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Brachos Daf 62

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Rabbi Akiva said: Once I went in after Rabbi Yehoshua to a latrine, and I learned from him three things. I learnt that one does not defecate while facing east or west, but rather north and south (*for he lived in Judea*); I learned that one does not expose themselves while standing, but rather, after they are sitting; and I learned that it is not proper to wipe with the right hand, but rather with the left hand. Ben Azzai said to him: Did you dare to act so brazenly with your teacher? He replied: It is a matter of Torah, and I am required to study it.

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The *Gemora* relates: Rav Kahana once went in and hid under Rav's bed. He heard him chatting (*with his wife*) and joking and then taking care of his needs (*having marital relations*). He (*Rav Kahana; from under the bed*) said to him: One would think that Abba's (*Rav's*) mouth had never swallowed food before (*for in acting with lightheadedness, it appeared as if he was acting to fulfill his own pleasure*)! [*In truth, he was acting in such a manner in order to appease his wife, and to make sure that she would enjoy it.*] Rav said to him: Kahana, are you here? Go out, because it is proper for you to be here. He replied: It is a matter of Torah, and I am required to study it.

The *Gemora* asks: Why should one wipe with the left hand and not with the right?

Rava answered: It is because the Torah was given with the right hand (*of Hashem*), as it is written: *At His right hand, the fire of the Law was given to them.*

Rabbah bar Chanah said: It is because it is close to the mouth. [*It was usual to bring food to the mouth with the right hand and not with the left; it is therefore not fitting to use that hand for wiping purposes.*]

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: It is because one binds the *tefillin* (*on the left arm*) with it (*his right hand*).

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: It is because he points to the accents in the Torah scroll with it. [*Rashi explains that when one chanted the tune of the Torah, he would make corresponding movements with the right hand to describe the shape of the note; this, Rashi himself, witnessed with people who came from Eretz Yisroel.*]

The *Gemora* notes that a similar difference of opinion is found among *Tannaim*, for Rabbi Eliezer said that it is because one eats with it; Rabbi Yehoshua said that it is because one writes with it; Rabbi Akiva said that it is because one points with it to the accents in the Torah scroll.

Rabbi Tanchum bar Chanilai said: Whoever behaves modestly in a latrine is delivered from three things: from snakes (*that are there*), from scorpions, and from demons. Some say also that he will not have disturbing dreams.



The *Gemora* relates: There was a certain latrine in Tiberias which if two persons entered together even by day, they came to harm (*through demons*). Rabbi Ami and Rabbi Assi, however, used to enter it separately, and they suffered no harm. The Rabbis said to them: Are you not afraid? They replied: We have learned a certain tradition. The tradition for (*avoiding harm in*) the latrine is modesty and silence; the tradition relating to sufferings is silence (*accepting without complaining*) and prayer.

The mother of Abaye trained for him a sheep to go with him into the latrine (*in order that he should not be alone*).

The *Gemora* asks: She should rather have trained for him a goat?

The *Gemora* answers: A goat could be confused with a demon that looked like a goat (*and therefore, it would not be able to protect him*).

Before Rava became head of the Academy, the daughter of Rav Chisda used to rattle a walnut in a copper dish (*to frighten away the demons and snakes while he defecated*). After he became head (*and the danger became worse*), she made a window for him, and put her hand on his head (*for this way, he was not left alone*).

Ulla said: Behind a fence one may defecate immediately; in an open field, as long as he can pass wind without anyone hearing it.

Issi bar Nassan taught as follows: Behind a fence, as long as he can pass wind without anyone hearing it; in an open field, as long as he cannot be seen by anyone.

The *Gemora* asks from a *Mishna*: The watchers (*of the olives*) may go out by the door of the olive press and defecate behind a fence (*immediately*), and they (*the olives*) remain *tahor*!?

The *Gemora* answers: For the sake of *taharos*, they made a leniency.

The *Gemora* asks on Issi from the continuation of that *Mishna*: How far can one go without affecting the *taharah* of the olive press? Any distance - as long as he (*the guard*) can still see him

(*one who enters the press*). [*This indicates that one may relieve himself, like the guard will inevitably be forced to do at some time, even though he may be seen!?*]

The *Gemora* answers: For the sake of *taharos* it is different, for the Rabbis made a leniency.

Rav Ashi said: What is meant by the words 'as long as he cannot be seen by anyone' used by Issi bar Nassan? It means that as long as the exposed part of his body cannot be seen; but the man himself may be seen.

The *Gemora* relates: A certain eulogizer went down in the presence of Rav Nachman and said: This man was modest in all his ways. Rav Nachman said to him: Did you ever follow him into a latrine, so that you should know whether he was modest or not? For it has been taught in a *braisa*: A man is called modest only if he is such in a latrine.

The *Gemora* asks: And why was Rav Nachman so concerned about it (*if the eulogizer was being accurate or not*)?

The *Gemora* answers: It was because it has been taught in a *braisa*: Just as the dead are punished (*if false praise is spoken about them*), so too the eulogizers are punished, and also for those who answer (*Amen*) after them.

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Who is a modest man? One who defecates at night in the same place that he defecates during the day.

The *Gemora* asks: Is that so? Hasn't Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: A person should always make a habit of rising early in the morning and to await evening in order to defecate, for this way, there would be no need for him to distance himself from others (*for the purpose of privacy*)? And furthermore, in the day, Rava used to go as far as a *mil*, but at night, he would say to his attendant, "Clear me a spot in the street of the town." [*Evidently, there is no need for distancing at all by night!?*] And so too Rabbi Zeira used to say to his attendant, "See if there is anyone behind the study hall, as I wish to defecate."

The *Gemora* answers: Do not read (*the braisa*) ‘in the same place’ (*which would mean regarding distance*), but rather, read ‘in the same way as he defecates by day’ (*in a modest manner*).

Rav Ashi said: You may even retain the reading ‘place,’ the reference being to a private corner (*and not regarding distance*).

The text had stated: Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: A person should always make a habit of rising early in the morning and to await evening in order to defecate, for this way, there would be no need for him to distance himself from others (*for the purpose of privacy*).

It has been taught similarly in a *braisa*: Ben Azzai said: Rise early and go out, wait for after dark and go out, so that you should not have to go far.

The *braisa* continues: One should manipulate himself before sitting (*to defecate*), but he should not sit and then manipulate, for if one sits and then manipulates, should witchcraft be used against him even as far away as Spain, he will not be immune from it.

The *braisa* asks: And if he forgets and does sit and then manipulates, what is his remedy?

The *braisa* answers: When he rises he should say, as follows: Not on me, not on me; not *tachim* nor *tachtim* (*affect me*); not these nor any part of these; neither the spells of sorcerers nor the spells of sorceresses!

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Ben Azzai says: Lie on anything but not on the ground (*for you will get sick due to the cold*). Sit on anything, but not on a beam (*for you might fall from such a high place*).

Shmuel said: Sleep at dawn is like a steel coat to iron (*for it strengthens it*); defecating at dawn is like a steel coat to iron.

Bar Kappara used to sell sayings for *dinars* (*money*). [*The Gemora lists some of them.*] While you are still hungry, eat (*right away*). While you are still thirsty, drink. While your pot is boiling (*when you feel the urge to defecate*), pour it out (*immediately, for otherwise, you can become sick*). When the

horn is sounded in (*the markets of*) Rome (*as a sign that those buying figs should begin to purchase*), the son of the fig seller should sell the father’s figs (*for otherwise, there will be nobody left to buy them*).

Abaye said to the Rabbis: When you go through the alleys of Mechoza to get to the fields (*in order to defecate*), do not look to this side or to that, for perhaps women are sitting there (*defecating as well*), and it is not proper to gaze at them.

The *Gemora* relates a story of Rav Safra, who was in the latrine. Rabbi Abba came and made a noise to indicate his presence, and Rav Safra said, “The master can enter.” When Rav Safra left, Rabbi Abba told him that by letting him enter, he showed that he did not go up to Se’ir, but he had learned their practices (*for they did not have proper protocol in the latrine*), as a *Mishna* taught: