

# The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Avodah Zarah 65-71

Week of 20-26 Kislev 5756 / 13-19 December 1995  
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

## How We Look in Their Eyes

Wine which has been used for idol worship is forbidden for use by a Jew. Therefore, if wine was left in the custody of an idol worshipper it is forbidden for use because of the suspicion that he poured it as a libation to his idol and then returned it to its container.



A Jew and an idol worshipper were sitting in a ship with a cargo of wine late one Friday afternoon. The Jew heard the sound of the shofar reminding people to put away their weekday activities and enter the Sabbath. He quickly left the ship and entered the city, leaving the idol worshipper alone with the wine.

The Sage Rava ruled that the wine may be used by the Jew because the idol worshipper is afraid to use it for the purpose of worship against the will of the Jew since the Jew may suddenly return and catch him in the act.

If the distance between the ship and where the Jew has gone for the Sabbath is so great that it is forbidden by Jewish laws for the Jew to return to the ship on the Sabbath — is it still safe to assume that the idol worshipper will be afraid of the Jew's sudden return?

Yes, declared Rava. Non-Jews do not believe that Jews properly observe the Sabbath and will not violate it if there is a danger of financial loss. A convert by the name of Issar told Rava that before he became a Jew, he, like all other non-Jews, was sure that Jews did not fully observe the Sabbath. Their proof was that they never came across a purse left in the street by a Jew arriving home after the beginning of the Sabbath because of the prohibition to carry it the distance of four cubits in the public domain. Where they erred, explained Rava, is that in such a case the Sages permitted the Jew, who might otherwise panic and carry it four cubits without interruption in violation of the ban, to carry it less than four cubits, stop and rest and continue carrying it in this fashion until he reaches his destination. This is in actuality not a violation of the Sabbath but since the non-Jew interprets it as such he concludes that a Jew will return to the ship even when such an exception is not granted and is therefore afraid to tamper with the wine.



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## Transient Gratification and Instant Vindication

The Sage Rava once came upon an idol-worshipping nobleman acquaintance, Bar Shaishach, as he was indulging in what he considered the peak of physical pleasure.

"Will you Jews have anything to compare with this in the World to Come?" he challenged the sage.

"Our pleasure will be even greater" he replied, "for it will not be compromised by fear of authority."

This annoyed the high ranking nobleman who snapped back: "What fear do I have of authority?"

At that very moment a messenger came from the king and relayed a summons to immediately appear before his majesty. Only then did Bar Shaishach appreciate that Heaven provided a more meaningful gratification both now and later for the desires of His beloved people, and even provided instant vindication of their claims.

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22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel ☎972-2-810-315 fax: 972-2-812-890 ✉ [ohr@jer1.co.il](mailto:ohr@jer1.co.il)  
38 East 29th Street 8<sup>th</sup> floor, New York, NY 10016, USA ☎1-212-213-3100 fax: 1-212-213-8717 ✉ [RZCorlin@aol.com](mailto:RZCorlin@aol.com) or [estern@Gramercy.ios.com](mailto:estern@Gramercy.ios.com)  
613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada ☎1-905-886-5730 fax: 1-905-886-6065 ✉ [avram.rothman@canrem.com](mailto:avram.rothman@canrem.com)

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