is the time to begin to accept this painful reali-

ty. But we should not feel downtrodden or depressed by it. On the contrary, we must learn to appreciate every tiny positive achievement precisely because we are here for a limited time. Surely when we leave the world we will be exceedingly grateful and joyous for every little mitzvah or fulfillment of God's will! If we take this fact to heart, we will feel encouraged with every tiny action for good and also feel galvanized to do as much as we can all the while that we can. Even if we can only take one extra baby step to better ourselves, we will appreciate it and rush to take it."¹ ■

1. מובא באוצר היראה, אות חיים ומות