

**Daf Yomi Review – Berachos 28**

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**Gemara:**

- The *Mishna* noted that *Ma'ariv* is not *Kavuah*, or fixed. Perhaps one can *Daven* the entire night? But if so, the *Mishna* should have said so explicitly. The *Mishna* is therefore following those who say *Ma'ariv* is optional. *R' Gamliel* says that *Ma'ariv* is obligatory and *R' Yehoshua* says it is not mandatory. *Abayeh* holds that it obligatory. *Rava* holds that it is not.
- *R' Yehoshua* told a student that *Ma'ariv* is optional. *R' Gamliel* told the student it was obligatory. But the student was conflicted. *R' Gamliel* told the student to wait for the *Ba'alei Trisim* (the great guards of Torah) to enter the *Beit Midrash*. When they entered and recounted this disagreement, *R' Yehoshua* now did not disagree with *R' Gamliel* out of deference, even when challenged by *R' Gamliel*.
- When *R' Gamliel* was later giving *shiur*, students were murmuring and *Chitzpis* (*R' Gamliel's* translator and megaphone (who was also one of the *Asarah Harogei Malchot*)) was told to stop. The *Rabanan*, recalling previous incidents in which *R' Gamliel* had embarrassed *R' Yehoshua*, agreed that they needed to find a new *Nasi*.
  - They agreed that they shouldn't appoint *R' Yehoshua*, as he was too involved nor *R' Akiva*, since he caused pain to *R' Gamliel* and lacked ancestral merit.
  - They agreed to appoint *R' Elazar ben Azaryah*, since his wisdom could help answer difficult questions, his wealth could help politically, and his pedigree (a tenth generation descendent of Ezra) would shield him from punishment from *R' Gamliel's* hurt.
- *R' Elazar ben Azaryah* is asked to be the new *Nasi*. He promptly asks his wife! She is worried:
  - Perhaps they will get rid of you quickly? *R' Elazar ben Azaryah* responds: using a precious crystal for a day is worth it even if it breaks the next!
  - But you have no white hairs! A miracle occurred and he grew 18 rows of white hair. That's why he famously said *Ani k'ben shivim shana*, "like" a man who is 70 years old.
- On his first day as *Nasi*, *R' Elazar ben Azaryah* allowed all students to enter the *Beit Midrash*, necessitating many hundreds of more benches. *R' Gamliel* was distraught at possibly limiting Torah study while he was *Nasi*. He was placated by a dream.
- An incredible amount of *Maseches Eduyos* was taught on that day, so much so that it is perennially known as "that day." For instance, difficult questions about conversion were answered.
- *R' Gamliel* visited *R' Yehoshua* and was surprised to learn he was incredibly poor. *R' Yehoshua* was incensed at his lack of perspective. *R' Gamliel* begs forgiveness. *R' Yehoshua* grants it in his father's merit. Since *R' Yehoshua* granted *R' Gamliel* forgiveness, *R' Gamliel* was somewhat reluctantly reinstated in a shared arrangement as *Nasi*.
- A discussion ensues about the importance of *Davening Musaf* promptly and refraining from eating.
- The *Rabanan* share beautiful *Tefillos* said upon entering and exiting the *Beis Midrash*.
- A sick *R' Yochanan ben Zakai* cries in front of his students, noting that while mortal kings can be appeased, Hashem's words are permanent. He wishes his students feared Hashem more than they fear other people.

**Inspiration:**

- Those in positions of Jewish communal leadership, like *R' Elazar ben Azaryah*, are always under the microscope and can lose their jobs at the drop of a dime. However, even though there is no assurance of long-term stability, this story reminds us that we must take opportunities that have a great impact, even if we aren't sure how long those will last.
- It doesn't matter how rich or powerful people are, but, like *R' Elazar ben Azaryah*, we must all ask our wives to gain perspective and make decisions together.
- Once the *Shomrim*, the gatekeepers of Torah are removed, many more Jews want to come and learn. So many people are uncomfortable with entering but still want to learn. We must not let gatekeepers stand in the way of access to Torah.