

Bava Basra - Simanim

Daf 8 – דף ח – דף ח

1. Rebbe's policy to only provide sustenance in a famine to the learned

Rebbe opened storehouses of food during years of famine, but only allowed masters of Torah, Mishnah, Gemara, halachah, or Aggadah to enter, but not the ignorant, for fear that there were not enough provisions for everyone. Rebbe's talmid, Rebbe Yonasan ben Amram, pushed his way in and asked for sustenance. Rebbe asked him if he was learned, and when Rebbe Yonasan said he was not, Rebbe responded: אם כן במה אפרנסך – "If so, based on what can I sustain you?" Rebbe Yonasan answered: אם כלב וכעורב – "Sustain me like a dog and a raven, whom Hashem sustains!" Rebbe gave him food but was later upset at having provided for an am haaretz. His son Rebbe Shimon suggested that this was perhaps Rebbe Yonasan, שאינו רוצה ליהנות מכבוד – who does not want to ever benefit from the honor of Torah. This was found to be correct, and Rebbe then allowed everyone to receive sustenance. Rebbe's original policy was based on his position: אין אין בשביל עמי הארץ – misfortune only comes to the world because of the unlearned. He proved this from a tax which was levied on Teveria, and when Rebbe refused to compel the Rabbis to contribute, the other townspeople fled, and the tax was canceled.

2. פדיון שבויים is a "מצוה רבה"

Ifra Hurmiz, mother of King Shapur, sent a pouch of gold dinarim to Rav Yosef and said: ליהוי למצוה רבה – "Let it be used for a great mitzvah." Rav Yosef sat and investigated what might be called "a great mitzvah," and Abaye said that since Rav Shmuel bar Yehudah taught: אין פוסקין צדקה על היתומים – we do not impose any tzedakah obligations on orphans, אפילו לפדיון שבוים is a great mitzvah. Rava asked Rabbah bar Mari for the source of this principle, and he answered with a passuk listing impending calamities, which mentions those destined to die naturally, by the sword, by famine, and those destined for captivity. Rebbe Yochanan said each misfortune written is worse than the one before it. Death by the sword is worse than a natural death, because the body is disgraced. Death by hunger is worse still, because he suffers. [He also quotes pesukim proving the above]. שבי קשה מכולם – Captivity is worse than all [the others], דכולהו איתנהו ביה – because all of them are included in it.

ומצדיקי הרבים ככוכבים לעולם ועד .3

The Gemara darshens the passuk: והמשכילים יזהירו כזוהר הרקיע – And the wise will shine like the shine of the firmament, אמת לאמתו – this refers to a judge who decides a perfectly truthful judgement.

And those who make the many righteous will shine like the stars forever and ever, אלו גבאי צדקה – this refers to charity collectors, who cause others to righteously give tzedakah. A Baraisa explains that the first phrase refers both to a judge who judges truthfully and tzedakah collectors and explains the second phrase: אלו מלמדי תינוקות – this refers to teachers of children, who make them righteous by teaching them the correct path. Rav says that Rav Shmuel bar Shilas exemplifies such a teacher: Rav once found him in a garden and said: שבקתיה להימנותך – Have you abandoned your integrity? Rav was surprised to see him, since he was always faithfully teaching his students. Rav Shmuel responded: הא תליסר שנין דלא חזיא – and even now, my mind is on [my students]." Ravina says that regarding the Rabbis, who themselves learn Torah, it is written: ואוהביו כצאת – and those who love Him will be like the sun going forth in its might. Tosafos says this refers to the sun in the time of Moshiach.

Siman – Challah

The great Rabbi who opened his bakery during a famine to feed *Talmidei Chochomim*, but not the עמי הארץ, had a huge *pushka* outside to raise money for the great *mitzvah* of פדיון שבוים, and sent a challah to the מלמד תינוקות next door, that was baked in the shape of a shiny star.

DAF 8 | ח קד

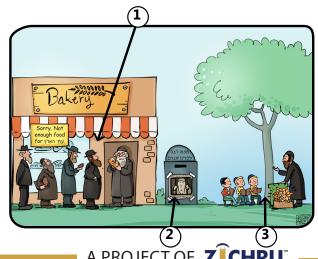
Challah



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things to remember

- 1. Rebbe's policy to only provide sustenance in a famine to the learned
- 2. פדיון שבויים is a "מצוה רבה"
- ומצדיקי הרבים ככוכבים לעולם ועד



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