

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Mentioning rain in the Diaspora (cont.)

Rava offers a third suggestion as to when those in the Diaspora should begin to mention rain.

After reporting that Rav ultimately changed his opinion and agreed with Rava, the Gemara rules in accordance with Rava.

2) **MISHNAH:** A disagreement is presented regarding the last time to ask for rain.

3) Yoreh rain

The implication of the pasuk cited in the Mishnah, i.e. that yoreh rain falls in Nissan, is challenged from the Mishnah that indicates that it falls in Marcheshvan.

R' Yochanan is quoted as explaining that the pasuk refers to the times of Yoel ben Pesuel and Hashem caused a miracle and yoreh rain fell in Nissan following a seven-year famine.

The Gemara elaborates on the miracle that occurred in the time of Yoel ben Pesuel.

A pasuk in Tehillim is explained in light of this story.

R' Yitzchok, in the name of R' Yochanan, described to R' Nachman the extent of the seven years of famine.

4) Teachings of R' Yochanan related by R' Yitzchok to R' Nachman

The Gemara records a series of teachings of R' Yochanan related by R' Yitzchok in response to R' Nachman's inquiry regarding the meaning of a pasuk.

The topics that were part of their discussion were: 1) The Heavenly Yerushalayim, 2) The severity of idolatry, 3) Shmuel HaNavi's premature aging, 4) Hashem's causing Shmuel's death so that Dovid HaMelech could rule.

R' Yitzchok taught R' Nachman three additional teachings: 1) One should not talk during the meal, 2) Yaakov Avinu did not die and 3) Saying רחב רחב caused a seminal emission if one knew her and was familiar with her beauty.

The Gemara concludes by sharing the blessing that R' Yitzchok wished R' Nachman. ■

*Today's Daf Digest is dedicated by Tzvi and Sury Grossman
in honor of the Bar Mitzvah
of our son Yitzchak*

*Today's Daf Digest is dedicated by the Schnell family
In memory of
ר' נפתלי הערץ בן ר' יצחק יוסף, ע"ה*

Distinctive INSIGHT

Yaakov Avinu never died

א"ר יוחנן יעקב אבינו לא מת

As they were sitting at a meal together, R' Nachman asked R' Yitzchok to say a Torah thought. R' Yitzchok deferred, telling R' Nachman that R' Yochanan had taught **אין משיחין בסעודה**—one should not [cause one to] speak at a meal," lest one choke. After they finished eating, R' Yitzchok said his words of Torah which he had heard from R' Yochanan: "Yaakov Avinu never died," he said. R' Nachman was shocked. He immediately questioned the comment and begged for an explanation, which was provided.

Torah Temima notes that it is usually commendable to say words of Torah while sitting at a meal. As far as the danger of choking is concerned, a speaker can generally clear his mouth before speaking. Rather, the rule here is that one should not say a provocative idea to another during a meal, due to the danger that the listener might choke upon hearing an unusual thought, because he might have food in his mouth while listening. Here, R' Yitzchok knew that his lesson that Yaakov Avinu never died would seem shocking to R' Nachman, so he warned R' Nachman that he did not want to say it over until the meal was over.

What does it mean that "Yaakov Avinu never died?" HaGaon HaRav Yechezkel Avramsky explains that Hashem promised Yaakov that his son Yosef, who was the ruler and commander over all Egypt, would follow the lead of his father. "I shall descend with you to Egypt, and I shall also surely bring you up. And Yosef shall place his hand on your eyes." (Bereshis 46:4) This meant that whenever Yosef would raise his hand to implement a decision, he would first look towards Yaakov to determine whether the actions met with his approval. If the decision was favorable in the eyes of Yaakov, Yosef would follow through. If the matter was not favorable to Yaakov, Yosef would not do it.

Even after Yaakov died, Yosef continued to weigh every move and evaluate each decision in terms of how Yaakov would have judged it. This Torah perspective, which was instilled in him by his father, was what guided his actions. The image of Yaakov continued to appear before Yosef at all times, as he envisioned his father's presence in his mind. This is a possible explanation of "Yaakov Avinu never died." ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Listening to a woman sing

אמר ר' יצחק כל האומר רחב רחב מיד נקרי א"ל ר' נחמן אנה אמינא ולא איכפת לי א"ל כי קאמינא ביודעה ובמכירה

R' Yitzchok said: *Whoever says, "Rachav Rachav" will immediately have a seminal emission. R' Nachman said, "I say it and it doesn't affect me."* He [R' Yitzchok] said back, *"I refer to one who knew her and recognized her."*

In an earlier edition of Daf Digest (Sukkah Daf 48, Edition #599) the topic of listening to women singing was addressed. In this edition the topic will be analyzed from a different angle. Poskim¹ question whether the interdiction against listening to a woman sing applies if one does not see the woman who is singing. In the opinion of some Poskim the sound of a woman's voice in and of itself will not generate improper thoughts whereas other Poskim maintain that the sound of a woman's voice has the capacity to generate improper thoughts even if the man cannot see the singer.

Our Gemara states that the concern related to mentioning Rachav's name applies to those, "who knew her and recognized her." Commentators note the use of a double expression and explain its significance differently. Rashi² explains that the terms are synonymous and nothing new is added by the second expression. Tosafos³, on the other hand, indicates that the terms describe different parts of their relationship. As a result of the fact that he knew her, i.e. they had an intimate relationship, he now recognizes her. This indicates that if he merely recognizes her but they did not have an intimate relationship the prohibition would

REVIEW and Remember

1. What is the shortest time in history from rain to harvest?

2. What is the source for the existence of a Heavenly Jerusalem?

3. How did Hashem protect Shmuel's honor?

4. What is R' Yitzchok's proof that Yaakov Avinu did not die?

not apply. Rav Yaakov Reisher⁴, the Shvus Yaakov, explains that the double expression teaches that even if he doesn't know her personally but has merely seen an image of her it is nonetheless enough for the restriction to apply. Although there are Poskim who maintain that if one does not see the woman singing the prohibition does not apply, nevertheless, Rav Ovadiah Yosef⁵ rules, based on this interpretation of Shvus Yaakov, that if one has seen her, even in a picture, it is prohibited to listen to her sing. ■

1. ע' שו"ת יביע אומר ח"א או"ח סע' ו' אותיות ד-ז
2. רש"י ד"ה ביודעה
3. תוד' ד"ה ביודעה וע' מהרש"א למגילה בח"א טו מש"כ לפרש דבריו אולם ע' בשו"ת יבי"א הנ"ל שפרש באופן אחר
4. עיון יעקב על סוגיא דידן
5. שו"ת יבי"א הנ"ל אות י"א ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The tree's blessing

אילן אילן במה אברכך? אם בתורה הרי יש לך תורה

Rav Chaim Kreisworth, ז"ל, was once on a flight with Rav Leib Gurvitz, ז"ל, and Rav Leib Lopian, ז"ל, and a question arose during the course of their conversation. Why do we find that so many young men learn assiduously and with great interest until about the age of eighteen but then forsake their studies? What makes them lose the tremendous interest in learning that they once clearly had?

Rav Chaim offered his perspective on the phenomenon. "In Taanis 5b we find that when Rav Nachman and Rav Yitzchak parted, Rav Nachman asked Rav Yitzchak

for a blessing. Rav Yitzchak responded with a parable about a starving traveler who benefits from a tree, and can bless it only that its offspring should be as wonderful as it is. Since Rav Nachman already had Torah, wealth, and children, Rav Yitzchak blessed him that his descendants should have the same. This seems quite enigmatic, though. Is the Torah so finite that one could ever be said to 'have' the Torah and no longer stand in need of a blessing? The answer is that when one is young, he receives a special degree of Divine assistance. He is granted the burning desire for Torah for a little while as a gift to know what true learning feels like. Afterward, the blessing is revoked and that taste has to provide the motivation he will need to continue to exert himself in his studies. This is what Rav Yitzchak was saying to Rav Nachman.

How can I bless you? You already feel enough of the Torah's sweetness so that you are willing to exert yourself to acquire the entire Torah. With what more can I bless you? Whether you will do the work to learn it or not is up to you, not to my blessing!"

Rav Chaim concluded, "Similarly, the bochurim who fall away only merited to learn passionately when they were still receiving special heavenly help. When they become 18 or 19 and the blessing is removed and they have to go on their own steam, most fail to rise to the challenge. For this reason they seem to change. It's time for them to work for the sweetness, and unfortunately most are not willing!"

Rav Chaim's traveling companions both agreed that this interpretation was completely correct. ■