

The Weekly Daf



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Avodah Zarah 37-43

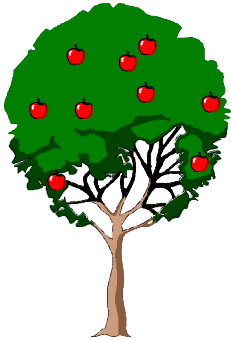
Week of 22-28 Cheshvan 5756, 15-21 November 1995
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Dimension of Despair

The Case:	Rabbi Eliezer Hakapar once came across a ring with an idolatrous image on it. As soon as there passed by an adult idol worshipper who understood the concept of idolatry he forcefully imposed on him to nullify the idol on the ring as an object of worship and thus render it permissible to use. Three conclusions are drawn from his behavior: an idol worshipper can nullify an idol belonging to another; only an adult with an understanding of idolatry can nullify and not a child; the nullification is valid even if the idol worshipper is coerced into doing so.
The Problem:	The question is raised, however, as to why nullification is necessary at all. Since someone who loses something in a public place is presumed to despair of regaining it and it is the property of the finder why don't we assume that the owner of the ring despaired of ever regaining it for worship and this should constitute nullification?
The Resolution:	The Sage Abaye explains that the nullification required for abolishing the status of an idol must be one which consists of an idol worshipper totally forsaking any hope of the idol ever being worshipped again. The owner of this ring is indeed presumed to have despaired of regaining his property but he still has hopes of it being worshipped either by another idolater who finds it or by one who will purchase it from a Jew who finds it and sells it because of its considerable value.

Avodah Zarah 42b

Guardian of Apple Wine



When Rabbi Yehuda Hanassi (Rebbie) had an attack of intestinal pain he asked his colleagues whether the rabbinic ban on drinking the wine of a non-Jew extended as well to apple wine which could cure him. Rabbi Yishmael recalled that his father Rabbi Yossie once had a similar attack and drank 70-year-old apple wine of a non-Jew which cured him.

A search was launched and a non-Jew was located who had 300 barrels of 70-year-old apple wine which Rebbie drank and was cured.

"Blessed is the Omnipresent one," exclaimed Rebbie, "who delivered His world into the hands of guardians."

On a simple level Rebbie was praising Hashem for creating people capable of guarding apple wine for so long a period of time. On a deeper level, suggests Maharsha, a careful reading of the Chumash indicates that Adam was only a guardian of the trees in Gan Eden but was not entitled to enjoy their fruits. Only after he was banished was the whole world delivered into his hands including the right to enjoy all fruits. Rebbie's praise to Heaven was for delivering into the hands of those who were only guardians in Gan Eden a world in which they could enjoy everything.

Even though the Torah specifically states that Adam was given permission to eat from all trees of Gan Eden aside from the Tree of Knowledge this was limited to enjoying those fruits during the course of his labor in the same manner as Torah law permits a worker to eat from the trees he is harvesting for the owner. The right to enjoy fruit without any limitation — even to ferment it for wine — was granted only after Adam's expulsion. (*Rabbi Yeshayahu Pik in the Ein Yacov*)

Avodah Zarah 40b

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