

15 Elul 5772
Sept. 2, 2012



Brachos Daf 32

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

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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

Room to Argue

Rabbi Chama said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: If not for these three verses (*which testify that it is in God’s Hand to remove the Evil Inclination from us*), the feet of Israel’s enemies (*a euphemism referring to the Jewish people*) would have faltered (*for now we are able to argue in judgment that it is God Who caused us to sin, for He created the Evil Inclination*). One is that which is written: *Whom I have caused to be evil*; and one is that which is written: *Behold, as the clay in the potter’s hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel*; and one is that which is written: *And I will take away the stony heart from your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh*.

Rav Pappa said: We derive it from here: *And I will put My spirit within you, and I will make it so that you to walk in My statutes*.

And Rabbi Elozar said: Moses spoke insolently upwards (*towards Heaven*), as it is written: *And Moshe prayed to Hashem*. Do not read it ‘to (*with an “alef”*) Hashem,’ but rather, ‘at (*with an “ayin”*) Hashem,’ for so in the school of Rabbi Eliezer – “alefs” were pronounced like “ayins” and “ayins” like “alefs.”

The school of Rabbi Yannai derived it from here: *And Di-Zahav (one of the places where Moshe spoke to all of Israel; each place is expounded to refer to a certain sin committed when the Jews were travelling in the Wilderness)*. What is *And Di-Zahav*? They said in the school of Rabbi Yannai: Thus said Moshe before the Holy One, Blessed be He: Master of the Universe, the silver and gold (*zahav*) which You lavished on Israel until they said, “Enough” (*dai*), that is what caused their making of the Golden Calf.

They said in the school of Rabbi Yannai: A lion does not roar over a basket of straw, but over a basket of meat. [*When it has an large quantity of meat to eat, it becomes wild and attacks other animals.*]

Rabbi Oshaya said: It is comparable to the case of a man who had a lean and bony cow. He gave it vetch to eat (*food which makes the animal strong and fatty*) and it began to kick him. He said to it: What caused you to kick me except the vetch that I fed you with? [*So too, the Jews sinned with the Golden Calf because of the gold and silver which God gave them.*]

Rabbi Chiya bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: It is comparable to the case of a man who had a son. He bathed him and anointed him (*with oil*) and gave him food and drink and hung a purse (*with money*) around his neck and placed him at the doorway of (*a house of*) prostitutes. What should the boy do to prevent him from sinning? [*So too, the Jewish people sinned due to God’s giving of an abundance of good to them.*]

Rav Acha the son of Rav Huna said in the name of Rav Sheishes: This bears out the popular saying: A full stomach is a type of sin, as it is written: *When they went to their pasture they became sated, they were sated and their hearts were exalted; therefore they have forgotten Me*.

Rav Nachman derived it from here: *Then your heart will become haughty and you will forget Hashem*.

The Rabbis derive it from here: *And he will eat, be sated, and grow fat, and turn to other gods*. Alternatively, I can say from here: *But Yeshurun (the Jews) grew fat and kicked*.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rabbi Yonasan: From where do we know that the Holy One, Blessed be He, returned and agreed with Moshe? It is because it is written: *And I lavished upon her silver and gold, but they used it for Baal*. (32a)

The Sin of the Golden Calf and Moshe's Prayers

It is written: *And Hashem spoke to Moshe, "Go, descend."* What is meant by "Go, descend"? Rabbi Elozar said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe, "Moshe, descend from your greatness. Have I given to you greatness save for the sake of Israel? And now Israel has sinned; then why do I need you?" Immediately, Moshe strength weakened and he had no strength to speak (*on behalf of Israel*). When, however, God said, "Leave Me that I may destroy them," Moshe said (*to himself*), "This depends upon me (*for if I pray for them, Hashem will not punish them*)," and immediately he stood up and strengthened himself in prayer and begged for mercy.

The *Gemora* notes that it is comparable to the case of a king who became angry with his son and began beating him greatly. The king's friend was sitting before him but was afraid to say a word until the king said, "Were it not for my friend here who is sitting before me, I would kill you!" He (*the friend*) said (*to himself*), "This depends on me," and immediately he stood up and saved him.

It is written: *And now, leave Me that My anger will flare against them, and that I may annihilate them, and I will make of you a great nation* etc. Rabbi Avahu said: Were it not explicitly written, it would be impossible to say such a thing: this teaches us that Moshe took hold of the Holy One, Blessed be He, like a man who seizes his fellow by his garment, and said before Him, "Master of the Universe, I will not let You go until You forgive and pardon them."

It is written: *And I will make of you a great nation* etc. Rabbi Elozar said: Moshe said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, seeing that a stool with three legs (*Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov*) cannot stand before You in the time of Your wrath, how much less a stool with one leg only! And furthermore, I am ashamed before my ancestors, who will now say, 'See what a leader He has placed over them! He sought greatness for himself, but he did not seek mercy for them!'"

It is written: *And Moshe pleaded (va-ye'chal) before Hashem.*

[*The Gemora explains the use of the word 'va-ye'chal to refer to Moshe's tefillah that Hashem should forgive the Jewish people.*] Rabbi Elozar said: This teaches us that Moshe stood in prayer before the Holy One, Blessed be He, until he persisted of Him.

Rava said: Until he annulled His vow for Him. It is written here: *va-ye'chal*, and it is written there (*regarding one's vow*): *he shall not profane (yachel) his word*. And a master has said: He himself (*the one who made the vow*) cannot profane it, but others may profane it for him.

Shmuel says: It teaches us that he risked his life for them, as it is written: *And if not, erase me now out of Your book (of life)*.

Rava said in the name of Rabbi Yitzchak: It teaches us that he caused the Attribute of Mercy to rest upon them.

The Rabbis say: It teaches that Moshe said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, it would be sacrilege (*chullin*) for You to do this thing."

And Moshe pleaded before Hashem. It has been taught in a *braisa*: Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: This teaches us that Moshe stood praying before the Holy One, Blessed be He, until an '*achilu*' (*from the expression of 'va-ye'chal*) seized him.

The *Gemora* asks: What is *achilu*?

Rabbi Elozar says: A fire of the bones.

The *Gemora* asks: What is a fire of the bones?

Abaye said: Bone fire (*a kind of fever*).

It is written: *Remember for the sake of Avraham, Yitzchak and Israel, Your servants, to whom You did swear (that You will increase Avraham's children like the stars and the sand) by Yourself*. What is meant '*by Yourself*'? Rabbi Elozar said: Moshe said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, had You sworn to them by the heaven and the earth, I would have said, 'Just as the heaven and earth can eventually cease, so can Your oath can cease (*to apply*).' Now, however, since You have sworn to them by Your Great Name: just as Your Great Name endures forever and ever, so too Your oath is established (*and must remain intact*) forever and ever."

The verse continues: [*Moshe said:*] *And You told them, I will increase your offspring like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of (I shall give to your offspring)*.

The *Gemora* asks: 'That **I** have spoken of'? It should have said: 'That **You** have spoken of'?



Rabbi Elozar said: Up to this point the verse records the words of the disciple; from this point and on, the words of the Master (*are recorded*). [God responded to Moshe that He will do as Moshe requested; he will not destroy the Jewish people, and He will keep His promise.]

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini, however, said: Both are the words of the disciple; rather, Moshe spoke the following before the Holy One, Blessed be He: "Master of the Universe, the words ("all this land that I have spoken of") which You did tell me, 'Go and tell Israel in My Name,' I did go and tell them in Your Name; now (if You plan on destroying them), what am I to say to them"?

It is written (*by Moshe's prayer to God after the episode with the Spies*): Because Hashem lacked the ability (*ye'choles – to bring the Jewish nation into the Land that He had sworn to give them, He slaughtered them in the Wilderness*).

The Gemora asks: It should have said 'yachol' (*He is unable*)!?

Rabbi Elozar said: Moshe said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, now (if You do destroy the Jewish people), the nations of the world will say, "He has grown feeble like a female and He is not able to save." The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe, "Have they not already seen the miracles and powerful acts that I performed for them by the Sea?" He replied, "Master of the Universe, they can still say, 'He could stand up against one king (*Pharaoh*), but He cannot stand up against thirty-one (*the kings in Canaan*)!"

Rabbi Yochanan said: How do we know that in the end the Holy One, Blessed be He, returned and agreed with Moshe? It is because it is written: And Hashem said, I have forgiven according to your words.

A braisa was taught in the school of Rabbi Yishmael: 'According to your words' (*that they would say, 'I do not have the power etc.'*), the nations of the world would have said. Fortunate is the disciple to whom the master agrees to!

The verse continues: *But as I live*. Rava said in the name of Rav Yitzchak: This teaches us that the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moshe: Moshe, you have revived Me (*amongst the other nations*) with your words.

Rabbi Simlai expounded: A man should first recount the praises of the Holy One, Blessed be He, and then ask for his needs, as Moshe did so (*when asking for permission to enter Eretz Yisroel*), for it is

written: *And I entreated Hashem at that time*, and it is written: *Hashem Elokim, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your strong hand; for what power is there in heaven and earth who can do according to Your works and according to Your mighty acts*, and afterwards it is written: *Let me now go over, and see the good Land etc.* [This is why we begin the Shemoneh Esrei with praises of Hashem, and only afterwards, do we proceed with our requests.] (32a)

Statements

[Mnemonic (for the following seven statements): Deeds, charity, offering, Kohen, fast, lock, iron]

Rabbi Elozar said: Prayer is more efficacious than good deeds, for there was no one greater in good deeds than Moshe our teacher, and yet he was answered only after prayer, as it is written: *Do not continue to speak to Me (about entering Eretz Yisroel)*, and immediately afterwards it is written: *Go up to the top of the cliff (and see with your own eyes)*.

Rabbi Elozar also said: Fasting is more efficacious than charity. What is the reason? One (*fasting*) is performed with a man's body, whereas the other (*charity*) is performed (*only*) with his money.

Rabbi Elozar also said: Prayer is more efficacious than offerings, as it is written: *To what purpose are your numerous sacrifices to Me?* And it is written (*afterwards*): *And when you spread forth your hands (in prayer, etc.; this indicates that although Hashem has 'rejected' the offerings, He is willing to accept prayers)*.

Rabbi Yochanan said: A Kohen who has killed a person should not lift up his hands (*to recite the priestly blessing*), since it is written: *Your hands are full of blood*.

Rabbi Elozar also said: From the day on which the Temple was destroyed, the gates of prayer have been closed, as it is written: *Though I would cry out and call for help, He shuts out my prayer*. But although the gates of prayer are closed, the gates of tears are not closed, as it is written: *Hear my prayer, Hashem, and give ear to my outcry; do not be silent to my tears*.

Rava did not decree a fast on a cloudy day, because it is written: *You have covered Yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can pass through*.



Rabbi Elozar also said: Since the day that the Temple was destroyed, a wall of iron has intervened between Israel and their Father in Heaven, as it is written: *And you shall take for yourself an iron griddle, and set it for a wall of iron between you and the city.*

Rabbi Chanin said in the name of Rabbi Chanina: If one prays long his prayer does not return empty (*without a response*). From where do we know this? It is from Moshe our teacher, for it is written: *And I prayed to Hashem (that he should forgive Israel for the sin of the Golden Calf; and since it does not specify the amount of time he prayed, we can assume that he prayed for all forty days that he was I heaven),* and it is written afterwards: *And Hashem listened to me that time as well.*

The *Gemora* asks: But is that so? But didn't Rabbi Chiya bar Abba say in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: If one prays long and analyzes it (*thinking that it will be fulfilled due to its length*), in the end he will suffer heartache, as it is written: *Prolonged prayer makes the heart sick?* What is his remedy? Let him occupy himself with the study of Torah, as it is written: *But the tree of life is a desire fulfilled,* and the tree of life is nothing but the Torah, as it is written: *It is a tree of life to those that lay hold of it!*

The *Gemora* answers: There is no difficulty, as one statement speaks of a man who prays long and analyzes it (*thinking that it will be fulfilled due to its length; and that is why R' Yochanan rules that he will be disappointed*), whereas the other refers to one who prays long without analyzing it.

Rabbi Chama son of Rabbi Chanina said: If a man sees that he prays and is not answered, he should pray again, as it is written: *Hope to Hashem, be strong and He will give you courage; and hope to Hashem.*

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: Four things require strengthening, and they are as follows: The study of Torah, good deeds, praying, and one's pursuit of a livelihood. [*One must constantly renew his efforts in these areas in order for him to succeed.*]

The *Gemora* asks: From where do we know this of Torah and good deeds? It is because it is written: *Only be strong and very courageous to observe, to do according to all of the Torah. 'Be strong' in Torah, and 'be courageous' in good deeds.* From where do we know this of prayer? It is because it is written: *Hope to Hashem, be strong and He will give you courage; and hope to Hashem.* From where do we know this of one's pursuit of a livelihood? It is because it is written: *Be strong and let us prove strong on behalf of our people etc.*

It is written: *And Zion said, "Hashem has forsaken me, and the Lord has forgotten me."* Isn't 'forsaken' the same as 'forgotten'? Rish Lakish said: The Congregation of Israel said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, "Master of the Universe, when a man marries a second wife after his first, he still remembers the deeds of the first. You have both forsaken me and forgotten me!" The Holy One, Blessed be He, answered her: "My daughter, twelve constellations have I created in the firmament, and for each constellation I have created thirty army commanders, and for each army commander I have created thirty legions, and for each legion I have created thirty *rahaton*, and for each *rahaton* I have created thirty *karton*, and for each *karton* I have created thirty *gastera*, and to each *gastera* I have suspended three hundred and sixty-five thousands of myriads of stars - corresponding to the days of the solar year, and all of them I have created only for Your sake, and you say, "You have both forgotten me and forsaken me'!"

It is written: *Can a woman forget her baby (oolah)?* The Holy One, Blessed be He said, "Can I possibly forget the burnt offerings (*olos*) of rams and the firstborn of animals that you did offer to Me in the Wilderness?" She (*the Congregation of Israel*) thereupon said, "Master of the Universe, since there is no forgetfulness before the Throne of Your Glory, perhaps You will not forget the sin of the Golden Calf?" He replied, "Also these will be forgotten."

She said before Him, "Master of the Universe, seeing that there is forgetfulness before the Throne of Your Glory, perhaps You will forget my conduct at Sinai (*and we will receive no credit for it*)?" He replied to her, "Yet, the 'I' (*referring to the first of the Ten Commandments – the Jewish nation's acceptance of the Torah*) I will not forget for you."

The *Gemora* notes that this agrees with what Rabbi Elozar said in the name of Rabbi Oshaya: What is referred to by the verse: *Also these will be forgotten?* This refers to the sin of the Golden Calf. *Yet, the 'I,' I will not forget for you.* This refers to their conduct at Sinai. (32a – 32b)