

10 Mar-Cheshvan 5782
Oct. 16, 2021



Rosh Hashanah Daf 7

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for his neshamah and may his soul find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

The Gemara cites a Baraisa: On the first of Nissan is New Year for months, for leap-years, and for the offering of shekalim; some say, also for the renting of houses.

‘New Year for months’: from where do we know this? — Because it is written: This month shall be for you the beginning of months, it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak to all the congregation of Israel saying: On the tenth day of this month they shall take for themselves: every man a lamb, according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for each household. . . and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month, and they shall slaughter it etc. It is also written [elsewhere]: Observe the month of the first ripened produce. Now which is the month in which there first ripened produce? You must say this is Nissan; and this is called ‘first’. But cannot I say that it is Iyar? — We require first ripened produce, and there is none. But cannot I say that it is Adar? — We require the bulk of the first ripened produce, and this we do not have [in Adar]. But does the text say: ‘the bulk of the first ripened produce’? Rather, said Rav Chisda; we learn it from here: But on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crop of the land. What is the month in which there is ‘gathering in’? You must say that this is Tishrei, and the text calls it ‘seventh’. But cannot I say that it is Mar-Cheshvan, and by ‘seventh’ is meant the seventh to Iyar? — We require ‘gathering in’, and this we do not have [in Mar-Cheshvan]. But cannot I say that it is Elul, and by seventh is meant seventh to Adar? — We require the bulk of the ingathering, which we do not have [in Elul]. But does the text say, ‘the bulk of the ingathering’? — The fact is, said Ravina, that we cannot

learn this from the Torah of Moshe our teacher, but we have to learn it from the Prophets [where it is stated]: On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, which is the month of Shevat.

Rabbah bar Ulla said: [We learn it] from here: So Esther was taken to the king Achashveirosh to his royal palace in the tenth month which is the month of Teves.

Rav Kahana said: [We learn it] from here: On the fourth day of the ninth month, in Kislev.

Rav Acha bar Yaakov said; [We learn it] from here: Then were the king's scribes summoned at that time in the third month which is the month of Sivan.

Rav Ashi said: [We learn it] from here: They cast a pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day and from month to month to the twelfth month, which is the month of Adar. If you prefer, I can learn it from here: In the first month, which is the month Nissan.

Why didn’t all the others derive it from here? — Perhaps ‘first’ here means, ‘first in relation to this occurrence’.

Why didn’t our Tanna [reckon the first of Nissan as the New Year for months]? — Our Tanna speaks only of years, he does not speak of months. (7a1 – 7a2)

‘For leap years’. Do we reckon [a New Year] for leap years from Nissan? Has it not been taught: ‘A leap year is not decreed before Rosh Hashanah, and if such a decree is

issued it is not effective. In cases of emergency, however, the decree may be issued immediately after Rosh Hashanah, and even so the intercalary month must be [the second] Adar! — Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak replied: What is meant here by 'leap years'? The closing of a leap year, as we have learned: They testified that the year may be declared a leap year throughout the whole of Adar, since others asserted that this could be done only until Purim.⁸ What was the reason of those who held that this could be done only until Purim? — Since a Master has stated that inquiries are made regarding the laws of Pesach for thirty days before Pesach, people might be led into neglecting the rules of chametz. What does the other say to this? — He says that people know that a leap year depends on calculation, and they say to themselves that the Rabbis have only now got the calculation right. - What of our Tanna? — He speaks only of commencements, not of terminations. (7a2 – 7a3)

'And for the offering of shekalim'. How do we know this [from Scripture]? — Rabbi Yoshiyah said: The verse says: This is the olah of the new moon, at its renewal, throughout the months of the year. The Torah here enjoins: 'Renew [the year] and bring an offering from the new contributions'. That the 'year' here commences with Nissan is learnt by gezeirah shavah with the text: It is the first to you of the months of the year. But why not suppose it is Tishrei from the gezeirah shavah of: From the beginning of the year? — To a year with which months are mentioned we apply the gezeirah shavah of a year with which months are mentioned, but to a year with which months are mentioned, we do not apply the gezeirah shavah of a year with which months are not mentioned. (7a3 – 7a4)

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Samuel: It is proper to bring the congregational sacrifices that are offered on the first of Nissan from the new contributions. If, however, they are brought from the old, the obligation has been fulfilled, but he has missed the opportunity to perform the

mitzvah in the most appropriate manner. It has been taught to the same effect: 'It is proper to bring the congregational sacrifices which are offered on the first of Nissan from the new contributions; if, however, they were brought from the old, the obligation has been fulfilled, but he has missed the opportunity to perform the mitzvah in the most appropriate manner. If a private person has offered them from his own property, they are valid, provided he transfers them to the congregation. - Surely this is self-evident? — You might think that we should have some concerns [in accepting them], in case he has not transferred them with all his heart. We are told therefore [that this is not necessary].

Why does our Tanna [not reckon New Year for shekalim]? — Since it is laid down that if the sacrifices are brought [from the old contributions] the obligation is still performed, he was not certain [whether this should be counted a New Year]. (7a4 – 7b1)

'Some say, Also for the renting of houses'. Our Rabbis have taught: If a man rents a house to another for a year, he reckons it as twelve months from day to day. If, however, he stipulates "for this year", then even if the tenant only entered into occupation on the first of Adar, as soon as the first of Nissan arrives, a year has been completed. And even according to those who say that one day in the year is reckoned as a year, this does not apply here, because a man would not trouble to rent a house for less than thirty days. But why should I not say that Tishrei [is the New Year for renting houses]? — It is taken for granted that when a man takes a house [in Tishrei], he takes it for the whole of the rainy season. Why do the first Tanna of the Baraisa and our Tanna [not reckon the renting of houses]? — In Nissan also there is often cloudy weather. (7b1)

The Mishnah had stated: On the first of Elul is new year for the maaser of animals. Who is the authority for this? — It is Rabbi Meir, as it has been taught: Rabbi Meir says: On the first of Elul is New Year for the maaser of animals'.

Who is the authority in respect of festivals? It is Rabbi Shimon. Now look at the succeeding clause: Rabbi Elazar and Rabbi Shimon say: On the first of Tishrei. [Am I to say that] the first and third statements here follow the authority of Rabbi Shimon and the middle one that of Rabbi Meir? — Rav Yosef said: The authority here is Rebbe, and he decides now in accordance with one, now with another Tanna. In respect of festivals he concurs with Rabbi Shimon, and in respect of maaser of animals he concurs with Rabbi Meir. If that is so, how can he say: Four [New Years]? There are five? — Rava replied: There are four according to all authorities. There are four according to Rabbi Meir, excluding the festivals, and four according to Rabbi Shimon, excluding the maaser of animals. Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: [The meaning of our Mishnah is]: There are four months in which there are a number of New Years.

An objection was raised: The sixteenth of Nissan is the New Year for the Omer;¹ the sixth of Sivan is the New Year for the two loaves.² Now [this being so], according to Rava the Mishnah should say six, and according to Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak five? — Rav Pappa said: In fixing the number, [the Tanna] reckons only such [New Years] as commence with the evening, he does not reckon those that do not commence with the evening. But what of festivals which [in respect of vows] do not commence with the evening and yet are reckoned? — Since he has to bring [his vow], he becomes guilty [of ‘delaying’] from the very commencement [of the festival]. But what of Yovel years which do not commence with the evening, and yet are reckoned in? — This follows the view of Rabbi Yishmael the son of Rabbi Yochanan ben Berokah, who said that the Yovel commences with the New Year.

Rav. Shisha the son of Rav Idi said: In fixing the number, [the Tanna] reckoned only New Years that are not inaugurated with some ceremony, but he does not reckon

those that are inaugurated with a ceremony. But what of festivals, which [in respect of vows] are inaugurated with a ceremony, and yet are not reckoned? — The [transgression of] ‘not delaying’ comes automatically. But what of the Yovel years? — This follows the authority of Rabbi Yishmael the son of Rabbi Yochanan ben Berokah.

Rav Ashi said: [The meaning of our Mishnah is:] There are four New Years which fall on four firsts of the month. [Do you then reckon] the first of Shevat [as one and so] follow Beis Shammai? — He [Rav Ashi] meant it in this way: There are three according to all authorities; with regard to the first of Shevat there is a difference of opinion between Beis Shammai and Beis Hillel. (7b1 – 8a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

BLESSING OF THE NEW MONTH

The Gemora had stated that Nissan is considered the New Year regarding the counting of the months. There are different verses throughout the Prophets and the Writings which indicate that Nissan is the first month of the year.

We have previously discussed the opinion of the Chasam Sofer and other commentators based on the Ramban in Parshas Bo, who state that there is an obligation to count the months in relationship to Nissan to remind ourselves of the Exodus from Egypt and not to count using the secular months like the other nations of the world.

The Binyan Shlomo learns differently and states that the obligation to count the months according to the Exodus from Egypt was only given to the Beis Din when they were sanctifying the new moon. The Beis Din was required to proclaim that they are sanctifying the first month, second month etc.

¹ I.e., for making permissible the new grain.

² For bringing minchah-offerings from the new grain.

Binyan Shlomo continues that according to this, it should be instituted that when we are reciting the blessing for the new month on the Shabbos preceding Rosh Chodesh, we should announce the number of the month relative to Nissan since the blessing of the new month is a remembrance for Beis Din's sanctifying the new moon. He concludes that in truth, our custom is not like this but he's not sure why.

DAILY MASHAL

ROSH HASHANAH OF THE SPECIAL TREE

Four varieties of Rosh Hashanah are listed in the opening *Mishnah* of this *mesechta*. One, the Rosh Hashanah related to the tree, is on the 15th of Shevat according to the opinion of Beit Hillel; it is familiar to us as "*Tu (15th) BShevat* the New Year of the trees." There are several halachic implications of this date, such as determining the years beginning in regard to tithes. Fruits reaching a certain state of development before Tu BShevat are not tithed with fruits that reach that stage later. Similarly, this date determines the *type* of tithe that applies: *Maaser sheni*, the "second tithe" applies to fruits of the second year in the seven-year agricultural cycle; whereas, *maaser ani*, the tithe for the poor, applies to fruits of the third year. There is also the ramification of how to determine when the fruits of a tree have passed the three year stage during which they are forbidden as *orlah*. (Whether Tu BShevat determines the beginning of the *shemita* year for fruits is the subject of a lively debate of halachic authorities cited by Rabbi Shlomo Strashun (Rashash) in the back of the *gemara*.)

One of the great Chassidic leaders, Rabbi Zvi Elimelech of Dinov, in his classic work "Bnei Yissachar" makes an interesting observation: All the items mentioned in the *Mishnah* affected by the various Rosh Hashanah dates kings, documents, festivals, animals and vegetables

appear in the plural form. The only exception is the tree which is referred to in the singular.

This, he suggests, may be a hint that on Tu BShevat, the New Year of the trees, we focus on one particular tree, the one which provides the *etrog* for the mitzvah of taking the four species on Succot. There is a tradition, he notes, to pray on that day to have the privilege of acquiring not only a kosher *etrog*, but a beautiful one as well. It is on that day that the sap rises in fruit trees, and the *etrog* each Jew will acquire depends on his individual merit. Prayer on this day, concludes the author, will "bear fruit," and it is to this prayer which the *Mishnah* alludes in switching to the singular form in regard to trees. (by Rabbi Mendel Weinbach zt'l – Ohr Sameach)