

Inside the Daf

רבי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן rode his donkey along the riverbank, feeling pretty satisfied with himself for having recently learned so much Torah from his teacher.

Along his way he came across a very ugly man.

"Peace be upon you, my teacher!" greeted the ugly man.

רבי אֶלְעָזָר did not repay the greeting in kind.

"You empty one! Are all the people of your city as ugly as you?" רבי אֶלְעָזָר mocked.

"I don't know," said the ugly man. "But go tell the Craftsman who made me that you think his handiwork is so hideous!" The ugly man meant to say that רבי אֶלְעָזָר should complain to Hashem who made the ugly man appear as he did. After all, Hashem makes us look as we do.

רבי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן realized the gravity of his insulting behaviour. He got down from the donkey and bowed down before



"Tell the Craftsman who made me that you think his handiwork is so hideous!"

before the man.

"I have spoken out of turn to you," said רבי אֶלְעָזָר. "Please forgive me."

"I will not forgive you," replied the ugly man, "until you go to the Craftsman who made me and tell him how ugly this vessel is that He made!"

רבי אֶלְעָזָר followed behind the man, begging for forgiveness, until he reached the city.

When they reached the city, people came out to greet the great scholar. The ugly man was puzzled by this.

"If this person you are greeting

is a teacher, may there not be many like him in Israel!" the ugly man exclaimed before telling the people how the scholar had treated him.

"Even so," the people said, "forgive him because he is a great Torah scholar."

At the city's request, the man forgave רבי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן.



Did You Know...

Even though a cedar tree is tall and strong we write Torah scrolls with a soft, lowly reed. This is to show us that one should be soft like a reed and not hard like a cedar.

Shaky Structures

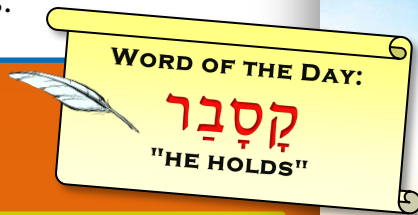
The **מִשְׁנָה** teaches that people should fast if sturdy buildings in their city suddenly collapse.

The wealthy sage, **רַב הוֹנָא**, was renowned for his good deeds. **רַפְרָם בֶּר פִּפְא** was once asked to tell of the sage's great deeds.

"I can't remember the deeds of his youth," said **רַפְרָם**,
"but I do remember some of the deeds from his old age.

"Every cloudy day, **רַב הוֹנָא** would be carried out in a golden carriage and he would inspect the entire city. Any wall that he found to be unsteady, he would destroy so that the coming storm would not collapse the wall on top of any one. If the owner of the wall could afford to rebuild it, he would leave it to him to rebuild. If the owner could not afford to rebuild it, **רַב הוֹנָא** himself would pay for the rebuilding."

This story shows how concerned **רַב הוֹנָא** was for the safety of others.



A מְדוּת Moment

The game started out as fun, but turned mean very quickly. The nickname game.

At first, Shemarya's name became Shamey. Then it became Shame. Shemarya didn't like that one very much. But he didn't want to say anything either because he didn't want to look like a whiner.

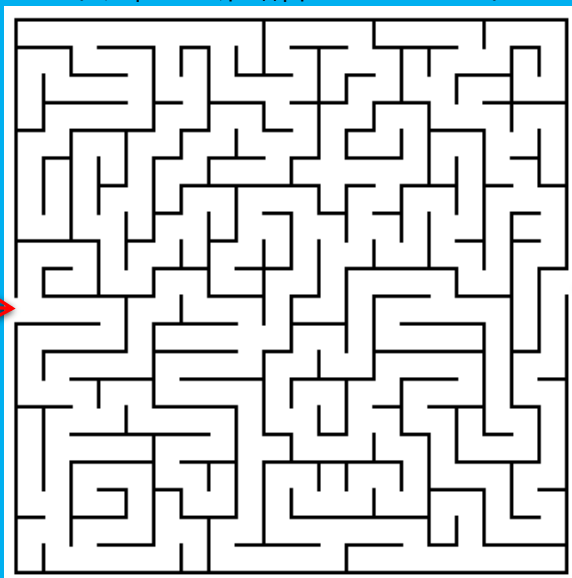
Shemaria's teacher saw what was going on and decided to have a word with the class.

רַבִּי זִירָא says that he merited long life partly because he never called anyone by an insulting nickname. Some say, he never even called people by their last names if it sounded insulting. Nothing can be more infuriating to a person that to be called something disrespectful. It hurts the person's entire identity! We should try to remember that."



A-M-A-Z-E-I-N-G

Help **רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר בֶּן רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן** find his way



Games

תענית דף כ' - Review Questions

1 What did the ugly man say when he was insulted?

2 What did **רַב הוֹנָא** check on cloudy days?

3. Why do we write our Torah scrolls with a reed?