

מסכת תענית · דף כ"א

Elucidated Talmud · Statement and Proof · Navy & Gold Edition

THE SUGYA

In this daf, we are brought into the holy and inspiring world of our great Sages, learning about the deep bitachon and absolute devotion to Torah that defined their lives. We begin with the moving story of Ilfa and Rabbi Yochanan, who were facing extreme poverty and considered entering the business world. After hearing ministering angels discuss their choice, Rabbi Yochanan returned to the beis medrash, ultimately becoming the Rosh Yeshiva, while Ilfa demonstrated his own incredible mastery of Torah by answering a complex halachic question regarding the wishes of a deceased father.

We then encounter the awe-inspiring figure of Nachum of Gam Zu, whose life was a testament to pure emunah and acceptance of Hashem's will. Despite suffering from severe physical afflictions, which he lovingly accepted as an atonement for a past oversight in tzedakah, his holiness was so great that his presence alone prevented a dilapidated house from collapsing. We also begin to learn why he was called "Gam Zu," reflecting his lifelong practice of declaring "this too is for the good" in every situation.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

EXPLANATION

משום דנפיש בני חילא דמחוזה.

This was because there are many soldiers of Mechoza who would take all his food if he fed them.

GEMARA

אי לפא ורבי יוחנן הוו גרסי באוריתא, דחיקא להו מילתא טובא, אמרי: ניקום ונזיל ונעבד עסקא ונקיים בנפשין "אפס כי לא יהיה בך אביון".

The Gemara relates: Ilfa and Rabbi Yochanan were studying Torah together, and the matter of their livelihood was very pressed for them. They said: Let us arise and go and engage in business, and we will fulfill in ourselves the verse: "However, there shall be no needy person among you."

GEMARA

אזלו, אותיבו תותי גודא רעיעא, הוּוּ קא כרכי ריפתא, אתו תרי מלאכי השרת.

They went and sat under a dilapidated wall, and while they were eating bread, two ministering angels came.

GEMARA

שמעיה רבי יוחנן דאמר חד לחבריה: נישדי עליהו האי גודא ונקטלינהו, שמניחין חיי עולם הבא ועוסקין בחיי שעה!

Rabbi Yochanan heard that one angel said to his fellow: Let us throw this wall upon them and kill them, for they abandon eternal life of Torah study and engage in temporal life of business!

GEMARA

אָמַר לִיה אֵידֶה: שְׁבִקְיָנָהּ, דְּאִיפָּא בְּהוּ חַד דְּקִימָא לִיה שְׁעָתָא.

The other angel said to him: Leave them, for there is one of them for whom the hour stands ready for greatness.

GEMARA

רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן שָׁמַע, אִילְפָּא לָא שָׁמַע.

Rabbi Yochanan heard this, but Ilfa did not hear.

GEMARA

אָמַר לִיה רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן לְאִילְפָּא: שָׁמַע מָר מִיָּדֵי? אָמַר לִיה...: לָא.

Rabbi Yochanan said to Ilfa: Did the Master hear anything? He said to him: No.

GEMARA

אָמַר מִדְּשַׁמְעֵי אָנָּא וְאִילְפָּא לָא שָׁמַע, שָׁמַע מִיָּנָה לְדִידֵי קִימָא לִי שְׁעָתָא.

Rabbi Yochanan said to himself: Since I heard and Ilfa did not hear, learn from this that for me the hour stands ready.

GEMARA

אָמַר לִיה רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֵיךְדֵּר, וְאוּקִי בְּנַפְשִׁי "כִּי לֹא יַחְדָּל אֲבִיוֹן מִקֶּרֶב הָאָרֶץ".

Rabbi Yochanan said to him, to Ilfa: I will return to the Beis Medrash, and I will fulfill in myself the verse: "For the needy shall never cease from the midst of the land."

GEMARA

רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן הֵדֵר, אִילְפָּא לָא הֵדֵר.

Rabbi Yochanan returned, but Ilfa did not return.

GEMARA

עַד דְּאָתָא אִילְפָּא, מְלִיךָ רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן.

By the time Ilfa came back from his business, Rabbi Yochanan ruled as the Rosh Yeshiva.

GEMARA

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אֵי אַתִּיב מָר וְגָרִיס, לָא הָוָה מְלִיךָ מָר.

They said to him, to Ilfa: If the Master had sat and studied, would not the Master have ruled as Rosh Yeshiva instead?

GEMARA

אִזֵּל תָּלָא נַפְשִׁיהּ בְּאַסְקָרְיָא דְּסַפִּינָתָא, אָמַר: אֵי אִיפָּא דְּשִׁאִיל לִי בְּמַתְּנִיתָא דְּרַבִּי חִיָּיא וְרַבִּי

אוֹשַׁעְיָא וְלֹא פְּשִׁיטְנָא לִיה מַמְתְּנִיתִין, נִפְּלִנָּא מֵאַסְקָרְיָא דְּסַפִּינָתָא וְטָבַעְנָא.

Ilfa went and suspended himself from the mast of a ship and said: If there is anyone who asks me a question on a Braisa of Rabbi Chiyya and Rabbi Oshaya, and I do not resolve it for him from our Mishnah, I will fall from the mast of the ship and drown.

BRAISA

אָתָא הָהוּא סָבָא, תִּנָּא לֵיהּ: הָאוּמַר תְּנוּ שֶׁקֶל לְכַנְיֵי בְּשַׁבָּת, וְהוּן רְאוּיֵין לְתֵית לָהֶם סֵלַע — נוֹתְנִין לָהֶם סֵלַע.

A certain old man came and taught to him the following Braisa: One who says on his deathbed, "Give a shekel to my sons every week," and they are fit in their poverty to be given a sela, which is two shekels, we give them a sela.

BRAISA

וְאִם אָמַר: אַל תִּתְּנוּ לָהֶם אֶלָּא שֶׁקֶל — אֵין נוֹתְנִין לָהֶם אֶלָּא שֶׁקֶל.

But if he said: "Do not give them anything but a shekel," we do not give them anything but a shekel.

BRAISA

אִם אָמַר: אִם מֵתוּ יִרְשׁוּ אַחֲרֵיהֶם תַּחְתֵּיהֶם — בֵּין שְׁאֵמַר "תְּנוּ" בֵּין שְׁאֵמַר "אַל תִּתְּנוּ" — אֵין נוֹתְנִין לָהֶם אֶלָּא שֶׁקֶל.

If he said: "If they die, others shall inherit in their place," whether he said "give" or whether he said "do not give" anything but a shekel, we do not give them anything but a shekel.

ANSWER

אָמַר לֵיהּ: הָא מִנִּי — רַבִּי מֵאִיר הִיא, דְּאָמַר: מִצְוָה לְקַיֵּים דְּבָרֵי הַמֵּת.

Ilfa said to him: Whose view is this? It is Rabbi Meir, who said: It is a mitzvah to fulfill the words of the deceased.

GEMARA

אָמְרוּ עָלָיו עַל נַחֻם אִישׁ גַּם זֶה שֶׁהָיָה סוּמָא מִשְׁתִּי עֵינָיו, גָּדָם מִשְׁתִּי יָדָיו, קִיטַע מִשְׁתִּי רַגְלָיו, וְכָל גּוּפוֹ מְלֵא שַׁחֲיוֹן.

They said about Nachum Ish Gam Zu that he was blind in both his eyes, amputated in both his hands, amputated in both his legs, and his entire body was full of boils.

GEMARA

וְהָיָה מוּטָל בְּבֵית רְעוּעָה, וְרַגְלֵי מִטָּתוֹ מוֹנַחֲיוֹן בְּסַפְלִין שֶׁל מַיִם כִּדֵּי שְׁלֹא יַעֲלוּ עָלָיו נְמָלִים.

And he was lying in a dilapidated house, and the legs of his bed were placed in basins of water so that ants would not climb onto him.

GEMARA

פַּעַם אַחַת בִּקְשׁוּ תַלְמִידָיו לְפָנוֹת מִטָּתוֹ, וְאַחֲרַיָּהוּ לְפָנוֹת אֶת הַכֵּלִים.

Once, his disciples wished to evacuate his bed, and afterward to evacuate the vessels.

GEMARA

אָמַר לָהֶם: בְּנֵיִי, פָּנוּ אֶת הַכֵּלִים, וְאַחֲרַיָּהוּ פָּנוּ אֶת מִטָּתִי, שְׁמוּבָטַח לָכֶם שֶׁכָּל זְמַן שְׂאֲנִי בְּבֵית אֵין הַכֵּית נוֹפֵל.

He said to them: My sons, evacuate the vessels first, and afterward evacuate my bed, for it is guaranteed to you that as long as I am in the house, the house will not fall.

GEMARA

פינו את הכלים ואחר כך פינו את מטתי, ונפל הבית.

They evacuated the vessels and afterward they evacuated his bed, and immediately the house fell.

QUESTION

אמרו לו תלמידיו: רבי, וכי מאחר שצדיק גמור אתה, למה עלתה לך כך?

His disciples said to him: Our Rabbi, since you are a completely righteous man, why has this happened to you?

ANSWER

אמר להם: בניי, אני גרמתי לעצמי.

He said to them: My sons, I caused it to myself.

STATEMENT

שפעם אחת הייתי מהלך בדרך לבית חמי, והיה עמי משוי שלשה חמורים, אחד של מאכל, ואחד של משקה, ואחד של מיני מגדים.

For once I was traveling on the road to my father-in-law's house, and I had with me a load of three donkeys: one of food, one of drink, and one of delicacies.

STATEMENT

בא עני אחד ועמד לי בדרך, ואמר לי: רבי, פרנסני.

A certain poor man came and stood before me on the road, and said to me: Rabbi, sustain me.

STATEMENT

אמרתי לו: המתן עד שאפרוק מן החמור.

I said to him: Wait until I unload from the donkey.

STATEMENT

לא הספקתי לפרוק מן החמור עד שיצתה נשמתו.

I did not manage to unload from the donkey before his soul departed.

STATEMENT

הלכתי ונפלתי על פניו, ואמרתי: עיני שלא חסו על עיניך — יסומו, ידיי שלא חסו על ידיך — יתגדמו, רגלי שלא חסו על רגליך — יתקטעו.

I went and fell upon his face, and I said: May my eyes, which did not have compassion on your eyes, become blind; may my hands, which did not have compassion on your hands, be amputated; may my legs, which did not have compassion on your legs, be amputated.

STATEMENT

וְלֹא נִתְקַרְרָה דַּעְתִּי עַד שְׁאַמְרָתִי: כָּל גּוּפִי יִהְיֶה מְלֵא שְׁחִין.

And my mind was not appeased until I said: May my entire body be full of boils.

STATEMENT

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אֹי לָנוּ שְׂרָאִינוּךְ בְּכָךְ! אָמַר לָהֶם: אֹי לִי אִם לֹא רָאִיתוּנִי בְּכָךְ.

They said to him: Woe to us that we see you in this state! He said to them: Woe to me if you did not see me in this state, for this suffering atones for my sin.

EXPLANATION

וְאִמָּאֵי קָרוּ לֵיהּ נַחוּם אִישׁ גַּם זֶה — דְּכָל מִילְתָּא דִּתְהוּה סָלְקָא לֵיהּ, אָמַר: גַּם זֶה לְטוֹבָה.

And why did they call him Nachum Ish Gam Zu? Because whatever matter occurred to him, he would say: "This too is for the good."

GEMARA

יִמְנָא חֲדָא בְּעוּ לְשִׁדְרֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל דּוּרוּן לְבֵי קִיסָר, אָמְרוּ: מָאן יִיזִיל — יִיזִיל נַחוּם אִישׁ גַּם זֶה, דְּמְלוּמָד בְּנִיסִין הוּא.

Once, the Jews desired to send a gift to the house of the Caesar. They said: Who shall go? Let Nachum Ish Gam Zu go, for he is accustomed to miracles.

GEMARA

שִׁדְרוּ בִידֵיהּ מְלֵא סִיפֻטָּא דְּאַבְנֵים טוֹבוֹת וּמַרְגָּלִיּוֹת.

They sent with him a chest full of precious stones and pearls.

GEMARA

אִזֵּל, בֵּית בְּהֵוּא דִּירָא.

He went and spent the night in a certain inn.

GEMARA

בְּלִילְיָא קָמוּ הֵנָּה דִּיּוֹרָאֵי וְשָׁקְלִינְהוּ לְסִיפֻטֵיהּ וּמְלוֹנְהוּ עֲפָרָא.

During the night, those innkeepers arose and took the jewels from his chest, and filled it with earth.

GEMARA

כִּי מָטָא הָתָם, שְׂרִינְהוּ לְסִיפֻטֵי, חֲזַנְהוּ דְּמֵלֵי עֲפָרָא.

When he arrived there at the palace, he opened the chest and they saw that it was full of earth.

GEMARA

בְּעָא מְלָכָא לְמַקְטִלֵיהּ לְכוּלְהוּ, אָמַר: קָא מְחִיכוּ בִּי יְהוּדָאֵי.

The king wanted to kill them all; he said: The Jews are mocking me.

GEMARA

אמר: גם זו לטובה.

Nachum said: This too is for the good.

GEMARA

אתא אליהו אדמי ליה כחד מינניהו, אמר ליה: דלמא הא עפרא מעפרא דאברהם אבוהון הוא, דכי הוה שדי עפרא — הו סייפי, גילי — הו גירי, דכתיב: "יתן כעפר חרבו כקש נדף קשתו".

Eliyahu came and appeared to him as one of the king's ministers, and said to him: Perhaps this earth is from the earth of Abraham their father, for when he threw earth it became swords, and when he threw straw it became arrows, as it is written: "He makes his sword like dust, his bow like driven stubble."

GEMARA

הוּא חַדָּא מְדִינְתָא דְּלֹא מָצוּ לְמִיכְבָּשָׁה, בְּדָקוּ מִינֵיהּ וּכְבָּשׁוּהָ.

There was a certain province that they had not been able to conquer; they tested some of this earth and conquered it.

GEMARA

עֲבִילוּ לְבֵי גִנְזִיָּה וּמְלוּחוּ לְסִיפֵיָּהּ אֲבָנִים טוֹבוֹת וּמְרַגְלִיּוֹת, וְשִׁדְרוּהוּ בִּיקְרָא רַבָּה.

They brought him into his treasury and filled his chest with precious stones and pearls, and sent him away with great honor.

GEMARA

כי אתו, ביתו בָּהֶהוּא דְּיוֹרָא, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ: מַאי אֵינִיתִּית בְּהֶדֶךָ דְּעָבְדִּי לָךְ יְקָרָא כּוּלֵּי הָאִי?

When they came back, they spent the night in that same inn. They said to him: What did you bring with you that they showed you all this honor?

GEMARA

אמר להו: מאי דשקלי מהכא אמטי להֶתֶם.

He said to them: What I took from here, I brought to there.

GEMARA

סִתְרוּ לְדִירֵיהוּ וְאִמְטִינְהוּ לְבֵי מְלָכָא, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ: הָאִי עֲפָרָא דְּאֵינִיתִּי הָכָא — מִדִּידֵין הוּא.

They demolished their inn and brought the earth to the king's palace. They said to him: This earth that was brought here is from ours.

GEMARA

בְּדָקוּהָ וְלֹא אִשְׁכָּחוּהָ, וְקָטְלִינְהוּ לְהֶנָּה דְּיוֹרָאִי.

They tested it and did not find it to have miraculous powers, and they killed those innkeepers.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

אי זו היא דבר — עיר המוציאה חמש מאות רגלי כו.

The Mishnah stated: What is considered a plague? A city that can send out five hundred foot-soldiers, etc.

גמרא GEMARA

BRAISA

תנו רבנן: עיר המוציאה חמש מאות ואף רגלי, כגון כפר עכו, ויצאו הימנה תשעה מתים בשלשה ימים זה אחר זה — הרי זה דבר.

The Sages taught in a Braisa: A city that can send out one thousand five hundred foot-soldiers, such as Kefar Akko, and nine dead emerged from it in three days, one after another, behold, this is a plague.

BRAISA

ביום אחד או בארבעה ימים — אין זה דבר.

If they died on one day, or over four days, this is not a plague.

BRAISA

ועיר המוציאה חמש מאות רגלי, כגון כפר עמיקו, ויצאו הימנה שלשה מתים בשלשה ימים זה אחר זה — הרי זה דבר.

And a city that can send out five hundred foot-soldiers, such as Kefar Amiku, and three dead emerged from it in three days, one after another, behold, this is a plague.

BRAISA

ביום אחד או בארבעה ימים — אין זה דבר.

If they died on one day, or over four days, this is not a plague.

STATEMENT

דרוקרת, עיר המוציאה חמש מאות רגלי הווא, ויצאו ממנה שלשה מתים ביום אחד.

In the town of Derokeret, which was a city that could send out five hundred foot-soldiers, three dead emerged on one day.

STATEMENT

גזר רב נחמן בר רב חסדא תעניתא.

Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda decreed a fast.

EXPLANATION

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: כמאן — כרבי מאיר, דאמר: ריחק נגחותיו — חייב, קירב נגחותיו — לא כל שפון?

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: Like whom is this ruling? It is like Rabbi Meir, who said regarding a goring ox: If it distanced its gorings over three days, the owner is liable to pay full damages; if it brought its gorings close on one day, is it

not all the more so a Muad? So too, if three deaths over three days is a plague, all the more so on one day.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה רב נחמן בר רב חסדא לרב נחמן בר יצחק: ליקום מר לייתי לגבן.

Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda said to Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak: Let the Master arise and come to us to sit together.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: תנינא, רבי יוסי אומר: לא מקומו של אדם מכבדו, אלא אדם מכבד את מקומו.

He said to him: We have learned in a Braisa, Rabbi Yose says: It is not a person's place that honors him, but rather the person honors his place.

PROOF

שכן מצוינו בהר סיני, שכל זמן שהשכינה שרויה עליו, אמרה תורה: "גם הצאן והבקר אל ירעו אל מול ההר ההוא",

For so we find regarding Mount Sinai, that as long as the Shechinah rested upon it, the Torah said: "Even the flocks and the cattle shall not graze facing that mountain."

PROOF

נסתלקה שכינה ממנו, אמרה תורה: "במשך היכל הזה יעלו בהר".

But once the Shechinah departed from it, the Torah said: "When the ram's horn sounds a long blast, they may ascend the mountain."

PROOF

וכן מצוינו באהל מועד שבמדבר, שכל זמן שהוא נטוי אמרה תורה: "וישלחו מן המחנה כל צרוע",

And so we find regarding the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness, that as long as it was pitched, the Torah said: "That they send out of the camp every leper."

PROOF

הוגלו הפרוכות — הותרו זבין ומצורעים ליכנס שם.

But once the curtains were rolled up for travel, those with discharges and lepers were permitted to enter there.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: אי הכי, ניקום אנא לגבי מר.

Rav Nachman bar Rav Chisda said to him: If so, let me arise and go to the Master.

STATEMENT

אמר ליה: מוטב יבא מנה בן פהס אצל מנה בן מנה, ואל יבא מנה בן מנה אצל מנה בן פהס.

He said to him: It is better that a maneh, a son of a half-maneh, should come to a maneh, a son of a maneh, and let not a maneh, a son of a maneh, come to a maneh, a son of a half-maneh. Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak humbly referred to himself as lesser.

GEMARA

בְּסוּרָא הָיוּת דְּבִרְתָּא, בְּשִׁיבּוּתִיה דְּרַב לָא הָיוּת דְּבִרְתָּא.

The Gemara relates: In Sura there was a plague, but in the neighborhood of Rav there was no plague.

INFERENCE

סְבוּר מִינֵהּ, מְשׁוּם זְכוּתִיה דְּרַב דְּנִפְיֵשׁ.

They understood from this that it was because of the merit of Rav, which was great.

STATEMENT

אֵיתְחַזִּי לְהוּ בְּחִילָמָא: רַב דְּנִפְיֵשׁא זְכוּתִיה טוֹבָא — הָא מִלְתָּא זּוּטְרָא לִיה לְרַב.

But it was shown to them in a dream: Rav's merit is indeed very great, but this matter of saving a neighborhood is too small for Rav to be the reason.

EXPLANATION

אֶלָּא, מְשׁוּם הָהוּא גְבָרָא דְּמַשְׁיִיל מָרָא וּזְבִילָא לְקַבּוּרָה.

Rather, the protection was because of a certain simple man who lends a hoe and a shovel for burial.

GEMARA

בְּדֶרוֹקֶרֶת הָיוּת דְּלִיקָתָא, וּבְשִׁיבּוּתִיה דְּרַב הוּנָא לָא הָיוּת דְּלִיקָתָא.

Similarly, in Derokeret there was a fire, but in the neighborhood of Rav Huna there was no fire.

INFERENCE

סְבוּר מִינֵהּ, בְּזְכוּתָא דְּרַב הוּנָא דְּנִפְיֵשׁ.

They understood from this that it was by the merit of Rav Huna, which was great.

EXPLANATION

אֵיתְחַזִּי לְהוּ בְּחִילָמָא: הָאִי זּוּטְרָא לִיה לְרַב הוּנָא, אֶלָּא מְשׁוּם הָהִיא אִיתְתָּא דְּמַחְמָמָא תַּנּוּרָא וּמַשְׁיִילָא לְשִׁיבּוּתִיהּ.

It was shown to them in a dream: This is too small for Rav Huna, but rather it was because of a certain woman who heats her oven and lends it to her neighbors.

GEMARA

אָמְרוּ לִיה לְרַב יְהוּדָה: אָתוּ קַמְצִי. גִּזַּר תַּעֲנִיתָא.

They said to Rav Yehuda: Locusts have come. He decreed a fast.

OBJECTION

אָמְרוּ לִיה: לָא קָא מַפְסְדִין.

They said to him: They are not destroying the crops.

ANSWER

אמר להו: זוידא איתו בהדיהו?

He said to them: Did they bring provisions with them? Eventually they will eat the crops, so we must fast.

GEMARA

אמרו ליה לרב יהודה: איכא מותנא בחזירי. גזר תעניתא.

They said to Rav Yehuda: There is a plague among the pigs. He decreed a fast.

QUESTION

נימא קסבר רב יהודה מכא משולחת ממין אחד משולחת מכל המינין?

Shall we say Rav Yehuda holds that a plague unleashed on one species is unleashed on all species?

ANSWER

לא, שאני חזירי — דדמיין מעיהו לבני אינשי.

No, pigs are different, because their intestines are similar to those of human beings, so a plague among them is dangerous to humans.

GEMARA

אמרו ליה לשמואל: איכא מותנא בי חוּזא'י. גזר תעניתא.

They said to Shmuel: There is a plague in Bei Chozo'i. He decreed a fast.

QUESTION

אמרי ליה: והא מרחק!

They said to him: But it is far away!

ANSWER

אמר: ליכא מעברא קא דפסיק ליה.

He said: There is no crossing here that cuts it off, so the plague can easily travel here.

GEMARA

אמרו ליה לרב נחמן: איכא מותנא בארעא דישראל. גזר תעניתא

They said to Rav Nachman: There is a plague in the Land of Israel. He decreed a fast in Bavel.

EXPLANATION

אמר: אם גבירה לוקה, שפחה לא כל שפון!

He said: If the mistress, Eretz Yisrael, is stricken, is the handmaid, Bavel, not all the more so destined to suffer?

INFERENCE

טעמא דגבירה ושפחה, הא שפחה ושפחה — לא.

The Gemara infers: The reason is because of the mistress and the handmaid, but from one handmaid to another handmaid, no, we do not fast.

QUESTION

וְהָא אַמְרוּ לִיהּ לְשִׁמוּאֵל: אִיכָּא מוֹתָנָא בֵּי חוּזְאִי, גִּזְרַת תַּעֲנִיתָא!

But did they not say to Shmuel: "There is a plague in Bei Choza'i," and he decreed a fast, even though both were outside Eretz Yisrael?

ANSWER

שְׂאֵנִי הָתָם, כִּינּוֹן דְּאִיכָּא שְׂיָרְתָּא דְּלוּי וְאָת

It is different there, since there are caravans that accompany and come back and forth, carrying the disease.

SUMMARY

The daf details the story of Ilfa and Rabbi Yochanan, highlighting Rabbi Yochanan's decision to return to full-time Torah study after hearing angels criticize their departure from eternal life. Ilfa, who went into business, later proved his vast Torah knowledge by resolving a baraita regarding a dying man's financial instructions for his sons, showing it aligns with Rabbi Meir's view that it is a mitzva to fulfill the words of the deceased. The Gemara then transitions to the holy Nachum of Gam Zu, describing his extreme physical suffering, which he brought upon himself through his own tefillos as an atonement for delaying to feed a starving poor man. The daf concludes by explaining his name, "Gam Zu," stemming from his unwavering emunah that every event, no matter how difficult, is ultimately for the good.

לְמַעֲשֶׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The story of Nachum Ish Gam Zu teaches us a profound lesson about the weight of a single moment. When the poor man begged him for food, Nachum did not refuse; he merely said, "Wait until I unload the donkey." He had every intention of helping, but in those few moments of delay, the poor man's soul departed. This holy Tzaddik held himself to such an exacting standard of yiras Shamayim that he recognized how even a justified delay in helping another Yid can have devastating consequences.

In our own daily avodah, we often experience a holy impulse, a sudden desire to give tzedakah, to call a lonely friend, or to sit down and learn Torah. But the yetzer hara is a master of the "wait" strategy. He does not tell us to say no; he simply whispers, "Wait until you finish this email," or "Wait until you are less busy." By the time we get around to it, the opportunity has passed, the inspiration has cooled, or the person in need has already moved on.

We must learn to act with holy urgency. When a mitzvah or an opportunity to help another Yid comes your way, do not let it sit. Do not wait for the perfect, most convenient moment to unload your donkey.

Today, when you feel a prompt to do a chesed or learn a passuk, do not delay. Act on that good thought immediately, within the next sixty seconds, before the opportunity slips away.