

The Weekly Daf



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Eirubin 63-69

Week of 12-18 Tammuz 5758 / 6 July-12 July 1998
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Sleeping it "On"

Sobriety is an absolute necessity both for prayer and for ruling on matters of halacha. But even if one has come under the influence of wine, says the Sage Rami bar Abba, he can return to a sober state by walking the distance of a *mil* (roughly a kilometer) or by sleeping a bit.

A qualification of this sobering solution is provided, however, by Rabbi Nachman in the name of Rabba bar Avuha. Only when a *revi'is* of wine (86 grams) is imbibed will sleep have a sobering effect. If one drinks more than this, sleep will only make him more intoxicated.

This *gemara* can help us explain a halacha mentioned in *Shulchan Aruch (Orach Chaim 695:2)*, based on the ruling of the Sage Rava (*Mesechta Megilla 7a*), that on Purim one must drink wine until he can no longer distinguish between "cursed be Haman and blessed be Mordechai." In contrast to the literal interpretation which suggests excessive drinking, *Rema* cites an opinion that it is sufficient to drink more than one is accustomed to and then go to sleep, "since when he is asleep he is unable to distinguish between cursed be Haman and blessed be Mordechai."

On the basis of the aforementioned *gemara* about the relationship between wine and sleep, it may be concluded that it is not drink-induced sleep which is the Purim state of confusion prescribed by *Rema*, but rather the state of intoxication induced by sleeping after drinking more than the customary measure of a *revi'is*.

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The Three Indicators

You can tell a man by three things, says Rabbi Ilouï. By his drinking (*kosso*), his pocketbook (*kisso*) and his temper (*ka'asso*).

A good man, the Sage informs us, is one who can hold his liquor, deal honestly in business and control his temper (*Rashi*).

This basic interpretation is expanded upon by *Maharsha*:

All human characteristics can be divided into three categories — man's relationship with Heaven, with his fellow man and with himself.

Whether one deals honestly in his affairs with others determines whether he is good or bad towards his fellow man. How he behaves when he has drunk more than a little spirits is an indication whether he is good or bad in caring for himself. How quick he is to anger is a criterion to Heaven, for our Sages have taught us that one who is prone to anger is considered as if he worships idols.

This oft-quoted Talmudic advice is borne out by so much human experience. The veneer which some people of poor character affect in their routine activities is exposed when they are challenged to hold their drink or temper, or to refrain from cutting corners in order to earn another dollar at someone else's expense.

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