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Megillah Daf 15

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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Lineage

The Gemora returns to the list of prophets that descended from Rachav, saying that we see from verses that four of them (Baruch, Seraya, Yirmiya and Chanamel) were prophets, but, the Gemora asks: Where do we see that their fathers were also prophets?

The Gemora answers that we know it from Ulla's statement that if a prophet is mentioned with his father's name, we know that his father was also a prophet, but if his father's name is omitted, we know that his father wasn't a prophet. Similarly, if his city is mentioned, he was born there, but if no city is mentioned, he was born in Yerushalayim.

The Gemora cites a similar braisa which says that if the verse mentions someone with his father's name, and we only know that one of them was praiseworthy, we know that the other was also praiseworthy. Therefore, the verse, which refers to the prophet Tzefania as the son of Kushi, the son of Gedalia, teaches that all of them were righteous. Similarly, if the verse states that one of them was disgraceful, we know that the other was also disgraceful, as in the case of Yishmael, the son of Nesania, the son of Elishama, who assassinated Gedalia.

Malachi

Rav Nachman says that Malachi is Mordechai, but the verse refers to him as *Malachi – my messenger*, since he was second to the king.

The Gemora rejects this from a braisa which lists those who prophesied in the second year of Daryavesh (Baruch ben Neriah, Seraya ben Maaseya, Daniel, Mordechai, Bilshan, Chagai, Zecharia, and Malachi), counting Mordechai and Malachi separately.

The Gemora cites a braisa in which Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karchah says that Malachi is Ezra, while the Sages say he was a different person named Malachi.

Rav Nachman says that it is understandable that he was Ezra, since Malachi's prophesy includes a verse castigating the Jews for marrying non-Jews, which was a topic that Ezra spoke to the Jews about at length.

Beautiful women

The Gemora cites a braisa which lists four beautiful women in history: Sara, Rachav, Avigail, and Esther. According to the opinion that says that Esther was greenish, the fourth is Vashti.



The Gemora cites a braisa which says that the temptation of Rachav was even her name; that of Yael was her voice; that of Avigail was the mere mention of her; and that of Michal the daughter of Shaul was seeing her. Rabbi Yitzchak says that anyone who says Rachav's name twice immediately has a nocturnal emission.

Rav Nachman challenged this, as he can say it, and it has no effect, but Rav Yitzchak explained that this was true only of someone who knows of her.

Megillah verses

The Gemora continues explaining verses from the Megillah.

Mordechai knew all of what transpired, and he went outside and cried out a large and bitter cry.

Rav says that he cried out that Haman has ascended above Achashverosh, while Shmuel says that he cried out that the lower king has ascended above the upper king.

The queen trembled a lot.

Rav says that this means she menstruated from the shock, while Rabbi Yirmiyah says that she had to relieve herself from the shock.

Esther called Hasach to inquire into Mordechai's behavior.

Rav says that Hasach was Daniel, and he was called Hasach since they cut him down (chasach) from his high position, while Shmuel says that it was because all the royal activities were carried out (nechtachim) on his orders.

To know mah zeh - what this is, and al ma zeh - for what this is.

Rabbi Yitzchak says that she asked Mordechai if the Jews transgressed the five books of the Torah, which the verse says *mizeh umizeh* – *from this [side] and this side [of the tablets] they are written.*

And they told Mordechai Esther's words.

The Gemora notes that this implies that Hasach was not the one who relayed this response, teaching us that one should not pass on a negative answer.

Go gather all the Jews in Shushan...and I will go to the king unlike the practice.

Rabbi Abba says that this means that Esther's going to the king was to be unlike the former practice, in which she was coerced, since she was now voluntarily going. Therefore, she said “As I have been lost, I will be lost,” since just as she had been lost to her father's household, she now would be lost to her husband Mordechai, since she will now be prohibited to him due to her voluntary relations with Achashverosh.

And Mordechai passed.

Rav says this means that he passed the first day of Pesach in fasting, while Shmuel says that he passed over a river to gather all the Jews.

And on the third day, Esther dressed in royalty.

The Gemora says that it should seemingly have said she wore royal clothing, but Rabbi Elozar quotes Rabbi Chanina who explains that it means she was adorned with divine spirit, as the verse also refers to Amasai's being clothed with the divine spirit.



The Gemora cites other statements of Rabbi Elozar in Rabbi Chanina's name:

One should not take a simple person's blessing lightly, as both David and Daniel had such simple blessings fulfilled. David was blessed by Aravna that Hashem should accept him, and Daryavesh blessed Daniel that Hashem should protect him from the lions, and both were fulfilled.

One shouldn't take a simple person's curse lightly, as Avimelech told Sarah that the gift he gave will be for her *kesus ainayim* – a covering for the eyes, and subsequently Yitzchak went blind.

How great is Hashem in contrast to humans. A human first puts a pot on the fire, and then fills it with water, but Hashem does the opposite, as He first placed the water in the sky and then gathered the clouds to receive it.

Anyone who properly cites the source of a statement brings redemption, as we see that Esther's proper attribution of the assassination plot that Mordechai reported enabled the redemption of the Jews from Haman's plans.

When a righteous person departs the world, his generation feels the loss, similar to a lost pearl, which hasn't changed, but causes its owner distress.

The Gemora continues to explain verses.

And all of this is worthless to me when I see Mordechai sitting.

Rabbi Elozar asked in the name of Rabbi Chanina: Why would Haman say this?

The Gemora answers, based on Rav Chisda, who said that Mordechai came from a position of wealth, and Haman from a position of poverty, as Haman had sold himself to Mordechai for food, and he was called the slave who was sold for bread. Haman had all his riches etched on his heart, and when he saw Mordechai, he said that all of this that he had was truly worthless, since he was Mordechai's slave.

Rabbi Elozar said in Rabbi Chanina's name that in the future, Hashem will be a crown on the head of each righteous person. This is based on the verse which the Gemora explains in detail:

On that day, Hashem will be as a crown of tzvi and a tzfira of glory: for those who do tziviyono – His will and those who are metzapim – hope for His glory.

To the remnant of His nation: to those who consider themselves the remnants by being humble.

And for a spirit of judgment: those who judge their evil inclination.

And for those who sit in judgment: one who judges truthfully.

And for courage: those who overcome their evil inclination.

[for] those who bring battle: those who battle in the give and take of Torah.

to the gate: the Torah scholars who are in the shuls and batai midrash early in the morning and late at night.

The next verse is the challenge of the attribute of justice, which notes that these (i.e., the Jews) also



strayed after wine and drunkenness, and should be judged to Gehinom.

The Gemora returns to the verses in the Megillah.

And she stood in the inner courtyard of the king

Rabbi Levi says that when she reached the location of idols, the divine presence left her. Esther then called out to Hashem, asking why He left her. Although she was going to the king, it was not fully of her own accord, but under duress of the circumstances. In case she had erred when she referred to Achashverosh as a dog, she now asked Hashem to save her from the lion, Achashverosh.

And when the king saw Esther...

Rabbi Yochanan says that three angels appeared: one who raised her neck, one placed grace on her, and one extended the king's scepter.

The Gemora asks how far the scepter extended, and gives varying numbers. Rabbi Yirmiyah says it was 2 amos, and it extended 12 amos (or 16, or 24). A braisa says it extended 60 amos, similar to the arm of Pharaoh's daughter, and the teeth of the wicked, which both grew in size. Rabbah bar Ufran cited Rabbi Elozar saying it extended 200 amos.

And the king said to Esther what is your request, up to half the kingdom..

The Gemora infers that he was offering half the kingdom, but not all of it, and not something that would touch on the kingdom itself, i.e., rebuilding the Bais Hamikdash.

The king and Haman should come today to the feast.
The Gemora cites a braisa with reasons that Esther invited Haman:

1. This was a trap, as the verse says that the table of the wicked will be a trap for them (Rabbi Eliezer).
2. She learned from the verse which counsels that if your enemy is hungry, feed him (Rabbi Yehoshua).
3. To show him his prestigious position, and thereby dissuade him from plotting an assassination of Achashverosh (Rabbi Meir).
4. To remove any suspicion that she was Jewish (Rabbi Yehuda).
5. To ensure the Jews didn't become complacent by relying on her, and not fully repent (Rabbi Nechemia).
6. To keep him around her, on the chance that she can trip him up in the presence of the king (Rabbi Yossi).
7. To show Hashem how low the Jews' position was, and prompt a miracle (Rabbi Shimon ben Menasia).
8. To make it look like she was close to Haman, prompting Achashverosh to kill both of them (Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karchah).
9. To make sure that any punishment the king may decide for Haman be carried out immediately, as Achashverosh often would act impetuously and then change his mind. (Rabban Gamliel).
10. Rabban Gamliel says we need Rabbi Elozar Hamoda'i's explanation that by inviting him, she incurred on him the jealousy of the king and of his peers.



Rabbh says that she wanted to fulfill with Haman the verse that states that before the fall, comes the high position.

Abaye and Rava say that she wanted to fulfill the verse which states that when the wicked are burning with drink, Hashem will intoxicate them with death.

Rabbah bar Avuha found Eliyahu hanavi and asked him what Esther's rationale was. He answered that it was all of the rationales given by the tannaim and amoraim.

And Haman told them the honor of his wealth, and rov banav – the multitude of his sons.

The Gemora asks how many sons he had. Rav says he had 30, of whom 10 died, 10 were hanged, and 10 were reduced to begging. The Sages say there were 70 left begging, as the verse says that *svai'im* – those who were satiated had be hired, which can be read as *shivim* – 70. Rami bar Aba says there were 208 sons, as indicated by the numerical value of *v'rov* (which is written without a middle vav).

On that night, the king couldn't sleep

Rabbi Tanchum says that this refers to Hashem, the king of the universe. The Sages say that the upper beings (i.e., angels) kept the lower ruler (Achashverosh) from sleeping, as they continually scared him from sleeping. Rava says that it means that Achashverosh couldn't sleep, as he was concerned that Haman and Esther were plotting to kill him. When he reasoned that someone would have revealed the plot to him, he was concerned that he may not have repaid a favor, and therefore people

were hiding the plot from him, and he therefore asked for the chronicle book to be brought and read.

And they were read.

The Gemora says that this expression teaches that they were read by themselves.

And it was found written.

Since the verse says "written" and not "writing", we learn that the king's scribe, Shimshi, erased the story, but Gavriel came and wrote it again. Rabbi Asi quoted Rabbi Shila from Tmarta saying that if a worldly writing of our merits cannot be erased, certainly the heavenly writing of our merits cannot be erased.

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

SAYING OVER IN THE NAME OF THE ONE WHO SAID IT

Rabbi Elozar said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: Whoever says a statement in the name of the one who said it will bring redemption to the world. Proof to this is cited from the verse in Megillah [2:22]: The matter became known to Mordechai and he informed Queen Esther. Esther then informed the king of it in Mordechai's name.

The Gemora is always careful in regards to saying statements in the name of the one who said it initially; why didn't the redemption come already?

The sefer Ohr Lashamayim cites from the Rebbe from Lublin that the Gemora is not referring to the ultimate redemption; rather it is referring to each person's individual success. Similarly, the blessing of Goel Yisroel in Shemoneh Esrei is referring to the redemption of the individual communities and not for the entire Klal Yisroel.

DAILY MASHAL

ESTHER CLOTHED HERSELF IN THE DIVINE SPIRIT

It is written in the Megillah [5:1]: On the third day, Esther donned [garments of] royalty and stood in the inner courtyard of the palace, facing the palace. The Gemora asks: The Megillah should have written that she clothed herself in royal clothing? Rabbi Elozar answers in the name of Rabbi Chanina: The verse is implying that Esther was clothed in the Divine spirit.

Pachad Yitzchak uses this verse to explain a difficulty regarding the story of Purim. The Gemora teaches us that the mitzva of destroying Amalek is only applicable after a king has been appointed over the Jewish people. According to this, the question is asked, how could the Jews in the times of Purim have fulfilled the mitzva of destroying Amalek by killing Haman and his sons, if they did not have a king at that time.

Pachad Yitzchak answers: It is written in the Megillah that Esther donned garments of royalty. This teaches us that she assumed the reign over the Jews, similar

to a king, thus allowing the Jewish people to destroy Amalek.

Who gave Esther this right? Pachad Yitzchak does not explain this point.

Rabbi Eliezer Ginzburg, in his sefer *Ginzei Hamelech* answers: The Shem Mishmuel states that the primary role of a king is to unite his constituents. He explains: "Esther did not literally assume the throne. Rather, she enveloped herself with the intense love for fellow Jews which a monarch must possess if he is to succeed in uniting the people."

This is the explanation of the Gemora. Esther cloaked herself with an abundance of love towards her fellow Jews and by doing so; she united the entire Jewish people. As a result of this, the Divine spirit rested upon her.