

The Weekly Daf



by Rav Mendel Weinbach - Dean, Ohr Somayach Institutions

Pesachim 86-92

Week of 21 - 27 Cheshvan 5759 / 10 - 16 November 1998
Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud
studied in the course of the worldwide Daf Yomi cycle

Dangerous Company

A group of people got together to form a company for the offering and eating of the Pesach sacrifice, and they discovered that one of their members was a fast eater with a big appetite who threatened to eat a greater share than his colleagues. Do they have a right to tell him to take his proportional portion of the sacrificial flesh and eat it apart from them? Can they claim that they originally included him only to ensure that the sacrifice be completely consumed as required by law, but that they had assumed that he would eat a normal amount? Or can he insist that since he was accepted as a paying member of the company, he was thereby given the right to eat as much as he could?

The Sages attempted to resolve this question by referring to the *mishna* which states that if one of the company's members brought in additional subscribers to the Pesach sacrifice without the consent of the other members, they can insist that he take the portion due him and eat it apart from them with the new subscribers. It would seem that the reason they can insist on this separation is that the addition of new subscribers threatens to reduce the amount of meat available to them. If so, then a fast, voracious eater should be eligible for exclusion from the company for the very same reason.

This proof is, however, rejected. Even if there were no economic consideration — for example, if the new subscribers together with the one who invited them would together eat only as much as a single member — the company would still have a right to object to eating together with them because of social reasons. The *mishna* may therefore be sanctioning separation based on people's sensitivity as to whom they share their table with, but may not give such sanction to a company which already accepted someone as a member. Their failure to previously check his eating habits can be interpreted as a consensus that he is entitled to eat as much as he likes.

The conclusion of the *gemara*, based on a *beraisa*, is that the company does have the right to set the big eater aside. This rule applies even to meals throughout the year when there is no claim to be made that they joined together for religious rather than social reasons.

Separation based on economic consideration can, however, sometimes backfire. The *gemara* tells the story of one man who joined with another in a partnership meal. When he discovered that his colleague was consuming four times his share of their common stock, he cited the above ruling and separated. He then made the same arrangement with someone else who ended up eating eight times his share. "A hundred like the first partner," he exclaimed in frustration, "are preferable to one like the present one."

Pesachim 89b

Prepared by Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem, Israel

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Mountain, Field and House

The *Beis Hamikdash* of the future, says the Prophet Yishayahu (2:3), will be called the “House of the G-d of Yaakov.” Why the G-d of Yaakov and not of Avraham and Yitzchak?

Rabbi Elazar explains that Avraham referred to the *Beis Hamikdash* as a “mountain” (*Bereishis* 22:14) and Yitzchak called it a “field” (*ibid.* 24:63). Only Yaakov referred to it as a “house” (*ibid.* 28:19) and this was the designation favored by Hashem for the *Beis Hamikdash* to which all the nations will flock in the future.

Maharsha explains this *gemara* against the background of a *midrash* about a king who wanted to build a palace and brought three good friends to the intended site. The first said that he remembered when a mountain stood there and the second recalled a field at that spot. When the third said he remembered a palace on that site, the king declared that he would name the palace he was going to build there in honor of the third friend.

The Patriarchs form the blueprint of the history of their descendants. Avraham’s reference was to the first *Beis Hamikdash* which enjoyed the full protection of the Divine Presence like the security provided by a sentry on a mountain, a security which is not enduring and which ended in destruction. Yitzchak’s reference was to the second *Beis Hamikdash*, which lacked some of the sanctity of its predecessor and was therefore less protected, as is a field. Yaakov, however, referred to the *Beis Hamikdash* which existed before the world was created (*Pesachim* 54a) which was the model for the third *Beis Hamikdash*, the Divine palace of the future, which will enjoy both maximum Divine protection and durability like a house.

Pesachim 88a

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