

The Weekly Daf



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Bava Kama 93-99 Week of 17-23 Sivan 5754/27 May -2 June 1994

Rav Weinbach's insights, explanations and comments for the 7 pages of Talmud studied as part of Daf Yomi during the above dates.

This issue is dedicated in memory of Rachmil Schwartz Z'L

Letter of the Law and Beyond



A woman consulted the Sage Rabbi Chiya as to whether she should accept a certain coin proffered to her in a business transaction. She later returned with a complaint that she was not able to spend the coin he had advised her to accept because it turned out to be worthless. Rabbi Chiya immediately instructed his nephew and treasurer, the Sage Rav, to compensate the woman and to chalk it up in their accounting records as a "bad deal".

Why did Rabbi Chiya feel obligated to compensate this woman? After all, he was an expert who knew everything there was to know about currency. As such, any error he committed, such as failing to be aware of the sudden cancellation of a coin by the government was considered the result of something beyond his control and therefore imposed no responsibility for compensation.

The answer says the Talmud, is that even though Rabbi Chiya was not obligated to pay by the letter of the law, he was anxious to deal with others in a noble manner beyond the letter of the law. He thus followed the higher level of behavior which is hinted at in the Torah as a standard which everyone should strive to live by.

Bava Kama 99b

Taking Up for the Underbird

One should always prefer to be amongst the hunted, said Rabbi Abahu, and not amongst the hunters. No birds are so hunted as the turtledove and the young pigeon and yet they alone of all fowl are eligible as sacrifices on the holy altar.

Bava Kama 99b

No One is being counseled by the Sage to impose upon himself the unfortunate role of the hunted. This is rather a moral challenge to have the courage to be on the side of the hunted; to take up the case of the underbird.

Maharsha