

11 Adar I 5776
Feb. 20, 2016



Gittin Daf 69

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

Moshe Raphael ben Yehoshua (Morris Stadtmauer) o”h

Tzvi Gershon ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Ancient Cures

For night blindness, one should take a rope of animal hair, including hair from the tail of a horse and cow, and he should knot one end around his leg and the other around a dog’s leg. Children should rattle broken pieces of pottery around him, and they should say: “Old man, dog, fool, chicken.” Seven pieces of meat should be taken from seven different houses, and they should put it before him by the doorway of his house, and the meat should be eaten in the garbage dumps of the city. Afterwards, he should untie the rope, and they should say: “Shavriri of *ploni* (*his name*), son of *ploni*, leave *ploni* ben *ploni*.” They then should blow into the pupil of the eye of this dog.

For day blindness, one should bring seven spleens from the insides of recently slaughtered animals, and he should put them in a clay pot normally used for bloodletting. He should inside a house and someone else should sit outside, and the person who is blind should say: “Give me so that I should eat.” The person who can see should say: “Take and eat.” After he eats, the clay pot should be broken, as otherwise, the blindness will come back to him.

For blood running out of one’s nose, one should bring a *Kohen* whose name is Levi, and he should write the name Levi backwards. If he cannot do this, he can bring anyone who should write: “I, Papi bar Shilo Sumki” backwards. If he can’t, he should bring someone who will write for him: “The taste of a bucket in silver water; the taste of a bucket in tainted water.” If he cannot do this, he should bring the

root of grain that is not fully grown (*normally used at this stage for animal food*), a bed rope from an old bed, paper made from soft material, saffron, a red part that grows on a palm branch (*possibly what we know as “kora”*), and roast them all together in a fire. He should then bring a piece of wool and make out of it three strings. He should soak them in vinegar and then roll them in the ashes of the ingredients listed above. He should then put them in his nostrils. If he cannot do this, he should locate a stream that runs from east to west, and put one of his legs on one side of the stream and the other on the other side. He should take some mud with his right hand from where his left leg is located, and he should take some mud with his left hand from where his right leg is located. He should make three ropes of wool and soak them in the mud, and then put them in his nose. If not, he should sit under a gutter and people should put water there so it falls on him, and they should say: “Just as these waters stopped, so too, should the blood running out of *ploni* ben *ploni*.”

For blood coming out of the mouth, it should be checked with a straw of wheat. If the blood sticks to it, it is from his lung and he can be healed. If not, it is from his liver and cannot be healed.

Rav Ami asked Rav Ashi: Didn’t we learn the opposite? The Mishna states: If the liver was taken away and none remains (*this being has the status of a tereifah. However, regarding lungs*) If the lung was punctured or missing a little bit (*it causes the status of a tereifah*)!

Rav Ashi answered: Being that the blood is coming from his mouth, we assume that there is nothing left of his liver.

The *Gemora* previously stated that if the blood comes from his lungs he can be healed. How? He should take seven fistfuls each of spinach and leek, five of frida (*a type of grass*), three of lentils, one each of cumin and chavli, and the amount of all of these fistfuls together from a firstborn animal (*to its mother*). He should cook them together and eat them, and drink afterwards sharp beer from the month of Teves.

For inner teeth sickness, Rabbah bar Rav Huna says: One should take a garlic that only had one clove, grind it together with oil and salt, and put it on the nail of his thumb on the side that his teeth hurt. He should put it back on the lip (*edge*) of a piece of dough and ensure that it does not touch his skin, as it brings about a risk of getting leprosy.

For inflammation of the tonsils, Rabbi Yochanan says: Leaves of the pyrethrum are good like baldmoney (*is generally for healing*). Its root is even better than that. He should put them in his mouth. This prevents it from swelling. In order to have all of the puss gather in the sores (*so that it will leave when the sore pops*), he should bring coarse bran that stay at the top of the sifter, and some lentils together with their dirt, some fenugreek and a flower that grows on hops, and he should put the amount of a nut of this mixture in his mouth. To open the sores, his friend should blow white cress seeds onto the sores through a wheat straw. In order to heal the sore, he should bring dirt that lies under the shade of the stones that act as a toilet seat, mix it with honey and eat it, as this heals the sores.

For barsam (*a sickness in the head coming from the nose*), he should bring a cedar cone's volume of ammoniac and the amount of a nut of sweet galbanum, a spoonful of

white (*clear*) honey, and a *revi'is* of clear (*not red*) wine. He should cook these together, and when the ammoniac is done, it is a sign that everything is done. If he cannot do this, he should bring a *revi'is* of clear goat's milk, and he should let it drip onto three stalks of cabbage that are in a vessel. He should then stir the pot with a *marmahin* stick. When the stick is cooked, it is a sign that everything is cooked. If he cannot do this, he should bring the feces of a white dog and mix it with balsam. But as long as he can (*deal with his sickness or try a different method*), he should try to avoid having to eat this.

For *gira* (*a piercing pain*), he should bring an arrow made out of *lilith* (*meteoric stone*) and turn it point down, and proceed to pour water on it and drink it. If he cannot do this, he should drink from water that a dog drank from at night, but he should be careful that there is no suspicion that a snake drank from it.

If someone drank uncovered water that was not watched, he should drink a *revi'is* of undiluted wine.

For an abscess, he should drink a *revi'is* of wine together with red aloe.

For a heart that flutters, he should bring three loaves of barley and soak them in a type of dip that is not more than forty days old, and eat them. He should drink afterwards heavily diluted wine.

Rav Acha from Difti said to Ravina: Won't this certainly make his heart flutter?

Ravina answered: I said this is appropriate for someone whose heart is heavy, not whose heart is fluttering. For someone whose heart flutters, he should bring three loaves of wheat, soak them in honey, and eat them. He should drink afterwards undiluted wine.

For someone whose heart hurts, he should bring three amounts of an egg of mint, one of cumin, and one of sesame, and eat them.

For intestinal pain, one should bring three hundred long peppers, and every day (*for three days*), he should drink (*eat*) one hundred of them with his wine.

Ravin from Narsh made for the daughter of Rav Ashi one hundred and fifty of these, and she got better.

For stomach worms, a *revi'is* of wine should be drunk together with a laurel leaf.

For clear stomach worms, one should bring a seed of a rocket plant and tie it to a piece of cotton cloth. He should then soak this in water and drink the water, and he will get better. He should make sure he does not drink this seed, as if he does, it will make a hole in his stomach.

To stop diarrhea, he should soak a fresh pennyroyal in water (*and drink it*). For constipation, one should soak a dry pennyroyal in water. The way to remember this is that fresh *itza* grass is used to stop up a dam.

For a swollen spleen, he should bring seven water leeches and dry them in the shade. He should drink two or three a day in wine (*for three days*). If he cannot do this, he should bring the spleen of a goat that did not give birth and put it in the oven and say: "Just as this spleen dried up, so too, the spleen of *ploni bar ploni* should dry up." If he cannot do this, he should stick it in between the rows of bricks of a new wall of a house, and say as stated above. If he cannot do this, he should find out where there is a person who died on Shabbos, and he should take the dead person's hand and put it on his spleen and say: "Just as this hand has dried up, so too, the spleen of *ploni bar ploni* should dry up." If he cannot do this, he should take a fish and roast it in the coals of a smith and eat it along with

water used by the smith to extinguish the coals. He should also drink from this water.

There was a goat that used to drink from this water. When it was slaughtered, it was found that it did not have a spleen. If he cannot do the above, he should drink a lot of good wine.

Rav Acha, the son of Rav Ashi, said to Abaye: If he has a good barrel of wine, he would not have to come before you to ask for a cure! Rather he should accustom himself to eating bread in the morning, as this helps the whole body.

For hemorrhoids, he should bring acacia and aloe, quicksilver along with the impurities that naturally are found with it in the ground, a small gold or silver perfume container, and pigeon feces. He should wrap these ingredients with pieces of flax clothing in the summer and wool clothing in the winter (*and put it in the area of the hemorrhoids*). If he cannot do this, he should drink diluted beer.

For sickness of the thighs, he should bring a container of brine from small fish, and he should roll it sixty times over each affected thigh.

To cure a stone that is affecting one's urine output (*by not allowing it to come out*), he should take three drops of tar impurity, three drops squeezed from leek, three drops of clean wine, and put it in the affected area. If he cannot do this, he should bring the handle of a jug, and he should hang it on the affected area for a man. If it is a woman, it should be hung on her breasts. If he cannot do this, he should bring a louse from the bodies of both a man and woman, and put them on the affected area. When he urinates, he should do so on a dry bush by the doorway. He should be careful to keep the stone that comes out of him, as it is helpful in curing all types of fevers. (69a – 69b)



DAILY MASHAL

Ancient Cures

The Maharsha asks: The *Gemora* in Brochos (10b) states that Chizkiyahu hid the book of remedies and the sages praised him for this. This book contained instructions on healing various diseases through the use of different herbs and plants. Rashi explains that the sages praised him for hiding the book, because people were relying upon these remedies and they were not praying to Hashem for healing. If so, why does the *Gemora* record all these remedies here?

The Maharsha answers: A doctor definitely has permission to heal the sick, and he therefore has the right to know the cure for all sicknesses. However, these should not be publicized to all people, for some people will not have faith in Hashem; rather, they will rely on these natural remedies. And just as it was permitted to write down the Oral Law, for otherwise, it would be forgotten; so too, it was permitted to write down these cures, for otherwise, they would all be forgotten.

The Geresh Yerachim answers: the book of remedies that Chizkiyahu hid contained cures that were accurate and functioned for any sick person. If that would have remained in existence, people would rely only on that, and not on Hashem. However, the remedies mentioned in our *Gemora* do not work for every person. There are many factors that would prevent a person from being cured, even if he followed the exact instructions. Therefore, even when these remedies would be applied, one would still need to pray to Hashem in order to be healed.

Frontwards and Backwards

The *Gemora* states: For blood running out of one's nose, one should bring a *Kohen* whose name is Levi, and he should write the name Levi backwards.

The Tiferes Yosef explains: It is well-known in the books of Kabbalah that the *alef beis* written forward connotes kindness, for this way, the inspiration comes in the regular manner; descending from Heaven to earth. The *alef beis* written backwards connotes judgment, similar to fire, which ascends from the earth.

It is written in the Zohar that a *Kohen* is a man of kindness, and a Levi is one of judgment. This is why the name Levi, written backwards, signifying judgment, should be written by a *Kohen*, for he represents kindness.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM YESTERDAY'S DAF to refresh your memory

Q: Why did Shlomo HaMelech need demons?

A: In order to find the *shamir* to be used for the stones in the Beis HaMikdash.

Q: Why did Ashmedai cry when he saw the joyous wedding procession?

A: The husband will die within thirty days, and the wife will be forced to wait for the brother-in-law who is still a child of thirteen years (*to perform yibum*).

Q: After Shlomo was thrown from his palace by Ashmedai, did he become the king again?

A: It is a *machlokes* between Rav and Shmuel.