

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Moed Katan 25 - Chagiga 3

Week of 22 28 Cheshvan 5760 / 1 - 7 November 1999
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

The Paradox of a Passing

The passing of *tzaddikim* (righteous people) is compared to the red heifer, whose ashes are used to bring purification for those Jews who have become spiritually contaminated by contact with the dead.

As a source for this equation, Rabbi Ami cites the juxtaposition of two chapters in the Torah. The laws of the red heifer (*Bamidbar 19*) are followed by an account of the passing of Miriam (*Bamidbar 20:1*) to teach us that just as the red heifer serves as an atonement (it is referred to in Maharsha) so does the death of a *tzaddik* act as an atonement.

An interesting explanation of this comparison is offered by Rabbi Yonata

the Torah makes him *pure*, those involved in some of the processes connected with those ashes become *impure*.

chok

A similar paradox exists regarding the impact which the death of a *tzaddik* for the impure in some mystical way, so too does the *tzaddik* generation. But regarding the *tzaddik*

tzaddiks

Why Bring the Kids?

Once every seven years, Jews gathered together in the *Beit Hamikdash* (*Devarim 31:12*)

The children referred to here are those infants too young to understand what is being read. Older children, who even if they have not yet reached the age of mitzvah responsibility but are at the level of *chinuch* where they can be trained by their parents to learn, are mentioned in the very next passage as active participants in this massive educational experience. There is therefore no other purpose for bringing the very little ones except for gaining a reward.

Rabbi Yehuda Mintz of Padua (15th century, Italy) provides an explanation of this *gemara*. Rabbi Elazar ben Azariah never intended to ask

rather why it was necessary for the Torah to command parents to bring along their little ones if they would have done so without such a command. The answer he gives is that the Torah wanted the parents to be motivated not just by their concern for the safety of their children, but primarily because having these children nearby would enable them to properly concentrate on listening to the Torah reading. With such motivation, what might have been ordinary child-care is transformed into a mitzvah which earns reward.

Tosefot points out that this *gemara* is the source for the custom of bringing children to the synagogue. It follows then that this is meaningful only when this will help the parents focus on their prayer. If these children, however, are not watched, disturbing their parents and the other worshippers, their presence in the synagogue is counterproductive.

Chagiga 3a

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

Ohr Somayach International - All rights reserved.

The Weekly Daf is available from several sources: • World Wide Web: Our address is <http://www.ohrnet.org> • E-Mail via InterNet: To subscribe, send the message "sub dafyomi {your full name}" to listproc@vjlists.com

22 Shimon Hatzadik Street, POB 18103, Jerusalem Israel

972-2-581-0315

fax: 972-2-581-2890

info@ohr.org.il

38 East 29th Street 8th floor, New York, NY 10016, USA

1-212-213-3100

fax: 1-212-213-8717

RZCorlin@aol.com or estern@aol.com

613 Clark Avenue West, Thornhill, Ontario L4J 5V3, Canada

1-905-886-5730

fax: 1-905-886-6065

Somayach@MSN.com

Dedication opportunities are available for The Weekly Daf. Please contact us for details.

Production Design: Eli Ballon

This publication contains words of Torah. Please treat it with due respect. Do not let this land on a garbage heap.

Issue #299 - Moed Katan 25 - Chagiga 3

For the week of 22 28 Cheshvan 5760 / 1 - 7 November 1999 (Parshat Chayei Sarah)