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Brachos Daf 34

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Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o"n

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Mishna

(If one says, "Let the good bless You" (implying that the evil should not bless You), this is a way of heresy.)

If one was leading the congregation (in the prayer service), and made a mistake (by skipping one of the blessings in the Shemoneh Esrei), another person should take his place, and at such a moment one may not refuse (to be the leader). Where should he commence (after he takes over)? At the beginning of the blessing in which the other made the mistake.

One who is leading the congregation (in the prayer service) should not respond "Amen" after the Blessings of the Kohanim, because this might confuse him (for he might not remember which blessing comes next). If there is no Kohen there except himself, he should not raise his hands (for the Priestly blessing), but if he is confident that he can raise his hands and return to his place in his prayer, he is permitted to do so. (34a)

Refusal

The Gemora cites a braisa: If one is asked to lead the congregation (in the prayer service), he ought to refuse (as if to say that he is unworthy of the honor), and if he does not refuse, he resembles a cooked food without salt; but if he persists too much in refusing, he resembles a cooked food which is over-salted. What should he do? The first time (he is asked), he should refuse; the second time, he should bestir himself (preparing himself to rise); the third time, he should stretch out his legs and go down.

The Gemora cites a braisa: There are three things of which too much of them are bad, while a little of them is good; namely, yeast, salt, and refusal. (34a)

Mistakes

Rav Huna said: If one made a mistake in the first three (of the Shemoneh Esrei) blessings (by skipping one), he must go back to

the beginning (of Shemoneh Esrei and begin again); if (this occurred) in the middle blessings, he goes back to 'Atah chonein' (the first of the middle blessings); if (this occurred) in the last (three) blessings, he goes back to the Avodah (the first of the last three blessings). Rav Assi, however, says that the middle blessings have no order. [And if one was accidentally omitted, he does not need to go back to the beginning of all these blessings; Rashi adds that the 'skipped blessing' can be inserted anywhere.]

Rav Sheishes asked on Rav Huna from our Mishna: Where should he commence (after he takes over)? At the beginning of the blessing in which the other made the mistake. This is a refutation of Rav Huna (for it implies that one does not need to return to the beginning of the section)!?

The Gemora answers: Rav Huna can reply that the middle blessings are all regarded as one (and the Mishna means that if one errs in any of the 'middle blessings,' he goes back to the 'beginning of the blessing,' meaning the first of the middle section). (34a)

Blessings

Rav Yehudah said: A man should never petition for his (personal) requirements either in the first three blessings or in the last three, but in the middle ones, for Rabbi Chanina said: In the first ones he resembles a servant who is arranging praises to his master; in the middle ones he resembles a servant who is requesting an allowance from his master; in the last ones he resembles a servant who has received an allowance from his master and takes his leave.

The Gemora cites a braisa: Once a certain disciple went down to lead the congregation (in the prayer service), in the presence of Rabbi Eliezer, and he stretched out the prayer to a great length. His disciples said to him: Master, what a prolonger this fellow is! He replied to them: Is he prolonging it any more than Moshe, our teacher, of whom it is written: *The forty days and the forty nights?*

Another time it happened that a certain disciple went down to lead the congregation (*in the prayer service*), in the presence of Rabbi Eliezer, and he cut the prayer very short. His disciples said to him: What an abbreviator this fellow is! He replied to them: Is he abbreviating any more than Moshe, our teacher, of whom it is written: *Please Hashem, please heal her (referring to Miriam when she contracted tzara'as)*?

Rabbi Yaakov said in the name of Rav Chisda: If one prays on behalf of his fellow, he does not need to mention his name, as it is written: *Please Hashem, please heal her*, and he did not mention the name of Miriam. (34a)

Bowing Down

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The following blessings are where a person bows down: [*'Bowing down' refers to the bending of the knees and the bending down of the back while saying certain blessings in Shemoneh Esrei. The Rabbis have decreed that there are only four such times where a person must bow down.*] At the blessing of the Patriarchs; in the beginning (*of the blessing, when he says, "Boruch atah Hashem"*) and at the end (*when he concludes the blessing by saying, "Boruch atah Hashem magen Avraham"*), and in the blessing of Thanksgiving (*Modim*) in the beginning (*of the blessing, when he says, "Modim anachnu lach"*) and at the end (*when he concludes the blessing by saying, "Boruch atah Hashem ha-tov shim'cha etc."*). And regarding one who wishes to bow down at the end of each and every blessing, we teach him that he should not do so.

Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, who said in the name of Bar Kappara: An ordinary person bows as we have mentioned; a *Kohen Gadol* at the end of each blessing; a king at the beginning of each blessing and at the end of each blessing. [*Rashi explains that the greater the individual is, the more he must humble himself.*]

Rabbi Yitzchak bar Nahmeini said: It was explained to me by Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi that an ordinary person does as we have mentioned; a *Kohen Gadol* at the beginning of each blessing; and a king - once he has bowed down, he does not rise again (*until the end of his Tefillah*), as it is written: *And it was so that when Solomon had finished praying ... he arose from before the Altar of Hashem, from kneeling on his knees.*

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: [*There are different types of prostration:*] "*Kidah*" means bowing on the face, as it is written:

Then Bas-Sheba bowed down with her face to the ground. "Keriah" means falling down on one's knees, as it is written: From kneeling on his knees. "Hishtachava'ah" means bowing down and extending one's arms and legs, as it is written: Shall I and your mother and your brothers come to prostrate ourselves before you on the ground?

Rav Chiya the son of Rav Huna said: I observed Abaye and Rava leaning on their sides (*when they recited tachanun*). [*Since they were prominent, they didn't fall on their faces, unless they knew that they would be answered; they were permitted to lean.*]

The *Gemora* asks: One *braisa* taught: One who bows in the thanksgiving blessing (*Modim*) is praiseworthy, while another taught that it is reprehensible!?

The *Gemora* answers: There is no contradiction, for one speaks of the beginning (*and that is when it is praiseworthy*), and the other speaks of the end.

The *Gemora* relates: Rava bowed in the thanksgiving blessing at the beginning and at the end. The Rabbis said to him: Why does the master act this way? He replied to them: I have seen Rav Nachman bowing (*in this manner*), and I have seen Rav Sheishes doing this as well.

The *Gemora* asks: But it has been taught in the *braisa* regarding one who bows in the thanksgiving blessing that it is reprehensible!?

The *Gemora* answers: That (*braisa*) refers to the thanksgiving in *Hallel* ("*Hodu la-Hashem*"; *where one should not bow*).

The *Gemora* asks: But it has been taught in a different *braisa*: One who bows in the thanksgiving blessing or in the thanksgiving of *Hallel* – it is reprehensible? [*Evidently, it is referring to the blessing in Shemoneh Esrei!?*]

The *Gemora* answers: The *braisa* refers to the thanksgiving in the Grace after Meals. (34a – 34b)

Mishna

If one makes a mistake in his *Tefillah* it is a bad sign for him, and if he is the leader of the congregation, it is a bad sign for those (*the congregation*) who sent him, because a man's agent is equivalent to himself.



It was related of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa that he used to pray for the sick and say, "This one will live, and this one will die." They said to him: How do you know? He replied: If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that it has been accepted, but if not, then I know that it has been rejected. (34b)

First Blessing

The *Gemora* asks: In which blessing (*is a mistake a bad sign*)?

Rabbi Chiya said in the name of Rav Safra, who said it from a member of the school of Rebbe: In the blessing of the Patriarchs.

Some attach this statement to the following: When one recites the *Tefillah*, he must say all the blessings with proper concentration, and if he cannot concentrate on all of them, he should say one with concentration. Rabbi Chiya said in the name of Rav Safra, who said it from a member of the school of Rebbe: In the blessing of the Patriarchs. (34b)

Fluency

The *Mishna* had stated: It was related of Rabbi Chanina etc.

The *Gemora* asks: What is the Scriptural source for this?

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: It is because it is written: *He creates (borei) utterance of the lips; peace to him that is far off and peace to him that is near, said Hashem, and I will heal him.* [*'Borei' translated 'created' also has the meaning of 'strong', therefore the verse is rendered to mean: if his lips are strong (fluent), then I will heal him.*] (34b)

No Eye has Seen

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: All the prophets prophesied only on behalf of one who (*has favorable interactions with Torah scholars, e.g.,*) marries off a daughter to a Torah scholar, and one who conducts business on behalf of a Torah scholar, and one who benefits a Torah scholar with his possessions. However, only Hashem perceives the reward awaiting Torah scholars themselves, as it is written: *No eye has seen, besides Yours, O God, what He will do for one that awaits Him.*

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The prophets only referred to the Messianic era, but the World to Come has never been perceived, as it is written: *No eye has seen, besides Yours, O God, what He will do for one that awaits Him.*

The *Gemora* notes that this differs with Shmuel, who says that the Messianic era will be the same natural order, but with the Jews not subjugated by the nations. This is based upon the verse: *For the poor shall not cease from the land.*

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: The prophets only referred to repentant sinners, but the righteous who never sinned will receive a reward only perceived by Hashem, as it is written: *No eye has seen, besides Yours, O God, what He will do for one that awaits Him.*

The *Gemora* notes that this differs with Rabbi Avahu, who says that repentant sinners are superior to righteous who never sinned, as it is written: *peace to him that is far off and peace to him that is near - to him that was far (and then repented) first, and then to him that is near.*

Rabbi Yochanan, however, said: What is meant by 'far'? One who from the beginning was far from sinning. And what is meant by 'near'? That he was once near to sinning, and now has gone far from it.

The *Gemora* asks: What is the meaning of '*No eye has seen*'?

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi explains that the reward that only Hashem perceives is wine aged since the six days of Creation, while Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini explains that it is Eden, upon which the eye of no creature has ever seen. Perhaps you will ask: Where was Adam, the first man? [*Was he not in Eden?*] The answer is that Adam only lived in its garden (*but not the region itself*). And if you will ask that perhaps the garden is Eden, the following verse proves otherwise: *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden - the garden is one thing and Eden is another.* (34b)

Praying for the Sick

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Once the son of Rabban Gamliel fell ill. He sent two scholars to Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa to ask him to pray for him. When he saw them, he went up to an upper chamber and asked for mercy for his son. When he came down he said to them: Go (*return to Rabban Gamliel*), for the fever has left him (*his son*). They said to him: Are you a prophet? He replied: I am neither a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but I have the following tradition: If my prayer is fluent in my mouth, I know that it has been accepted, but if not, I know that it has been rejected. They sat down and made a note of the exact moment. When they came to Rabban Gamliel, he said to them: By the Temple service! You have not been a moment too soon or too late, but so it happened;



at that very moment, the fever left him and he asked us for some water to drink.

On another occasion it happened that Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa went to study Torah from Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai. The son of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai fell ill. He said to him: Chanina my son, go and ask mercy for him that he may live. He (*R' Chanina*) put his (*own*) head between his (*own*) knees and prayed for him (*his son*) and he lived. Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai said: If Ben Zakkai had stuck his head between his knees for the entire day, no one would have paid attention to him. His wife said to him: Is Chanina greater than you are? He replied to her: No; but he is like a servant before the king (*who has permission to go in freely at anytime*), and I am like an officer before the king (*who appears before him only on important occasions*).

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: A man should not pray except in a room which has windows, since it is written: *Now his windows (referring to Daniel) were open in his upper chamber, facing Jerusalem (and three times a day he fell to his knees and prayed).*

Rav Kahana said: I consider a man to be arrogant who prays in a valley (*an open area*).

Rav Kahana also said: I consider a man to be arrogant who openly recounts his sins (*to others*), since it is written: *Happy is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.* (34b)

WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU, EIN OMDIN

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

No one but Hashem

The *Gemora* lists various explanations for the verse that refers to the reward which is unseen by anyone but Hashem. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi says that this unseen reward is wine that has been aged since creation. The Maharsha explains that creation was *ex nihilo* – something from nothing, which is above the perception of anything in the world but Hashem. Since it was from creation, it preceded Adam before the sin, while he was still in Gan Eden, and could not even be perceived by him.

The Sefer Ikarim says that the comparison to wine is due to its relation to grapes. Someone who has never experienced wine cannot imagine that the grapes can produce something that is

even more enjoyable. Similarly, one who exists in the physical world cannot perceive how physical acts of mitzvos can lead to a higher level of enjoyment in the spiritual realm.

DAILY MASHAL

Gan and Eden

By: Rabbi Binyomin Adler

The verse says that no one but Hashem ever saw the ultimate reward. Rabbi Chiya bar Abba quotes Rabbi Yochanan, who explained this verse refers to three limitations on the prophecies recorded by the prophets:

1. The prophets only referred to the Messianic era, but the world to come has never been perceived. The *Gemora* notes that this differs with Shmuel, who says that the Messianic era will be the same natural order, but with the Jews not subjugated by the nations.
2. The prophets only referred to repentant sinners, but the righteous who never sinned will receive a reward only perceived by Hashem. The *Gemora* notes that this differs with Rabbi Avahu, who says that repentant sinners are superior to righteous who never sinned.
3. The prophets referred to one who has favorable interactions with Torah scholars, e.g., marrying off a daughter to one, and giving them business. However, only Hashem perceives the reward awaiting Torah scholars themselves.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi explains that this reward that only Hashem perceives is wine aged since creation, while Raish Lakish explains it is the Eden region, as Adam only lived in its garden, but not the region itself.

It is interesting to note that the *Gemora* distinguishes between Eden and the Garden. We are apt to refer to the location of eternal reward as *Gan Eden*, the Garden of Eden. Is this a misnomer, or is there a deeper understanding concerning these distinct terminologies?

There is a kabalistic statement¹ that the word *oneg*², which means delight, is an acrostic for the words *Eden, Nahar, and Gan*. Although the explanation for this idea is beyond the scope of this exegesis, there is a fundamental concept that can be easily

¹ Zohar Breishis 1:26; See Rabbeinu Bachye Shemos 20:8, Rashi to Tehillim 46:5

² Spelled in Hebrew: ayin, nun, gimel

understood. The word *Eden* is defined as a form of pleasure, as it is said:³ *after I have withered shall I again have delicate (Edna) skin? Nahar* means river, and *Gan* means garden. What is the association between these three words? Pleasure has a source, and that is *Eden*, and that pleasure is continuous, like a flowing river. How does one arrive at this pleasure? We are familiar with the term *Oneg Shabbos*, which means delighting in the Sabbath. How does one derive pleasure from Shabbos? The Sfas Emes⁴ writes that the *Gemora*⁵ does not state that one who delights in the Shabbos for his personal pleasure merits all of his desires being fulfilled. Rather, it states that one who delights in the Shabbos will merit his desires being fulfilled. If one recognizes that the source of the pleasure is the Shabbos, which is the present that Hashem proffered to the Jewish People⁶, then he will be rewarded with the dividends of Shabbos.

It is important to recognize that Shabbos is not merely a day like any other day of the week. Regarding Shabbos it is said:⁷ *Hashem said to Moshe saying: Now you speak to the Children of Israel, saying: 'However, you must observe My Sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you for your generations, to know that I am Hashem, who makes you holy'*. Rabbi Yehonasan Eibshetz⁸ writes that because Shabbos is a protection from the nations of the world, one must be well versed in the laws of Shabbos, and furthermore, that he delights in the Shabbos.

With this idea we can explain what appears to be a discrepancy in Scripture. First it is said:⁹ *Hashem G-d planted a garden in Eden, to the east, and placed (vayasem) there the man whom He had formed*. In the subsequent verse it is said:¹⁰ *Hashem G-d took the man and placed him (vayanecheihu) in the Garden of Eden, to work it and to guard it*. Why in the first verse does it state *vayasem* and in the second verse the word *vayanecheihu* is used? The answer is that the Medrash states¹¹ that *vayanecheihu* is a reference to Shabbos, which is called *Yom Hamenucha*, a day of rest. Initially, Hashem placed Adam in the Garden without any responsibilities. This is similar to the 'gift' of Shabbos. Then Hashem willed that Adam appreciate the gift, and he gave him the commandment of Shabbos to fulfill. Adam was banished from Gan Eden before Shabbos. Apparently, in order for one to benefit from

Shabbos, one has to understand its laws and appreciate the pleasure of this Holy Day. May we all merit the day that will be all Shabbos.

Wine

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi interpreted the verse *no eye has seen to be said concerning wine preserved in its grapes since the six days of Creation*. What is so significant about wine preserved in its grapes? In order to understand this cryptic statement, we must first examine the impact of wine in Judaism. The Vilna Gaon was of the opinion that one should not eat grapes on Rosh Hashanah¹². The reason for this is based on kabalistic teachings, but perhaps there is a simple understanding to this also. The Medrash¹³ states that according to one opinion, Chava squeezed grapes and gave the juice to Adam to drink. This was the sin of eating from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad. Adam and Chava were created on Rosh Hashanah,¹⁴ so it would follow that we should not eat grapes on that day as that would serve as a reminder of their sin. The difficulty with this explanation is that we drink wine on Rosh Hashanah, and from the Medrash it is clear that Chava gave Adam the juice from the grapes and not the grapes themselves.

Wine that is preserved in its grapes is a metaphor for modesty. After the flood, it is said:¹⁵ *Noach, the man of the earth, debased himself and planted a vineyard. He drank of the wine and became drunk, and he uncovered himself within his tent*. Rashi writes: it [his tent] is written *oholo*, and this alludes to the Ten Tribes who were called on the name of Shomron that is referred to as *Oholo*. The Ten Tribes were exiled because of wine, as it is said:¹⁶ *who drink wine out of bowls... [anoint themselves with choicest oils, and are not pained by the destruction of Yosef. Therefore, they will now be exiled at the heads of the exiles, and the banquets of the haughty will cease]*. The Maharal¹⁷ is bothered that the Medrash,¹⁸ which appears to be the source of Rashi's words, does not use the word *oholo* to derive this teaching. The Medrash states that the Torah does not state *vayigal*, which would imply that Noach alone was affected by his nakedness. Rather, it states *vayisgal*, which implies that his nakedness affected his whole tent, i.e. all future generations¹⁹.

³ Breishis 18:6

⁴ Bamidbar 5738

⁵ Shabbos 118b

⁶ Ibid 10b

⁷ Shemos 31:12-13

⁸ Yaaros Devash Volume 2 Derush 3

⁹ Breishis 2:8

¹⁰ Ibid verse 15

¹¹ Yalkut Shimoni Breishis 2: 22

¹² Maaseh Rav

¹³ Breishis Rabbah 19:5; see also Sanhedrin 70a

¹⁴ See Rosh Hashanah 27a

¹⁵ Breishis 9:19-20

¹⁶ Amos 6:6

¹⁷ Gur Aryeh Ibid

¹⁸ Breishis Rabbah 36:4

¹⁹ Yefe Toar ibid



Perhaps we can suggest an answer to the Maharal's question. Rashi specifically derived this exegesis from the word *ohelo*, because there were two aspects to Noach's disgrace. One element was that he was uncovered, and the second was that he was uncovered in his tent. The word *ohel* in Tanach refers to modesty²⁰. By intoxicating himself with wine, Noach left the arena of modesty. This behavior was a sign that his descendants would also forsake the modest lifestyle and be exiled. We are accustomed to viewing modesty in areas of dress and behavior. There is another modesty, and that is the inner modesty of a person, as it is said:²¹ *when a willful sinner comes, shame comes, but with modest ones comes wisdom*. This modesty is symbolized by wine that is preserved in its grapes. When the Medrash states that Chava squeezed grapes and gave Adam the juice to drink, this means that she was shedding the modesty of wisdom that had been granted to them by Hashem. It is said:²² *and the woman perceived that the tree was good for eating and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable as a means to wisdom, and she took of its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they realized that they were naked; and they sewed together a fig leaf and made themselves aprons*. It is fascinating that upon eating from the fruit of the tree, it states that their eyes were opened (*vatipukachna*). This is similar to what the *Gemora*²³ states: wine and scents enlighten (*pikchin*). In this case, the wine opened their eyes and they realized that they had shed the cloak of inner modesty. The *Gemora* states²⁴ *enter wine, exit secret*. This statement has many ramifications, but in the simple sense it can be understood to mean that by imbibing wine, the secret of creation departs.

Now we can begin to comprehend the statement of the *Gemora*: What is that which *no eye has seen*? Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: This is wine preserved in its grapes since the six days of Creation. The wisdom of creation will only be revealed in the World to Come. The experience of Adam and Chava in Gan Eden was akin to the World to Come, as the *Gemora* states further: Rish Lakish says: This is Eden, which no eye has ever seen. The Arizal²⁵ writes that had Adam waited until Shabbos to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Bad, he never would have been exiled from Gan Eden. The lack of inner modesty, i.e. concealing the wisdom that Hashem had bestowed upon them, was what catalyzed their exile.

Similarly, the lack of modesty displayed by Noach affected the future generations, and they went into exile.

When we recite Kiddush on Friday night, it is important to have in mind that we are sanctifying the Shabbos through wine, and this will lead to the rectification of Adam and Chava's sin and the ultimate redemption speedily in our days.

Please, Please

By: Meoros HaDaf HaYomi

The Chida writes: "I have heard in the name of previous great teachers z"l that Moshe was given this secret in Heaven, that when he would pray and say *na* - 'please' twice, his prayer would be accepted and therefore he prayed, 'Please, Hashem, please heal her.' But when he prayed to enter Eretz Israel and said, 'Please let me cross over and see...', Hashem told him, 'Don't continue to speak to me about this matter (lit. with this word)' - especially 'with this word', that he shouldn't mention 'please' again" (*Nachal Kedumim, Beha'alosecha*).

The Name Is Still Hinted

When praying for one's fellow one doesn't need to mention his name as is written "Please G-d, please heal her" without mentioning Miriam's name.

Still, her name and mother's name are hinted: the numerical equivalent of *refa na* ("please heal") is that of *Miryam Yocheved!* (*Degel Machaneh Efrayim, Beha'alosecha*).

A Kabbalist Or Not

A person who pretended to be a Kabbalist came to Rabbi Aizel Charif z"l and requested an approbation for his book. Even after much pleading, Rabbi Aizel refused. People asked him why and he replied, "Last night I saw him as a *shliach tzibur* and becoming confused in his prayer as though he didn't know the meaning of the words and Chazal said, 'If my prayer is fluent, I know that he is *mekubal* ("accepted" or "a Kabbalist") and if not...'"

²⁰ An example of this is when the angels queried Avrohom Avinu as to Sarah's whereabouts, he responded (Breishis 18:9) *hinei b'ohel*, "behold, in the tent"

²¹ Mishlei 11:2

²² Breishis 3:6-7

²³ Sanhedrin 70a

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Shaar Hakavanos Drushei Rosh Hashanah Drush 1