

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah addresses certain expressions of prayer that are deemed inappropriate.

2) Clarifying the Mishnah

The Gemara questions the reason it is inappropriate to ask for mercy by saying "like Hashem is merciful to the bird's nest."

Two explanations are presented to explain this halacha.

Two related incidents are recorded.

A second teaching of R' Chanina is recorded.

3) Shema Shema

R' Zeira rules that repeating the word שמע is as inappropriate as repeating מודים.

This ruling is unsuccessfully challenged

4) Clarifying the Mishnah

R' Yosef explained how one can incorrectly interpret the cases of the forbidden relationships.

The Yeshiva of R' Yishmael explains how one can misinterpret the verse cited in the Mishnah related to molech.

5) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah identifies portions of the Torah that are read and not translated, and others that can be read and translated.

6) Reading and translating

A Baraisa identifies portions read and translated, read but not translated, and neither read nor translated.

The Baraisa enumerates a number of portions that are read and translated, and the novelties of these rulings are explained.

The portions that are read but not translated are listed and the novelties of these rulings are explained.

A contradiction regarding one of the cited parshas is noted and resolved.

7) Delicate language

A Baraisa presents examples of the Torah's use of delicate language.

R' Nachman states that although mockery is generally prohibited it is permitted when directed at idolatry. He proves this from the Navi's use of disparaging language when referring to idolatry.

Two related teachings are presented.

הדרן עלך הקורא עומד

8) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins to elaborate on the laws of using the proceeds of the sales of sacred items ■

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By Mr. and Mrs. Avi Goldfeder
In loving memory of their mother
מרת רחל לאה בת ר' אברהם צבי חיים ע"ה

Distinctive INSIGHT

Everything is in the hands of Heaven, except the fear of Heaven
הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים

We often daven to Hashem and ask that we be granted fear of Heaven. For example, in ובא לציני we beg, "May you set into our heart love and reverence for You." Yet the Gemara clearly tells us: "Everything is in the hands of Heaven, except for the fear of Heaven." How, then, can we ask for something that is only in our own hands, and not in the hands of Hashem?

The Chiddushei HaRim explains that prayer is always necessary to access the multitude of gifts which Hashem showers upon us. It is our responsibility to ask for health, peace and prosperity. At that point, whether or not our prayers will be answered, and the degree to which we will find favor in Hashem's eyes, is totally "in the hands of Heaven." We must do our part, and Hashem determines everything else. However, in the realm of fear of Heaven, once we sincerely ask that our spirituality be increased, this is something that Hashem is obliged to grant. This is what is meant when we say "fear of Heaven is not in the hands of Hashem," because once we yearn and strive to achieve it, Hashem cannot withhold it from us.

Sefer HaChasidim (131) adds: "If a person asks for something in the realm of learning Torah or anything in the area of

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REVIEW and Remember

1. What is inappropriate to repeat the word מודים?

2. How do we know that fear of Heaven was a small matter for Moshe Rabbeinu?

3. Why do we read and translate the story of the Golden Calf?

4. What mockery (ליצנותא) is permitted?

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HALACHAH Highlight

Repeating words during the Chazan's repetition

אמר ר' זירא האומר שמע שמע כאומר מודים מודים דמי

R' Zeira said: One who says, "Shema - Shema" is like one who says, "Modim - Modim."

Shulchan Aruch¹ rules that there is a prohibition against repeating the word, "Shema" as well as against repeating the entire sentence. There are two ways to understand the second prohibition. One way is that the restriction is violated when a person reads the entire verse and then repeats the entire verse. If he merely repeats each word as he reads the pasuk (Shema - Shema, Yisroel - Yisroel, etc.), his behavior is improper but he is not silenced. The second understanding is that the restriction is to be understood the opposite way. Only when someone repeats the sentence word by word is he silenced, as this is what is prohibited. According to this, if he repeats the entire verse, although it is improper behavior, he does not have to be silenced.

The Aruch HaShulchan² offers a rationalization for the improper practice of the chazzan repeating words during the repetition on the amidah from our Gemara. Our Gemara states that a person who repeats "Shema" is silenced, implying that one who repeats other words does not have to be silenced. The Maharam Shik³ derives the opposite conclusion from our Gemara. He writes at length against the practice of repeating words during the chazan's repetition, and he presents five different arguments to support his opposition to the practice. One of his arguments is that our Gemara prohibits the repetition of Shema and the same restriction applies to Shemoneh Esrei whose words were carefully composed and counted by the Anshei

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shem will fulfill his request, even if he is otherwise unworthy."

When a person davens for physical blessings, the request should be made in finite terms, because one can never be certain that his desires are worthy. However, when asking for blessings in spiritual endeavors, a person is assured that his goals are favorable. Here, a person can ask for unlimited blessings, as the verse confirms (Tehillim 81:11), "Open wide your mouth, and I will fill it." This gesture is in reference to spiritual endeavors, and Hashem promises that He will grant any heartfelt petition.

Finally, we find in the sefer "Sifsei Tzaddik" (Rosh Hashana, 8) where the author pointed out that his grandfather always used to quote the words of the Zohar on the verse (Tehillim 84:6): "Praiseworthy is the man whose strength is in You, those whose hearts focus on upwards paths." Here, we recognize that a person is at an advantage when his heart aims to achieve goals in the area of the service of God, for this is the place where his desires will be met. ■

Knesses HaGedolah who composed the prayers.

Additional reasons are suggested by other Poskim who oppose the practice. Teshuvos Ben Porat⁴ writes that the repeated words constitute an interruption in the prayer. Furthermore, if the intention of the prayer is to direct one's thoughts to Hashem and the chazzan has his attention focused on his voice and singing the tune in a melodious fashion he undermines the necessary intent of the prayer. Rav Moshe Feinstein⁵ also wrote in opposition to the practice. ■

1. שו"ע או"ח סי' ס"א סע' ט'
2. שו"ת ש"ס סי' של"ח סע' ח'
3. שו"ת מהר"ם שיק או"ח סי' ל"א
4. שו"ת בן פורת ח"ב סי' ז'
5. שו"ת אג"מ או"ח ח"ב סי' כ"ב ■

STORIES Off the Daf

"Everything is in the hands of heaven..."

הכל בידי שמים חוץ מיראת שמים

Someone once asked the Divrei Torah of Munkatch, zt"l, "There appears to be a contradiction between two statements of Chazal. In Sukkah 52b, we find that every day a person's evil inclination is strengthened and tries to kill him by causing him to sin. Were it not for the help of Hashem, a person would be overcome. This implies that main way to attain שמים is through heavenly assistance. In Megillah 25a, however, Chazal tell us that everything is in the hands of heaven except the

fear of heaven. How can both statements be true?"

The Rebbe explained, "The truth is that fear of heaven is also in the hands of heaven. Hashem does not help us to achieve יראת שמים unless we do our part. Doing our part means opening our hearts to the best of our ability. The Midrash speaks of this on the verse in Shir Hashirim 5:2, 'The voice of my Beloved knocks; open to me my sister, my love...' We must open our hearts— even if we only manage to open it as wide as the eye of a needle, Hashem then helps us to attain יראת שמים."

The Rebbe continued, "But we still have free will. When we choose to make an effort to become better, our evil inclination

becomes stronger too. This is the meaning of the Gemara in Sukkah. Chazal first state that every day one's evil inclination becomes stronger; only then did they write that if were not for Hashem helping, one would not succeed in overcoming one's yetzer. As one ascends, one needs more and more **סייעתא דשמיא**!"

The Rebbe of Sadigora, zt"l, explained this differently. "There are two separate statements being said here. The first is that everything is in the hands of heaven. The second is that even worldly and 'external matters' (matters of 'חוץ') in which we are engaged, pursuits like our jobs, should also flow from the inner state of yiras shomayim—**מיראת שמים**—■