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Sotah Daf 5

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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

Haughtiness of Spirit

From where is there a prohibition for the haughtiness of spirit? — Rava said in the name of Ze’iri: Listen and be attentive; do not be haughty. Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: [It is derived] from this passage: And your heart will become haughty and you will forget Hashem, and it is written: Take care lest you forget Hashem, your God. This is in accord with what R. Abin said in the name of R. Elai; for Rabbi Avin said in the name of Rabbi I’lai: Wherever it is stated ‘Take care’ ‘lest’ and ‘do not’ the reference is to a prohibition.

Rav Avira expounded, sometimes he said it in the name of Rav Assi and at other times in the name of Rav Ammi: Every man in whom is haughtiness of spirit will in the end be reduced in stature; as it is said: They are exalted, decrease; and lest you think that they remain in existence, the text continues: And they are gone. If, however, he repents [and becomes humble], he will die [as did our patriarchs] in his due time like our patriarch Abraham; as it is said: But when they are lowly, they are gathered in like all — i.e., like Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, of whom it is written: with all, from all, all. If not, they are cut off as the top of a stalk. — What does it mean ‘as the top of a stalk’? — Rav Huna and Rav Chisda explain: One says that it is referring to the bristle that grows on top of the grain (*and eventually falls off by itself*). The other says that it is referring to the grain itself (*which is cut off by the harvest*). — This is quite right according to the one who says that it means like the bristle that grows on top of the grain, since it is written ‘as the top of the stalk’; but according to the one who says that it means like the grain

themselves, what is the significance of ‘as the tops of the grain’? — Rav Assi said, and so it was taught in the school of Rabbi Yishmael: It is analogous to a man who enters his field; he harvests the tallest ears. (5a1 – 5a2)

Humility and Haughtiness

It is written [Yeshaya 57:15]: *With the lofty and the holy ones I dwell, and with the crushed and humble in spirit*. Rav Huna and Rav Chisda explain the verse. One says that it means that the crushed and humble in spirit is with Me (*they are elevated to His level*). And the other one said that I am with the crushed and humble in spirit (*Hashem descends to them*).

The *Gemora* notes: The more logical view is in accord with the who holds the meaning to be, “I am with the crushed and humble in spirit”; for behold, the Holy One, blessed be He (*at the giving of the Torah*), ignored all the mountains and hills and rested His Presence upon Mount Sinai, but He did not elevate Mount Sinai.

Rav Yosef said: Man should always learn from the mind of his Creator, for behold, the Holy One, blessed be He, ignored all the mountains and hills and rested His Presence upon Mount Sinai (and ignored all the beautiful trees and caused His Presence to abide in a bush). (5a2)

Rabbi Elozar said: Any man who possesses a haughtiness of spirit is fit to be cut down like an *asheirah* tree (*one that is worshipped*). It is written here: The high ones of stature shall be cut down, and elsewhere it is written: And you shall cut down their *asheirah* trees.

And Rabbi Elozar said: Any man who possesses a haughtiness of spirit, his dust will not be moved (*at the time of Resurrection*). as it is said: Awake and sing, you that dwell in the dust — it is not said ‘you that lie in the dust’, but, ‘you that dwell [shochnei] in the dust’, i.e., each one who during his lifetime made himself a dweller [shachen] to the dust [by his humility].

And Rabbi Elozar said: Any man who possesses a haughtiness of spirit, the Divine Presence will lament over him, as it is said: But the haughty He grieves over from afar.

Rav Avira, and others say, Rabbi Elozar expounds: Come and see that the manner of a human being is not like the manner of the Holy One, blessed be He. The manner of human beings is for the lofty to take notice of the lofty and not of the lowly; but the manner of the Holy One, blessed be He, is not so. He is lofty and yet He takes notice of the lowly, as it is said: For though Hashem is exalted, yet He views the lowly.

Rav Chisda and others say, Mar Ukva said: Regarding a man who possesses a haughtiness of spirit, the Holy One, Blessed be He says: I and him cannot dwell together in the world, as it is said: He who slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy; one with haughty eyes and a proud heart, him I cannot bear — read not ‘him’ [I cannot bear], but ‘with him’ I cannot [bear – to dwell]. Others say that this was said regarding those people who slander others, as it is said: He who slanders his neighbor in secret, him will I destroy.

Rabbi Alexandri said: Regarding a man who possesses a haughtiness of spirit, even the slightest wind will upset him, as it is said: But the wicked will be like the troubled sea. If the sea, which contains so many *revi'ios* (quarters of a log), is agitated by the slightest wind, how much more so a human being who contains but one quarter of a log.

Rav Chiya bar Ashi said in the name of Rav: A Torah scholar should have one eighth of an eighth of haughtiness (*so that lighthearted people should not play with him and that they will accept his rulings*). Rav Huna the son of Rav Yehoshua said: [This small amount of pride] crowns him like the beard of the stalk.

Rava said: A Torah scholar who possesses haughtiness of spirit deserves to be excommunicated, and if he does not possess any of it, he deserves to be excommunicated.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: A person should not possess it or even a part of it (*a haughtiness of spirit*); is it a trivial matter that which it is written: Every one that is haughty in heart is an abomination to Hashem!

Chizkiyah said: A person’s prayer is only heard if he makes his heart as soft like flesh, as it is said: And it shall come to pass, that from every New Moon to another, shall all flesh come to prostrate, etc.

Rabbi Zeira said: Concerning flesh it is written: And it is healed; but it is not written concerning man (adam): And he is healed.

Rabbi Yochanan said: The word for man [ADaM] indicates [through an acronym] dust [aifer], blood [dam] and bile [marah]. The word for flesh [BaSaR] indicates [through an acronym] shame [bushah], foul [sruchah] and worms [rimah]. Some declare that [instead of foul’ we should have the word grave [sheol], since it [basar] is written with a ‘sin’ (whereas ‘seruchah’ is spelled with a ‘samech’).

Rav Ashi says: A person who possesses a haughtiness of spirit will in the end be lessened, as it is said: and of the *s’eis* and of the *sapachas*, and *s’eis* [‘rising’] means nothing else than elevation, as it is said: Upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are *nisaos* [lifted

up]. And *sapachas* [‘scab’] means nothing else than subsidiary,, as it is said: Attach me [sefacheini], please, to one of the priestly offices, that I may eat a morsel of bread.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Come and see how great are the lowly of spirit before the Holy One, blessed be He, since when the Beis Hamikdash stood, a man brought an *olah* offering and received the reward for the *olah*. If he brought a flour offering, he received the reward of a flour offering. But as for one who is humble, the Torah considers him as though he had offered every one of the sacrifices; as it is said: *The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit*. And furthermore, his prayer is not despised; as it continues: *A broken and crushed heart, O God, You will not despise*.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: One who appraises his conduct (*he considers the loss he might incur by performing a mitzvah against the eternal reward that the mitzvah will bring, and the benefit he may obtain by committing a sin against the tremendous loss that will result*) will merit seeing the salvation of the Holy One, Blessed be He. He cites a verse in Tehillim [50:23]: *Vesam derech arenu beyasha Elokim*; And to him that sets his way, I will show the salvation of Hashem. Do not read it as *Vesam* (and to him that sets), rather, read it as *Vesham*, and one who appraises his way. (5a2 – 5b1)

Explaining the Mishnah

The *Mishnah* had stated: How does he warn her? (*The Mishnah answered: If the husband says to his wife in front of two witnesses, “Do not speak to So-and-so,” and she does speak with him, she is still permitted to her husband and she may eat terumah. However, if she secludes herself with that man, and she remained with him there long enough to become defiled, she is forbidden to her husband and she may not eat terumah.*)

The *Gemora* asks: How can the text of the *Mishnah* be explained? First the *Mishnah* said: How does he warn her? If the husband says to his wife in front of two witnesses, “Do not speak to So-and-so.” This implies that merely speaking is regarded as a seclusion. But then, the *Mishnah* states: If she does speak with him, she is still permitted to her husband and she may eat *terumah*. Here we see that merely speaking with him is insignificant!?

Abaye answers: The following is what the *Mishnah* actually means: If the husband says, “Do not speak to So-and-so,” and she does speak with him; or if he said, “Do not speak to So-and-so,” and she secludes herself; or if he said, “Do not seclude yourself with So-and-so,” and she speaks with him, she is still permitted to her husband and she may eat *terumah* (*if she is the wife of a Kohen*). However, if she secludes herself with that man, and she remained with him there long enough to become defiled, she is forbidden to her husband and she may not eat *terumah* (*if she is the wife of a Kohen*). (5b1 – 5b2)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

One Sixty-fourth

Rav Chiya bar Ashi said in the name of Rav: A Torah scholar should have one eighth of an eighth of haughtiness (*so that lighthearted people should not play with him and that they will accept his rulings*).

The Sheiris Hapeleitah explains this precise measurement as follows: The *Gemora* in Bava Basra (73b) states that Mount Tabor was four parasangs (*parsa’os*) high. A *parsah* is four *mil*. A *mil* consists of two thousand *amos*. Accordingly, a *parsah* is eight thousand *amos*. It emerges that Mount Tabor is thirty-two thousand *amos* high. Chazal tell us that Mount Sinai was five hundred *amos* tall, which is precisely one sixty-fourth of Mount Tabor.

The following question may be asked: If the Holy One, Blessed be He did not wish to give the Torah on Mount

Tabor, for it was haughty, why did He give the Torah on a mountain at all? The Torah could have been given on a flatland, where there would be no concern for haughtiness whatsoever! It was given on Mount Sinai, a mountain which its height was one sixty-fourth of Mount Tabor to teach us that a Torah scholar should possess this small measure of haughtiness.

DAILY MASHAL

HE DIDN'T KNOW FROM HIS RIGHT TO HIS LEFT

In the city of Dvinsk, there was a very prestigious and scholarly man named Reb Leib. He was referred to as Reb Leib Charif, the sharp one, due to his intelligent insights in torah. He was extremely close to Reb Meir Simcha, the Ohr Sameach, and they would spend many hours in each others company discussing Torah matters together.

There was once an incident where they were both sitting in the Beis Medrash when a different scholar was delivering a lecture to thirty laymen. Reb Leib heard how the scholar was explaining a certain topic to them and immediately asked a penetrating question that the scholar was incapable of answering.

Reb Meir Simcha arose from his designated seat near the eastern wall, walked to the back of the Beis Medrash and admonished Reb Leib: "Someone that doesn't know between his right and his left, should be asking questions in the middle of a lecture?" Reb Leib was quiet, left the Beis Medrash in embarrassment and the scholar continued on with his lecture.

All those that witnessed the incident were bewildered. Is it possible that Reb Leib Charif could ask a question that was not fit to be asked? What did he do so terrible that caused Reb Meir Simcha to react in such a manner?

Reb Leib was puzzled as well and he went to Reb Meir Simcha's house to inquire of him why he took such

offense with his question, which was seemingly a legitimate one.

Reb Meir Simcha told him: "Did I say that your question was not a valid one? No, I did not. I was repeating a Gemora in Moed Katan (*and in Sotah as well*)."

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: One who appraises his conduct (*he considers the loss he might incur by performing a mitzva against the eternal reward that the mitzva will bring, and the benefit he may obtain by committing a sin against the tremendous loss that will result*) will merit in seeing the salvation of Klal Yisroel through Hashem. He cites a verse in Tehillim [50:23]: *Vesam derech arenu beyasha Elokim*, And to him that sets his way, I will show the salvation of Hashem. Do not read it as *Vesam* (and to him that sets), rather, read it as *Vesham*, and one who appraises his way.

Rabbi Yannai had a student who would consistently ask questions during the lecture. On the Shabbos of the festival (*within thirty days of the festival, the scholars would teach and discuss the laws of the festival*), the student wouldn't challenge Rabbi Yannai (*since there were many people attending and if Rabbi Yannai wouldn't know how to respond, he would be embarrassed*). Rabbi Yannai said in reference to him: And to him that appraises his way, I will show the salvation of Hashem (*due to the student's careful calculation*).

Reb Meir Simcha concluded: "You, Reb Leib, should have been cognizant of the difference between the right and the left of the letter *sin*; it was written *vesam*, with the letter *sin*, which has the dot on the left and the Gemora expounds it to mean *vesham*, with the letter *shin*, which has the dot on the right. *Vesham* means that one should appraise his ways and calculate his every move and word. When this scholar was lecturing in front of thirty laymen, you should not have asked a question that quite possibly could embarrass him.