

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
in loving memory of שרגא פייוול דוד בן קמואל
The Abramowitz family

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Practices appropriate for righteous individuals (cont.)

R' Elazar's assertion, that not everyone will greet the Jewish People at the time of redemption in the same way, is challenged.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok states that in the World to Come not everyone will merit light or gladness.

הדרן עלך מאימתי

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins with a description of the special procedures and tefillos recited when fasting because of a lack of rain and cites the text of the berachos added into Shemonah Esrei. A related incident is recorded. The Mishnah discusses how the fasts were observed by the Kohanim serving in the Beis HaMikdash which leads to a broader discussion of differences between the members of the mishmar and the members of the beis av. The Mishnah noted a dispute related to the additional fasts recorded in Megillas Ta'anis. The Mishnah concludes with guidelines for appropriate or inappropriate times to decree fast days.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

The implication of the Mishnah that the Ark was taken into the street even for the first two sets of fasts is challenged.

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REVIEW and Remember

1. Who will merit gladness in the World-to-Come?

2. What is the theme of the additional brachos added to Shemoneh Esrei for fasts?

3. What is the difference between a mishmar and a beis av?

4. Why does placing the ashes on the head of the Nasi first indicate his importance?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The elderly scholar who addresses the nation

הזקן שבהם אומר לפניהם דברי כבושין

The conclusion of the Gemara according to Abaye (16a) is that there are four levels of distinction. If there is an elderly man who is also wise (זקן וחכם), he should be the one who addresses the community at this prayer meeting. In the absence of such a person, we should choose a wise man, even if he is young. The next level is to have an elderly man speak, even if he is not particularly wise (this category is mentioned by Tur 579, but is rejected by Beis Yosef). The last level is to have a man of stature address the assembly.

ארי wonders why the Mishnah omits the first two levels, and mentions that a זקן should be the one chosen to speak to the people, which is only the third level.

He explains that the fact that we may choose to have a wise man stand in front of the people at such an occasion is quite reasonable, for his wisdom will inspire the people to repent. It is also logical that a man of stature would represent the people well under such circumstances, as his words will be heeded. The novelty of the Mishnah is that there is virtue in having an elderly man speak at such a moment, even without his being wise or of a noted stature. We might think that this would not be worthwhile. The lesson is that there is, nevertheless, value in having an elderly person stand before us, for his image can, indeed, command respect and inspire the people.

ארי also explains that the Mishnah, in fact, does refer to the cases of an elderly scholar and of a young scholar, in its very mention of the need to have a זקן to address the people. The word זקן connotes not only one who is old, but it also describes a person who has acquired wisdom. Therefore, "the זקן" in the Mishnah can mean an elderly scholar, and it can also refer to a person who is simply a scholar, although he is not particularly old. ■

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לע"נ שפרה דבורה בת ר' מנחם מנדל
by the Axelrod family, Toronto, Canada

HALACHAH Highlight

Disrupting the market

אין גזרין תענית על הצבור בתחילה בחמישי שלא להפקיע השערים
We do not decree [a series of] fasts [to begin] on Thursday in order to not disrupt the market.

The reason a series of fasts must begin on a Monday rather than on a Thursday is to prevent merchants from artificially raising their prices - הפקעת שערים. Rashi¹ explains that when the store owners, who may not be aware that it is a fast, see customers buying large quantities of food for the meal following the fast as well as their Shabbos meals, they may think that a famine is coming. With a famine beginning the store owners will raise their prices and thus disrupt the market. In order to prevent such an occurrence Chazal enacted that the series of fasts may not begin on Thursday.

Teshuvah Tzemach Tzedek² once received a related question. There was a place where the non-Jewish fish merchants realized that the Jews would pay large sums of money to obtain fish for Shabbos so they raised their prices. In order to correct the market a decree was issued that no one was permitted to purchase fish for two months and the question was presented to Tzemach Tzedek whether the community could issue such a decree. Tzemach Tzedek replied that it is permitted to issue decrees to prevent salesmen from artificially raising their prices to make a greater profit and his son, in his glosses to the teshuvah, cites our Gemara as precedent for this type of enactment.

edent for this type of enactment.

Teshuvah Hillel Omer³ addressed a similar question. There was a time when the price of food was very high in Eretz Yisroel and he was asked why the Rabbonim did not issue a decree against the consumption of meat and fish to correct the inflated market. He responded that decrees of this nature could be issued only when the price of one food was inflated, because people could supplement the missing food with something else, but if the price of everything is inflated a decree may not be issued since that would leave the people without anything to eat. We only find that Chazal decreed against fasting to keep the market honest but we do not find that they could mandate a fast to prevent merchants from disrupting the market. ■

1. רש"י ד"ה שלא להפקיע

2. שו"ת צמח צדק (הישן) סי' כ"ח

3. שו"ת הלל אומר סי' קנ"א ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Joy to the straight-hearted

ולישרים שמחה, דכתיב: ולישרי לב שמחה

Rav Avraham, zt"l, author of the Maalos HaTorah and the brother of the Vilna Gaon, zt"l, lived in the city of Kaidian, Lithuania. In the fullness of time, his children all married and moved to Vilna.

In the meanwhile, Rav Avraham and his wife grew older and their married children asked them to move to Vilna so they could see the grandchildren and be more involved in their lives. Who deserved to get nachas from

the eineklach all the time more than their own righteous parents?

To the children's great joy, Rav Avraham eventually agreed on condition that his wife would acquiesce. Much to everyone's surprise, however, when he asked his wife she wouldn't hear of moving to Vilna!

"Why not?" the bewildered Rav asked. "I know you miss our children and grandchildren even more than I do! What could possibly be so important to you here in Kaidian that you can't give it up for such a great pleasure and privilege?"

The Rebbetzin's answer was even more surprising than her original refusal. "I get more nachas here in

Kaidian than I would get from our grandchildren in Vilna. Every time I pass our old house which was much bigger and nicer, I remember what may very well have been our greatest merit. Of course you recall that we sold that house for this smaller one in order to purchase an esrog mehudar many years ago for Sukkos. Every single time I pass the building, I am filled with truly unsurpassable joy. It is far better for me to be alone in Kaidian without my whole family than to lose this poignant reminder of what we have to be truly joyous about!

Joy is granted to the straight-hearted! ■

