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Megillah Daf 5

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Rav said: If the Megillah is read in the proper time, it may be read even by an individual; but if it is read in a time that is not the proper time, it must be read with ten men. Rav Assi disagrees and maintains that the Megillah must be read with ten men in all instances. The Gemora records that Rav didn't have ten men and he troubled himself to assemble ten men because of Rav Assi's decision.

The Gemora asks: But could Rav actually have said this? Didn't Rav Yehudah the son of Rav Shmuel bar Shilas say in the name of Rav: If Purim falls on Shabbos, Friday is the proper time? Now, the Gemora asks: Friday the proper time!? Surely Shabbos is the proper time! What Rav must have meant therefore is this: The alternative time is like the proper time. Just as at the proper time, the Megillah may be read by an individual, so at the alternative time, it may be read by an individual.

The Gemora answers: No; for the reading of the Megillah Rab requires ten. What then did he mean by saying that Friday is the proper time? His intention was to reject the opinion of Rebbe, who said that since the unwalled towns had to shift their time, they might as well shift to the day of assembly; therefore, Rav informs us that Friday is the proper day to which they should shift (and not Thursday). (5a)

The Mishna states: What is regarded as a large town? If the town has ten unoccupied men who will always be

available to create a minyan (*ten adult males are needed for the prayer service in the synagogue*) for Tefillah. If there are less than ten of these people, it is considered a village and they may read the Megillah early.

Regarding the reading of the Megillah, it was said: They advance and they do not postpone. However, regarding the time of the wood offering (*the day the families donated wood for the mizbeach, they brought a korban and if that day fell out on Shabbos, they would bring the korban on Sunday*), the ninth of Av (*if it falls out on Shabbos, the fast would be postponed until Sunday*), korban chagigah (*korbanos that they would bring on the first day of the festivals and if it would fall out on Shabbos, they would bring these korbanos on the following day*), and hakhel (*the reading of the Torah by the king after the first day of Sukkos on a year following a Shemitah year*) they postpone and they do not advance.

The Mishna continues that even though it was said that they advance and do not postpone; it would be permitted to eulogize, fast and give the gifts to the poor on the days that the Megillah was read. (*We wouldn't fulfill the mitzva of mishloach manos on that day because that is connected to the seudas Purim, which is eaten on the fourteenth.*)

The Mishna concludes: Rabbi Yehuda states that the ordinance (*of reading the Megillah early*) was only in those places where the people from the villages came to the towns on Mondays and Thursdays; but in the places where they do not enter the towns, the Megillah is only read in its main time. (5a)

The Mishna had stated that the reading of the Megillah may be advanced but not postponed. The Gemora seeks out the source for this. Rabbi Abba says in the name of Shmuel: The verse in Esther [9:27] states *and it shall not pass*. We derive from there that the reading of the Megillah cannot be postponed. (5a)

And Rabbi Abba said in the name of Shmuel: From where do we know that years are not to be counted by days (and a year is made up of twelve months regardless of the amount of days)? It is because it is written: of the months of the year, which implies that you reckon a year by months, but not by days.

The Rabbis of Caesarea said in the name of Rabbi Abba: How do we know that a month is not reckoned by its hours? It is because it is written: until a month of days; you reckon a month by days, but you do not reckon a month by hours.

The Mishna had stated that the time of the wood offering, Tisha b'Av, Chagigah (the festival sacrifice) and Hakhel (*the reading of the Torah by the king after the first day of Sukkos on a year following a Shemitah year*) are postponed and not advanced. The Gemora explains that we do not advance Tisha b'Av because there is a principle that calamities are not lamented in advance. We do not advance Chagigah and Hakhel because their obligation has not arrived yet. (5a)

A Tanna taught in a braisa: The festival sacrifice (Chagigah) and all the period of the festival sacrifice is to be postponed.

The Gemora asks: We understand what is meant by the festival sacrifice, namely, that if its day happens to be Shabbos we postpone it until after the Shabbos. But what is meant by the 'period of the festival sacrifice'?

Rabbi Oshaya replied: What is meant is the following: The festival sacrifice is postponed if its time occurs on Shabbos, and the olah offering upon appearing in the Beis HaMikdash is postponed even on Yom Tov, which is the proper time for a festival sacrifice. [The olah may not be offered on Yom Tov; it can only be offered on Chol HaMoed, when the labor restrictions are not as strict.]

The Gemora asks: Which authority does this follow? It must be Beis Shammai, as we have learned in a Mishna: Bais Shammai maintain that one can offer a korban shelamim on Yom Tov but one cannot perform semichah (leaning on the animal, because it is rabbinically prohibited to make use of an animal on Yom Tov). One cannot, however, bring an olah. Bais Hillel maintain that one can offer both shelamim and olos on Yom Tov, and one can perform semichah on them.

Rava said: The meaning (of the braisa) is: The festival sacrifice may be postponed for the whole period of the festival sacrifice, but not more, as we have learned in a Mishna: One who did not offer the korban on the first day of the festival may bring it on any day during the festival, including Shmini Atzeres (*the last day of Sukkos*). If the entire festival passed and the korban was not brought, he is not responsible to bring it any longer.

Rav Ashi said: It means that the festival sacrifice may be postponed (when the festival occurs on Shabbos) for the whole period of the festival sacrifice, and even on Shavuos which is only one day, it, nevertheless, is postponed (and one has seven days to offer it), as we have learned in a Mishna: Beis Hillel agree that if Shavuos falls out on Shabbos, the day for slaughtering the sacrifice is after the Shabbos. (5a)

Rabbi Elozar says in the name of Rabbi Chanina that Rebbe planted a shoot on Purim, bathed himself publicly in Tzipori on the Seventeenth of Tammuz, and he wanted to abolish the fast of Tisha b'Av (*he wanted the fast of Tisha b'Av to have the same halachos as the other fasts*) but regarding this, the Sages did not agree with him.

Rabbi Abba bar Zavda said to Rabbi Elozar that Rebbe did not want to abolish Tisha b'Av every year; rather, that year Tisha b'Av fell out on Shabbos and it was postponed to Sunday. Rebbe maintained that since the fast was being pushed off, it should be pushed off altogether (although the ban on eating and drinking still exists, it should not have the other stringencies of washing - according to Tosfos). The Sages, however, did not agree with him. When Rabbi Elozar heard this from Rabbi Abba, he applied the following verse: Two are better than one (for if it would not have been taught to him, he would have remained in error).

The Gemora asks: How was Rebbe allowed to plant on Purim when there is a braisa that rules that it is forbidden to fast, eulogize or work on Purim?

The Gemora answers that Rebbe lived in a large town and therefore observed Purim on the fourteenth of Adar; he planted on the fifteenth.

The Gemora asks that Rebbe lived in the city of Teveria (Tiberias) and Teveria was a city that was surrounded by a wall since the days of Yehoshua?

The Gemora answers that Rebbe observed Purim on the fifteenth and he planted on the fourteenth.

The Gemora states that Chizkiyah was uncertain if Teveria had a wall in the days of Yehoshua and therefore he would read the Megillah on the fourteenth and the fifteenth there; Rebbe was certain that it had a wall and therefore read the Megillah on the fifteenth.

The Gemora asks further: Even if Rebbe read the Megillah on the fifteenth; it should nevertheless be forbidden to plant on the fourteenth. It is written in Megillas Taanis that one is prohibited from eulogizing or fasting on the fourteenth and the fifteenth of Adar. Rava explains that this prohibition applies regardless of when he observes Purim. If so, how could Rebbe have planted on the fourteenth?

The Gemora answers that the prohibition for both days applies to eulogizing and fasting, but work will be forbidden for just one day.

The Gemora asks: But is that so (that work is forbidden only one day and permitted the other day)? But Rav once observed a man sowing flax on Purim and he cursed him for working on Purim; the curse took effect and the flax did not grow.?

The Gemora answers: That man was observing Purim on that day.

Rabbah, the son of Rava answers that it is possible that Rebbe planted on the day that he read the Megillah, and he was permitted to do so because the Jews only



accepted the prohibitions against fasting and eulogizing but they never accepted upon themselves the prohibitions against working.

The Gemora asks: But why did Rav curse the man for working on Purim?

The Gemora explains that even though the prohibition against working on Purim was not accepted, in Rav's city, it was customary to refrain from working on Purim and this man violated the custom.

The Gemora offers an alternative answer: Rebbe was planting for the purpose of joy and that is permitted on Purim.

This is proven from the following Mishna: If these days (of fasts) pass and they are still not answered (with rain), they abstain to a certain extent from business, from construction and from planting, from betrothing and from marrying, and a Tanna taught a braisa regarding this: 'Construction' here means construction for joy; 'planting' means planting for joy. What is construction for joy? If one builds a wedding residence for his son (on the occasion of his marriage). What is a planting for joy? If one plants a royal arbor. (5a – 5b)

The Gemora mentioned earlier that Chizkiyah was uncertain if Teveria was surrounded by a wall in the times of Yehoshua or not and therefore he read the Megillah on the fourteenth and the fifteenth. The Gemora asks: It is written in Yehoshua [19:35] And the fortress cities are: Tzidim, Tzeir, Chamas, Rakas and Kineres. It has been established that Rakas is Teveria. Since Teveria (*Rakas*) is referred to as a fortress city, it obviously was surrounded by a wall; why was Chizkiyah uncertain? The Gemora answers: There was a body of

water on one side of Teveria and he was unsure if this constitutes a wall.

The Gemora elaborates on why he was uncertain. What is the defining distinction between a walled city and an unwalled city? If the distinction is based on the fact that an unwalled city is exposed, Teveria is also exposed and the Megillah should be read on the fourteenth. If the distinction is based on the fact that an unwalled city is not defended, Teveria is defended (*the body of water functioned as a defending barrier*) and the Megillah should be read on the fifteenth.

The Gemora relates that Rav Assi read the Megillah in Hutzal on the fourteenth and the fifteenth, for he was uncertain if it was a city that was surrounded by a wall in the times of Yehoshua or not.

Other relate that Rav Assi said that Hutzal of the house of Binyomin was surrounded by a wall in the times of Yehoshua (and therefore, the Megillah was read there on the fifteenth). (5b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

TENTH OF TEVES ON SHABBOS

The Mishna states that if Tisha b'Av would fall out on Shabbos, the fast would be postponed until Sunday. Rashi says that the same halacha would apply if the Seventeenth of Tammuz or the Tenth of Teves would fall out on Shabbos; its observance would be postponed until Sunday. The Mishna made special mention of Tisha b'Av since it was the only fast that was compulsory in those times.

The Avudraham writes that all of the fasts could fall out on Shabbos and when that happens, they will be postponed; however, the Tenth of Teves can never occur on Shabbos. It could fall out on Friday and we would fast on Friday. The Avudraham concludes that if the Tenth of Teves would fall out on Shabbos, we would observe the fast on Shabbos and it could not be postponed. This is based on a verse in Yechezkel which states: *b'etzem hayom hazeh* etc. - on this very day, and since the prophet specifies the precise day in this manner, we cannot postpone the fast.

Rashi clearly does not subscribe to this viewpoint. In his explanation of the Mishna, Rashi states that Tisha b'Av, the Seventeenth of Tammuz and the Tenth of Teves would all be postponed to Sunday if they would fall out on Shabbos.

The sefer Iturei Megillah explains the Avudraham. The reason that we do not observe a fast on Shabbos is because there is the option of fasting the following day as a replacement for the fast on Shabbos. The Avudraham maintains that there is no such possibility by the Tenth of Teves (similar to Yom Kippur) and the fast must be observed on that day. This explanation is said in the name of Reb Chaim Brisker as well.

DAILY MASHAL

The Chasam Sofer offers a different explanation. He states that one does not fast on Shabbos for a calamity that has happened in the past. However, one who is compelled to fast on account of a succession of bad dreams would fast on Shabbos since he is fasting in order to prevent a tragedy from transpiring. A fast, such as Tisha b'Av or the Seventeenth of Tammuz are fasts which commemorate episodes of the past and if they

would fall out on Shabbos, the fast would be postponed. The Chasam Sofer states that the fast on the Tenth of Teves is fundamentally different from all the other fasts. He explains that in the year that the Beis Hamikdosh was destroyed, Hashem had decreed on the Tenth of Teves beforehand that there will be a destruction. The Gemora states that any generation that does not have the Beis Hamikdosh built in is regarded as if they destroyed the Beis Hamikdosh. Every year, on the Tenth of Teves, there is a judgment from Hashem if the Beis Hamikdosh will be built this year or not. We are fasting on the Tenth of Teves not on the account of the past, but rather for the future. This fast can be observed on Shabbos.

An interesting aside: The Chasam Sofer (O" C 9) concludes a responsa by signing his name and dating it Sunday, the 11th of Teves 5578. Was the Tenth of Teves on Shabbos that year?

In the Likutei Heoros on the Chasam Sofer, he comments that the Tenth of Teves cannot fall out on Shabbos and in the year 5578 it happened to be a Friday, so there seemingly is a printers mistake and it should say Sunday, the twelfth of Teves.