

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Doves (cont.)

The Gemara explains the nature of R' Yehudah's inquiry and how Shmuel responded to R' Yehudah.

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah teaches that one may not take the mother even to purify a metzora. The value of the mitzvah of shiluach hakein and other mitzvos is illustrated.

3) Good and long life

R' Yaakov teaches that mitzvos that are written in the Torah together with their reward lead to resurrection.

R' Yaakov's proof is unsuccessfully challenged.

The principle that one who is sent to perform a mitzvah is not harmed is challenged.

The parameters of this principle are defined.

R' Yosef comments that had Acher expounded the pasuk as did R' Yaakov the son of his daughter, he would not have sinned.

The incident that caused Acher to sin is identified. ■

הדרן עלך שילוח הקן
וסליקא לה מסכת חולין



REVIEW and Remember

- How do we know that the reward for difficult mitzvos is "that it will be good for you and you will live long"?
- What is the additional reward for performing a mitzvah whose reward is written together with the mitzvah?
- Is a person punished for sinful thoughts?
- What led Acher to sin?

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Rabbi and Mrs. Yosef Knopf
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Distinctive INSIGHT

Two mitzvos which are rewarded with long life

למען יאריכון ימיך ולמען ייטב לך

The mitzvah of sending away the mother bird from her nest and the mitzvah of honoring one's parents are unique in that the Torah promises length of life as a reward for their fulfillment.

Oros HaGr"o explains that when a person performs a certain mitzvah, it is usually difficult to determine whether his motive is his loyalty to God, or whether he is merely complying with the Torah's dictates because they coincide with the manner in which he personally chooses to act. One way in which a person's true character can be revealed is when he is asked to do various mitzvos, some of which demand that he conduct himself in a seemingly harsh and strict fashion, and others which require that he act with exceptional compassion and kindness. If a person does only one type of mitzvah, this does not demonstrate his being a righteous and trustworthy servant of God. Perhaps he is naturally kind or unusually uncompromising. However, when he fulfills all mitzvos consistently, no matter what is asked of him, he thereby displays his loyalty to the word of God.

This is why the Torah provides the reward of long life for these two mitzvos. On the one hand, we have the mitzvah of honoring one's parents, which demands that a person exercise great sensitivity and patience for the people to whom he owes the greatest gratitude. On the other hand, we are commanded to send the mother bird away as she guards her young offspring. This requires that we act with a certain degree of cruelty. As a result of our performing these two mitzvos, we have shown our sincere devotion to God, and have proven that our mitzvah observance is a fulfillment of God's will and not an expression of our own personal agenda. Accordingly, we truly deserve to merit long life as a reward. This insight can allow us to understand the words of the angel of God as he addressed Avraham Avinu just after the episode of the Akeida. The angel said, "Now I know that you are God-fearing." Were the actions of Avraham not known among the angels until now? Had the angel only now come to realize his being

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HALACHAH Highlight

Reward in this world for negative commands

הרי שאמר לו אביו עלה לבירה והבא לי גוזלות

What about the father that told his son to climb the tower to bring some chicks

Sefer Bechor Shor¹ writes that one who fulfills a positive command does not receive reward in this world. Just as one who does not fulfill a positive command is not punished by Beis Din in this world, so too one who fulfills a positive command is not rewarded. On the other hand since one is punished for violating a negative command, so too a person who fulfills a negative command is rewarded in this world. Teshuvah L'horos Nosson² challenges this position from our Gemara. The Gemara relates that a father instructed his son to ascend a tower to bring him some chicks. The son climbed up, sent away the mother and took the chicks. On his way down he fell and died. This incident is cited as proof that one is not rewarded for fulfilling mitzvos in the world. The son simultaneously fulfilled two mitzvos for which one is promised "length of days," honoring a parent and sending away the mother before taking the chicks and yet the son died as he was returning from fulfilling these two mitzvos. It happens to be, notes L'horos Nosson, that there is also a negative command against taking the young without sending away the mother. According to Bechor Shor, since the son fulfilled a negative command he should have been rewarded in this world. The fact that he was not rewarded seems to refute Bechor Shor's position.

He answers by first relating that Iyun Yaakov³ draws atten-

(Insight...continued from page 1)

special? The answer is that until now Avraham had done many outstanding feats. Yet, perhaps they were each an expression of Avraham's natural tendency to be compassionate or kind. It was now, however, that the true character of Avraham had been accurately tested. He had been called on to perform an act of cruelty, where a father was prepared to take his own son and offer him upon the altar. When Avraham acted without question and without restraint, even in this situation, he demonstrated his being a righteous and trusted God-fearing man. ■

tion to the fact that the son was fulfilling two mitzvos that promise long life. The reason is that if he was fulfilling only a single mitzvah it may be that he was not rewarded because he was not fulfilling the mitzvah for its own sake (שלא לשמה). In this case since he was fulfilling two mitzvos certainly the second mitzvah would be fulfilled for its own sake since he already earned long life with the fulfillment of the first mitzvah. According to the order in which the son fulfilled the mitzvah he would have first sent away the mother bird to take the chicks and then when he descends to bring them to his father he is only fulfilling the mitzvah of honoring his father. Accordingly, since the first mitzvah may not have been fulfilled for its own sake he also would not receive reward for fulfillment of the negative command. It was only the mitzvah of honoring his father that was done for its own sake and since that mitzvah only involves a positive command it is understandable that the son was not rewarded in this world. ■

1. בכור שור ט.
2. שו"ת להורות נתן ח"ב סי' י"ז.
3. עיון יעקב לקידושין ל"ט. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Mitzvah Messengers

שלוחי מצוה אינן ניזוקים

In his commentary on chumash, Rashi cites a midrash that discusses the dangers faced by travelers.

Rav Yitzchak of Vorke, zt"l, gave important practical advice to ensure that travelers are protected. "Every person who travels must make sure that he is a sheliach mitzvah while on his trip. Let him take a letter or something else for his friend to ensure that he will not be damaged, as our sages teach in Chullin

142: 'שלוחי מצוה אינן ניזוקים.'

The Beis Yisrael of Gur, zt"l, offered similar advice. "A car owner who wishes to ensure that he will not get into an accident should make sure to do at least one chessed with the car each day. If he will be careful to help others with the car, he will be afforded heavenly protection and will not be hurt."²

Rav Aizel Slonimer, zt"l, explained this statement in a novel manner. "It means that no matter what you give of yourself to do a mitzvah, you will not have any damage or loss at all."³

Once a group of people traveled for a mitzvah and got into an accident and were sorely hurt. Naturally, someone

asked the Imrei Emes, of Gur, zt"l, about this. "Don't our sages teach that one who is a shaliach mitzvah will not be damaged?"

The Imrei Emes explained that they had not really understood the meaning of this statement. "This means that no messenger of a mitzvah remains hurt. Even if they get into an accident, they will recover."

Although the messengers had been very hurt, they recovered completely. Their doctors were certainly surprised... but the Imrei Emes wasn't!⁴ ■

1. שיח שרפי קודש, מאמר דרכים
2. בחצר הקודש, ויחי תשס"ב, ע' ג'
3. גן יוסף, ע' ק"ד
4. אמרי שמאי, ח"ב, ע' קצ"א ■