

**שבת קודש פרשת כי תשא | מסכת כתובות דף ע"ז**

**INSIGHTS FROM OUR CHABUROS**

**Symptoms and precautions related to ראתן**

מכריז ר' יוחנן הזהירו מזבחי של בעלי רעתן. רבי זירא לא היה יתיב בזיקיה. רבי אלעזר לא עייל באהליה...

The Gemara discusses the disease known as ראתן, which is very contagious and unpleasant, and the precautions which some of the Amoraim took to avoid catching the disease.

Rabbi Yochanan used to announce that people should avoid the flies which swarm around people afflicted with this condition. This is because the Gemara earlier mentioned that flies are attracted to people with this disease. Rabbi Zeira would not sit in a spot downwind from anyone with this malady. Rabbi Elazar did not enter the room (or tent) in which a person with ראתן was situated. Maharsha explains that this was because a person with this illness is compared to a person with tzara'as, which has tumah of the dead, and the entire room in which he is sitting transmits this tumah.

Rebbe Ami and Rebbe Assi did not eat any eggs which came from the street where the afflicted person sat. Talmidei Rabeinu Yona explain that even though eggs have a shell, the degree to which this is communicable is high. They certainly refused to partake of other foods which might have become contaminated, as well.

The Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 16:3) lists many precautions which were taken by the Amoraim in regard to tzara'as, many similar to what our Gemara lists in reference to ראתן, and some measures which were even more extreme. This is due to the symptoms of boils and skin lesions which are common in these diseases.

**POINT TO PONDER**

According to שמואל if a husband says that he doesn't want to provide for his wife (איני זן ואיני מפרנס) we force him to support her. What happens if he doesn't have the means to support her?

**Response to last week's Point to Ponder:**

אמר רש"י ד"ה רב אשי אמר writes that a daughter claims the kesuba for her father, meaning that she is saying, you owe my father the כתובה. In the משנה Rashi writes that the father is demanding the כתובה and not the daughter. Why did Rashi change to now say that she is claiming for her father?

רש"י is explaining that רב אשי understands the רישא as a case whereby the father is unsure שחא and he therefore has to rely on his daughter. However רש"י in the משנה is explaining a case where the father is ברי. (See שיטה מקובצת).

**STORIES OF THE DAF**

**The Rainbow**

**"נראת קשת בימיה?"**

The group was learning the Daf Hayomi as usual, and they were up to Kesuvos daf 77b. They had reached the Gemara's description of the meeting between Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi and Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai. Rabbi Shimon asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi, "Was the rainbow ever seen in your day?"

"Yes, it was," answered Rabbi Yehoshua.

Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai declared, "If so, you are not worthy of the proclamation that Eliyahu Hanavi had made earlier on your behalf: 'Make way for ben Levi!'"

The Maggid Shiur said, "Rashi explains that the rainbow is a heavenly sign of the promise that Hashem made to spare the world from another flood. If there is a complete tzaddik living in the generation, there is no need for such a sign."

One of the members of the shiur interjected, "I don't understand this at all. A rainbow is the natural result of the refraction of light through a prism. How can we the presence of a tzaddik worthy of protecting the generation from a flood be seen in the absence of a rainbow? Isn't it just a natural part of creation?"

The Maggid Shiur replied, "The Rema answered this question in a very beautiful and simple way. In the years before electric lighting, the only way that a rainbow could be seen was when it rained during the day—that is the sunlight just after a rainstorm refracting through the remaining moisture in the air. The Gemara in Taanis 23a and the Sifrei in Eikev explain the will I and'—'ונתתי מטר ארצכם בעתו'—'to mean that when the Jewish people are worthy, Hashem will only send rain on Tuesday night and Leil Shabbos.

The Maggid Shiur concluded, "This is why the rainbow is not seen when there is a true tzaddik in the generation. When we are zocheh through the great merit of a very elevated tzaddik, it rains at night when there is no light!"

## HALACHA HIGHLIGHT

**Bikur cholim  
for someone  
contagious**

ר' יהושע בן לוי מיכרך בהו ועסיק בתורה  
*R' Yehoshua ben Levi attached himself to them  
and studied Torah.*

**T**he later authorities question the practice of R' Yehoshua ben Levi recorded in our Gemara. How could R' Yehoshua ben Levi put his life at risk to study Torah with people who have a contagious disease? Isn't there a principle that one is not permitted to knowingly put himself into danger, even to perform a mitzvah, and rely on a miracle that Hashem will protect him? The Meshech Chochmah<sup>1</sup> asserts that R' Yehoshua was so confident in his constant attachment (דביקות) to Hashem that he had no reason to fear anything in the world of nature. Rav Elchonon Wasserman<sup>2</sup> asserts that the restriction against putting oneself into danger to fulfill a mitzvah does not apply to the mitzvah of Torah study. Torah study is unique, as our Gemara relates, and he was allowed to rely on the power and protection of his Torah study (תורה לשמה). Others<sup>3</sup> suggest that he was allowed to be in their vicinity only because he was teaching Torah publicly and it was the merit of teaching Torah publicly that protected him from harm.

This question has bearing also on the question of a doctor treating a patient with a contagious disease. Rav Chaim Falagi<sup>4</sup> was asked about a doctor who treated patients with communicable diseases and the members of his shul wanted to prevent him from davening with them due to the fear that he would bring a disease into shul. Rav Falagi ruled in favor of the congregants and instructed the doctor to distance himself from others because of the fear that he would transmit to others a disease. He also ruled that people are not obligated to endanger themselves to fulfill the mitzvah of bikur cholim. The Tzitz Eliezer<sup>5</sup> wrote that it is permitted for a doctor to treat a patient with a contagious disease and it is considered a great mitzvah and he does not have to fear becoming ill.

1. משך חכמה ויקרא כו:ו.
2. קובץ שיעורים אות רע"ז.
3. ע' מתיבתא לכתובות ח"ד לרף ע"ז: ד"ה ביקור חולה.
4. נשמת כל חי ח"ב ח"מ סי' מ"ט.
5. שו"ת ציץ אליעזר ח"ט סי' י"ז פ"ה.

## MUSSAR FROM THE DAF

**The Deciding  
Factor**

מכריז רבי יוחנן: הזהרו מזבובי (של) בעלי ראתן. רבי זירא לא הוה יתיב בזיקיה. רבי אלעזר לא עייל באהליה. רבי אמי ורבי אסי לא הוו אכלי מביעי דההיא מבואה. רבי יהושע בן לוי מיכרך בהו ועסיק בתורה. אמר: "אילת אהבים ויעלת חן", אם חן מעלה על לומדיה, אגוני לא מגנא?

**T**he Gemara tells us a fascinating story with R' Yehoshua ben Levi. There was a contagious disease (ראתן) and other Amoryim were careful to stay away from those with this disease, less they catch it. R' Yehoshua ben Levi did not refrain from teaching these people Torah, despite their contagious disease. The Gemara goes on to tell us how R' Yehoshua ben Levi was able to overcome the Malach Hamaves, and he managed to cross into Gan Eden with his body intact.

What is the connection to these two stories of R' Yehoshua ben Levi? Let us first look at a Yesod. Before Adam ate from the Etz Hadaas, there was no death in the world. Once he ate from the Etz Hadaas, Adam now developed a Self, separate from Hashem. (as we know he was now embarrassed of not having clothes) This Self contained within it the Yetzer harah. Now, Man must physically die, and be buried and rebuilt and return during Techas Hamesim for the body to be cleansed from this החשך והעכירות (murkiness and darkness) that it received from eating of the Etz Hadaas.

R' Yehoshua ben Levi in deciding to teach Torah b'rabim demonstrated that he successfully was able to mivatel any self interest which is a manifestation in the החשך והעכירות of the גוף. Therefore, he was zoche to be able to enter Gan Eden straight with his גוף intact, as there was no need for his גוף to be nullified and then reconstructed.

We learn from R' Yehusha ben Levi what type of great levels one can reach. In any given situation, learning how to make decisions based on what Hashem wants can help a person slowly destroy any self interest and reach shalymus.

## PARSHA CONNECTION

**In this week's daf** the gemara tells the story about רבי חנינא בר פפא who asked the חמות the פסוק in this week's פרשה (אליעזר) מאי דכתיב (שמות לב, טז), writes, עירובין דף נד ע"א in גמרא the פרשה וא"ר (אליעזר) מאי דכתיב (שמות לב, טז), writes, עירובין דף נד ע"א in גמרא the פרשה because חרות על הלוחות אלמלי לא נשתברו לוחות הראשונות לא נשתכחה תורה מישארל the first לוחות were destroyed we no longer have this מעלה of remembering everything we learn. Why did this change after the לוחות were broken by משה רבינו? The פסוק ויתן אל משה ככלתו לדבר אתו בהר סיני שני שני לחת העדת לחת אבן says: פרשת כי תשא upon completing talking to him. לוחות משה הקב"ה and כתבים באצבע אלהים upon completing talking to him. The גמרא in גמרא the תורה משה הקב"ה was teaching for 40 days and every day that the הקב"ה taught him he forgot it, until finally after 40 days it was given to him as a מתנה. If the הקב"ה intended to give it to him as a gift anyway, why did he teach it to him every day for 40 days knowing that he will forget it each day? The תמימה quotes a beautiful ירושלמי that this was done to comfort people who have a difficulty remembering what they learn. Knowing that even משה רבינו forgot what he learned will give them encouragement that they too will eventually remember what they learned. The הקדוש offers a different, unique explanation for the 40 days of learning. He explains that in order to understand and remember the whole תורה, it was necessary for משה רבינו to transform himself from a normal human being into a spiritual being, 40 days represents the timeframe for creating a new being, like יצירת הולד which is 40 days. The method of transformation is through learning תורה which has the ability to completely change a person. Once he became a "new being" he was able to receive the תורה as a gift. Perhaps we can add, that since we lost our elevated status which was attained by תורה תמימה, after the עגל we can no longer reach that level today, and we therefore must study many times to remember what we learn.

For more points to ponder by Rabbi Yechiel Grunhaus, or insights by Rabbi Yitzchok Gutterman, please visit our website, [dafaweek.org](http://dafaweek.org), or download the app

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