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Moed Katan Daf 29

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

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

Rabbi Yochanan said: Those who come to comfort the mourner are prohibited from speaking until the mourner begins to talk. This is derived from the verse dealing with the friends of Iyuv who came to console him: *[No one said a word to him.] After that, Iyuv opened his mouth, and then it is written: Elifaz the Temanite then spoke up.* (28b)

Rabbi Avahu said: The mourner should recline at the head of all the consolers. This is derived from the following verse: *I would choose their way; I would sit at the head, I would rest like a king among his troops, as one who consoles (yenacheim) mourners.*

The Gemora asks: But (the word) *yenacheim* refers to the one who is consoling others (not the mourner)?

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak answers: It is written *ynacheim* (which literally means ‘he will be comforted’ – referring to the mourner).

Mar Zutra said that it is from the following verse: excessive mourning will approach. This means: The mourner becomes prince of the exalted ones. (28b)

Rabbi Chama bar Chanina said: The bridegroom should be seated at the head of the table. This is derived from the following verse: *like a bridegroom*

who is as splendid as a Kohen. Just as a Kohen is seated at the head, so too a bridegroom is seated at the head.

A braisa was taught in the Academy of Rabbi Yishmael (proving that whatever is holier takes precedence over its counterpart): *You shall sanctify him* teaches us that in all matters pertaining to holiness, the *Kohen* takes precedence. He should be the first one called to read the Torah. He should be the first to recite the blessing by a meal. He takes the first portion (*if he is dividing something with a Yisroel, the Kohen has the right to choose the first portion*). (28b)

Rabbi Chanina said: The departure of the soul from the body is as difficult as the removal of a knotty rope from the mast of a ship. Rabbi Yochanan said: It is as difficult as the pulling of the cables (*used to connect two ships*) through a hole. (28b – 29a)

Rabbi Levi bar Chayasa said: When a person takes leave from a dead person (*the coffin*), he should not say “Go to peace,” but “Go in peace.” When a person takes leave from a living person, he should not say “Go in peace,” but “Go to peace.”

The Gemora cites the source for the ruling that when a person takes leave from a dead person (*the coffin*),

he should not say "Go to peace," but "Go in peace": Hashem told Avraham (regarding his death): *You shall come to your ancestors in peace.*

The Gemora cites the source for the ruling that when a person takes leave from a living person, he should not say "Go in peace," but "Go to peace." When David told Avshalom "Go in peace," he went and was eventually hanged. When Yisro told Moshe "Go to peace," he went and was successful. (29a)

Rabbi Levi said: One who goes from the synagogue directly to the Beis Medrash (*house of study*) or from the Beis Medrash to the synagogue will merit greeting the Divine Presence. This is as it is written: They go from multitude to multitude, each appears before God in Zion. (29a)

Rabbi Chiya the son of Ashi said in the name of Rav: Torah scholars have no rest even in the World to Come (*they will continue to study Torah in front of the Divine Presence*). This is as it is written: They go from multitude to multitude, each appears before God in Zion. (29a)

**WE SHALL RETURN TO YOU,
VE'EILU MEGALCHIN
AND MESECHES MOED KATAN
IS CONCLUDED**

DAILY MASHAL

TWO SHIPS

"And the day of death (is better) than the day of one's birth." (Ecclesiastes VII, 1)
To what can this be compared? To two ships that were in the ocean laden with merchandise. One ship was coming to port, the other was leaving. People were praising the ship coming into port. Others stood by amazed and said, "Why are you praising this ship and not the other?" In reply they said to them, "We are praising the incoming ship since we know this ship has departed in peace and arrived at its destination in peace. But what the future will bring to the ship that has just begun its journey we do not know. "So it is with a person who is born: we do not know the nature of his future deeds. But when he leaves this world we know the nature of his deeds. (Yalkut Shimoni)

I found this letter from Rav Shlomo Wolbe and thought that it was worthy of sharing.

COMFORTING THE MOURNERS

A Letter of Consolation

(QUOTED BY RAV SHLOMO WOLBE, ALEY SHUR)

To my dear and beloved sons and daughters,

The purpose of this letter is to console you for when I will not be with you anymore. A person does not know when his time will be up, but the day will come (May Hashem bless me with long life) when my place at home will be empty, and you will be orphans.



My beloved, I have seen many orphans, most of whom find themselves in darkness without hope. Some are jealous, thinking, "Others have parents, but not me." Others feel that their world has tumbled down. Few are able to strengthen and brace themselves and to eventually elevate themselves after the tragedy in their lives. I therefore came to the conclusion that before one can comfort a mourner, it is essential to teach him how to deal with the situation. I hope I succeed in this endeavor, and may you understand these words so that they illuminate your lives.

The key to the mystery of life is faith in the true G-d, the Creator of the Universe! It is G-d's power that keeps the world going, even each and every blade of grass derives its sustenance from the Creator and surely each human being. This spirit of life is the essence of everything, and the most important part of a person is his spirit and soul.

I trust that I have raised you to have faith in G-d. I now encourage you to strengthen your faith and to realize that this is also the secret to the mystery of death! If life would be over for a dead person, it would be difficult to comfort a mourner. But that is not so! Although the body passes away, the person continues to exist!

Our great teacher (Rav Yeruchem Levovitz of Mir) wrote: "Death should be understood as one who moves from one city to another. This is the real truth. Your father has not died, may his memory be blessed, for he is alive. He has merely moved. To the understanding person there is even more to say. The

deceased is now even closer to you than before for now there are no separations."

One who has faith is able to deal with the concept of death. The truth is that the deceased is alive! He is aware of everything, and he is close to his relatives at all times!

However, I realize that you will still be bothered by his seeming absence. Children are accustomed to seeing their parents, asking for advice and being helped. Even after they move away from home they rely on and know that they can always turn to their parents. Who can fill this void?

But, think it over, my beloved ones. If you really loved me when I was with you, and if your love was not just superficial, you can always picture me in front of your eyes. You will know what I would have said and how I would have advised you. As an example, we see what our Sages say about Yosef Hatzadik; that he withstood temptation because of the vision of his father before his eyes.

Use the vision of your father to give you strength and encouragement. Keep in mind: The essence of a person is the spiritual, and that part continues to live!

Another point. All people feel an urge to come closer to mitzvos and good deeds at a time of mourning. Even those who were non-observant come to say Kaddish, they put on a *tallis* and *tefillin* and pray. What is the reason for this?

There is a deep reason. Our Sages teach that there are three partners to every human being: his father,



his mother and the Holy One, Blessed be He. A child is used to seeing only his father and mother. The third partner is invisible to him. However, when the physical partners leave this world, there is an inner feeling in the person that pushes him closer to the third partner.

One whose faith is strong tells this in a concrete way: "My father and mother (may) have left me but Hashem is always there."

The truth is: The physical parent was merely a messenger from the Heavenly Father. Now that the physical father's job is over the child's relationship to his Heavenly Father becomes stronger.

This is the most important message to bear in mind, for all people at any age: to strengthen one's faith, to sense Hashem's Providence, to realize how Hashem guides and leads a person daily and provides all his physical and spiritual needs. You will not lack anything if you keep your faith strong!

Through faith one will be consoled. Normally, a person is surrounded by his family, his teachers, his friends—all of them help him to maintain his life properly. However, when a relative passes away, may Hashem spare us, one of the supports has been removed.

The process of *Nichum Aveilim* to comfort the mourners, is to help replace the missing support, to raise his spirits and to help him continue.

Now my beloved ones, come closer to each other, help and encourage each other; your friendship

should be wholesome, faithful, amidst the love of Torah and of those who study Torah. Always be willing to learn and improve. Hashem will surely comfort you and help you continue . . . Be strong in emunah (faith) and in Torah, build for yourselves loyal homes with the aim of fulfilling Hashem's mitzvos. Your actions shall then serve to benefit me, as our Sages say: When one's children observe the mitzvos it is considered as if the father has not passed away. This is my advice and last request of you.

My Beloved Ones: Have faith and your faith will be fulfilled, and may your lives be successful forever!

With love,

Your father