

11 Iyar 5774
May 11, 2014



Rosh Hashanah Daf 3

Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

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COUNT FROM NISSAN

➤ Rabbi Yochanan cites a scriptural verse proving that kings are counted from the month of Nissan. He learns from a verse in Kings that the same way the years after the Exodus from Egypt are reckoned from Nissan, so too the years of the king are counted from Nissan.

The Gemora questions the premise that regarding the Exodus from Egypt, we count the years from Nissan; perhaps the count is from Tishrei? The Gemora proves from several Scriptural verses that the count cannot be from Tishrei. However in conclusion, the Gemora rejects Rabbi Yochanan’s viewpoint since perhaps the years were counted from Tamuz, Av or Adar. The Gemora does cite a braisa supporting Rabbi Yochanan.

Rabbi Elozar learns from a different source that kings are counted from the month of Nissan. It is written in Divrei Hayomim regarding Shlomo Hamelech “He began to build in the second month, in the second, in

the fourth year of his sovereignty.” The words ‘in the second’ are extra. Why are those words repeated? Rabbi Elozar explains it to be referring to the second month from when the king’s reign is counted. It is evident that the second month of the year, Iyar, is the second month of the king’s year, which starts in Nissan. (2b – 3a)

JEWISH KINGS – NISSAN GENTILE KINGS - TISHREI

➤ Rav Chisda qualifies the ruling of the Mishna and states that our Mishna’s ruling that Nissan is the New Year for kings is only referring to Jewish Kings, however in regards to gentile kings, we count from Tishrei. This is proven from two verses in Nechemia. The first verse states that in the month of Kislev, in the twentieth year, Nechemia was notified of the pathetic condition of the Jews residing in Yerushalayim. It is further written that in the month of Nissan, in the twentieth year of Artachshasta (a Persian king), Nechemia requested permission from the king to build

the walls of Yerushalayim. Since the first event took place in Kislev and the second in Nissan and they are both described as taking place in the twentieth year of Artachshasta, it is obvious that there was not a New Year between them. This proves that the New Year for gentile kings cannot be in Nissan and thus we assume that the New Year for them is Tishrei.

The Gemora questions the proof: How do we know that the Kislev event preceded the incident that happened in Nissan? Perhaps the Nissan incident occurred prior to the Kislev event, thereby explaining why they are both described as happening in Artachshasta's twentieth year and Nissan can still be considered the New Year for gentile kings?

This question is answered by citing a braisa which states explicitly that the matters that were told to Nechemia in Kislev were repeated by Nechemia to the king in Nissan.

Rav Yosef challenged Rav Chisda's ruling from the verses in Chagai. It is written that the people resumed construction of the Beis Hamikdosh on the twenty-fourth day of the month, in the sixth month, in the second year of Daryavesh. In the next verse, it states that in the seventh month on the twenty-first day of the month, Hashem told Chagai that the

splendor of this Beis Hamikdosh will be greater than that of the first one. According to Rav Chisda, the second verse should have stated "In the seventh month of the third year" since the seventh month is Tishrei and Tishrei is the beginning of the New Year for gentile kings.

Rabbi Avahu answers that Koresh was a righteous king and therefore his reign was calculated from Nissan as they would do for the Jewish kings.

Rav Yosef questions how Rav Avahu's statement that Koresh was righteous has any bearing on the verses in Chagai which are discussing Daryavesh. The Gemora answers that we learned in a braisa that Koresh, Daryavesh and Artachshasta are all the same person. He is referred to as Koresh since he was righteous. He is called Artachshasta since that is the royal title for all the Persian kings. His name was actually Daryavesh. (3a – 3b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

WAS KORESH A JEW?

➤ Rabbi Avahu explained that Koresh was a righteous king and therefore his reign was calculated from Nissan as they would do for the Jewish kings.

It is evident from this Gemora that Koresh was a gentile.

Tosfos comments that Koresh was the son of Esther. This can be found in several Medrashim.

The question is obvious that if Koresh is the son of Esther, he is not a gentile but rather a Jew. The Gemora in Yevamos (45b) rules that a gentile that lives with a Jewish woman and has a child, the child is indeed Jewish. The Rambam in Hilchos Issurei Biah (15:3) rules according to this Gemora as well. Why does our Gemora state that he was a righteous gentile and that is the reason his years were calculated from Nissan? The Gemora could have answered that Koresh was a Jew and that is why his years are counted from Nissan?

Rashi's opinion is that a gentile that lives with a Jewish woman and has a child, that child is a gentile and the meaning of the Gemora that states that he is kosher means that he is not considered illegitimate. If the child would be a Jew, he must be considered illegitimate since he is the product of two people that cannot be married to each other.

Rav Elyashiv Shlita answers that in the times of Koresh the ruling was that the child is a gentile

and that is why the Gemora inquired as to why the counting of his years was from Nissan. It was only afterwards that the ruling was established that the child is considered a Jew.

This would be similar to the ruling in the times of Boaz. Until the time of Boaz, it was ruled that one is not permitted to marry an Amonis woman. This is why Ploni Almoni refused to marry Rus. It was only after Boaz ruled that she was permitted that the halacha was established for the future that an Amonis is indeed permitted.

MENTIONING SHABBOS DURING THE WEEK

➤ Rabbi Elozar learns from a different source that kings are counted from the month of Nissan. It is written in Divrei Hayomim regarding Shlomo Hamelech "He began to build in the second month, in the second, in the fourth year of his sovereignty." The words 'in the second' are extra. Why are those words repeated? Rabbi Elozar explains it to be referring to the second month from when the king's reign is counted. It is evident that the second month of the year, Iyar is the second month of the king's year, which starts in Nissan.

The Gemora explains that the extra words ‘in the second’ cannot be referring to the second day of the week since we do not find such a term written in the Torah.

Tosfos cites from a Yerushalmi that the verse in Breishis “There was evening, there was morning, a second day” is not referring to the day of the week but rather to the second day of Creation.

Sfas Emes asks from several verses in Parshas B’shalach that state that the manna fell on the sixth day. He answers that perhaps our Gemora was only referring to the second day but other days of the week are mentioned in the Torah.

The Ramban in Parshas Bo points out that other nations assign intrinsic names to the days of week (such as Sunday, Monday . . . or dimanche, lundi . . .) whereas we denominate every day relative to Shabbos (yom rishon, - “first day” - yom sheni - “second day . . . B’Shabbos). This is a fulfillment of the mitzvah “Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it.” This is similar to the custom of Shamai who would eat every day in honor of Shabbos. When he would find a better-quality animal, he would say that this should be set aside for Shabbos. This is why we mention every day in the ‘song of the day’ that today is the first day from Shabbos.

Rav Yeruchem Fishel Perlow in his classic commentary on Rabbeinu Sadya Gaon writes that it is apparent from our Gemora not like the Ramban since the Gemora states unequivocally that we do not find the term ‘second day of the week in the Torah.’ The Yerushalmi adds that this calculation is not found in the Torah. According to the Ramban that it’s a mitzvah to mention the days of the week in this manner, why don’t we find the names of the days mentioned in this manner in the Torah?

Rav Nosson Grossman in his sefer Poseach Shaar offers a novel approach to explain the Ramban and our Gemora. There is a mitzvah to count the days of the week relative to Shabbos providing that this will bring about sanctity for this Shabbos or the Shabbos in the future. One who relates that a certain incident occurred on the second day since Shabbos does not sanctify the Shabbos at all. The custom of Shamai to designate an animal for this Shabbos, stating in the ‘song of the day’ that today is the second day of the Shabbos and writing in a divorce contract the day relative to Shabbos are all sanctifying this Shabbos and one fulfills the mitzvah of “Remember the Shabbos day to sanctify it.”

I found the following discussion in the Hearos blog on the daf related to our issue.

When we refer to the day of the week as "rishon b'Shabbos, sheini b'Shabbos" Does it mean: 1. Day one **from** Shabbos. 2. Day one **to** Shabbos 3. Day one of the week?

The Beis Shmuel (Even Haezer 126:7) says that in Gittin we should write "b'Shabbos" and not "l'Shabbos" because the language "l'Shabbos" implies from Shabbos including Shabbos. Therefore, "l'Shabbos" would imply Shabbos is day 1, Sunday is day 2, Monday is day 3 etc. But now that we say "b'Shabbos" the problem is solved. Although I can't prove it, it seems to me that "b'Shabbos" also implies that we are counting **from** Shabbos, just that the language "b'Shabbos" indicates that Shabbos is not included in the number so that "sheini b'Shabbos" would correctly refer to Monday. Just as "l'Shabbos" is clearly counting from Shabbos, so too "b'Shabbos" is counting from Shabbos without including Shabbos in the count.

It would seem to me that according to the Poseach Shaar, this would not be the case. There is no mitzvah to mention that today is the second day since Shabbos. That is ancient history. The point of mentioning Shabbos is to sanctify the present Shabbos or the future Shabbos. Therefore, the meaning of "rishon b'Shabbos" is today is the first day of the week leading up to the upcoming Shabbos.

DAILY MASHAL

➤ Tosfos quotes a Medrash that states that the king of Arad was actually Amalek. The Yalkut adds that they dressed and spoke like the Canaanites. Amalek changed their language to speak in the Canaanite tongue, so that the Jews would pray to their G-d to give the Canaanites into their hands, but they were not Canaanites. When they came close to the Jews, it was apparent by their faces that they were from Amalek.

Reb Chaim Volozin was once walking in the streets of Peterburg. A young gentile approached him and gave him a beating. Reb Chaim was very interested to discover the name of this gentile lad. He found out that this was Alexander, the son of Czar Nikolai.

Reb Chaim was asked as to why he was so curious to learn the name of the boy. Reb Chaim responded that his Rebbe, the Vilna Gaon, had given over to him the signs of recognizing who is a descendant of Amalek. Reb Chaim said that he noticed all the symbols on the face of that 'sheiget'.