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Moed Katan Daf 26

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

**Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

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

### **Tears which may not be repaired**

The braisa lists the cases in which a tear may not be repaired: on the death of one's parent's death, one's Rebbi, the nasi, or head of the court, on bad news (i.e., mass death of Jews), on hearing blasphemy, on a Torah scroll being burnt, on seeing the cities of Yehuda, the Bais Hamikdash, or Yerushalayim in their destruction. The braisa adds that after one tears for seeing the location of the destroyed Bais Hamikdash, he must add on to this tear when he sees destroyed Yerushalayim.

The Gemora says the source for tearing for his parents and Rebbi is the Elisha's exclamation when he didn't see Eliyahu anymore – *avi avi, revech Yisrael uparashav – my father, my father, the chariot of Yisrael, and its cavalry.*

The Gemora explains that the first phrase, *avi avi*, teaches that one tears for a mother and father, while the remainder teaches that he tears for his Rebbi, as Rav Yosef explains that it refers to his Rebbi, whose prayer was more effective for the nation than chariots and cavalry.

The Gemora explains that we learn that one may not repair it since the verse says that Elisha took hold of his clothes, and tore them to two pieces. The phrase

“to two pieces” is extra, since it is implicit in tearing, and it therefore teaches that they must remain two pieces forever.

Raish Lakish asked Rabbi Yochanan why Elisha tore for Eliyahu, as he remained alive, and he answered that he was effectively dead to him, since he never saw him again.

The Gemora says the source for tearing on the death of the nasi or the head of the court and on bad news is the verse which says that Dovid grabbed his clothes and tore them, along with all the people with him, and they eulogized and fasted until the evening, because of the news of Shaul and Yehonasan, and the nation of Hashem and Yisrael who fell in battle.

The Gemora explains that Shaul was the nasi, Yehonasan was the head of the court, and the nation who fell in battle was bad news.

Rav bar Sheva asked Rav Kahana why we don't say that one only tears if all of these occur, and he answered that the word *al* – on used before each of these events teaches that each one necessitates tearing.



The Gemora challenges the requirement to tear about bad news from Shmuel who heard that the king Shevor killed 12,000 Jews, and he didn't tear.

The Gemora answers that bad news is only when a majority died, like the story in the verse.

The Gemora challenges the story about Shevor, as he told Shmuel that he should get rewarded since he never killed any Jews.

The Gemora says that in this case, the Jews were responsible, since they rebelled, as Rabbi Ami said that because of the revelry in this town's rebellion, the wall of the neighboring city was broken down.

The Gemora says the source for tearing when hearing blasphemy is the verse which says that Chizkiya's servants came to him with torn clothes after hearing the blasphemy of Ravshakeh.

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that only one who heard the blasphemy must tear, but not one who hears it second hand. Witnesses to a blasphemy need not tear when they testify, since they tore when they initially heard it, as we see from Chizkiya who tore when he heard the blasphemy recounted, but his servants didn't tear again.

The Gemora says the source for tearing when seeing a Torah scroll burnt is the verse which says that when three or four sections of the scroll (with the prophecy of the exile) was torn and burnt, the king and his men didn't fear or tear their clothes, implying that they should have torn their clothes.

The Gemora explains that the king wasn't concerned with the first four verses, as they don't relate directly to the king. When he heard the fifth, which prophesies that the Jew's oppressors will rule over them, usurping the king's power, he was upset. When he was told that this was a prophecy from Hashem, he tore out all mentions of Hashem's name and burned them.

Rav Pappa suggested to Abaye that perhaps they should have torn their clothes on hearing the bad news in the prophecy, but not necessarily because of the burning of the scroll, but Abaye rejected this, since there was not yet any bad news, but only a prophecy.

Rabbi Chelbo cites Rav Huna saying that if one sees a Torah scroll torn, he must tear two times – one for the parchment, and one for the writing, as the verse refers to the king's burning the megilla (i.e., the parchment) and the words (i.e., the writing).

Rabbi Abba and Rav Huna bar Chiya were sitting in front of Rabbi Abba. Rabbi Abba needed to relieve himself, so he took off his tefillin, and placed them on the pillow. A bird came, and tried to swallow them, and Rabbi Abba said that if it had succeeded, he would have had to tear two tears. Rav Huna bar Chiya challenged his statement, as something similar happened to him, and he asked Rav Masna, who didn't know what he should do. He asked Rav Yehuda, who told him that Shmuel said that one must tear only if the Torah scroll is forcibly burned, like the one burned by the king.



The Gemora says the source for tearing on seeing destroyed cities of Yehuda is the verse which refers to the people who came from Shechem and Shilo and found the cities destroyed had torn clothes and shaved beards, indicating that tearing is the proper response to seeing them.

Rabbi Chelbo quotes Ula Bira'a in the name of Rabbi Elazar saying that when one sees destroyed cities of Yehuda, he says the verse, "Your holy cities were like a desert," and then tears. When he sees destroyed Yerushalayim, he says "Zion was like a desert, Yerushalayim was desolate," and then tears. When he sees the destroyed Bais Hamikdash, he says, "Our house of holiness and splendor that our fathers praised was burned in fire, and our beloved was destroyed," and then tears.

The braisa concluded saying that one tears on the Bais Hamikdash and continues to tear on Yerushalayim.

The Gemora challenges this from another braisa which says that one tears on hearing of or seeing them destroyed (from the area of Tzofim), and he tears for the Bais Hamikdash and separately for the Yerushalayim.

The Gemora answers that if he sees the Bais Hamikdash first, he may add on to his tear when he sees Yerushalayim, but if he sees Yerushalayim first, he must make a separate tear for the Bais Hamikdash.

### **Patching tears**

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that all of these tears may be patched deficiently (wide stitches, two stitches, bunching the tear and stitching it, staggered stitches), but not professionally.

Rav Chisda explains that one may not stitch it in the Alexandrian fashion.

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that if one tears a deficiently stitched tear, he didn't fulfill his obligation, but if he tore a well stitched tear, he did fulfill it, and Rav Chisda explains that a well stitched tear is one stitched in the Alexandrian fashion.

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that one may turn his clothing upside down and then professionally stitch the tear, but Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says one may not. Just as the owner may not repair it, one who buys it may not, and therefore one must notify a buyer of this.

### **New tear vs. adding**

The Gemora cites a braisa in which Rabbi Meir says that a new tear must be at least a tefach, while an addition to a tear must be at least 3 fingers long, while Rabbi Yehuda says a new one must be at least 3 fingers, and an addition may be any amount. Ula rules like Rabbi Meir for the size of a new tear, and like Rabbi Yehuda for the size of an addition.



The Gemora cites a supporting braisa with Rabbi Yossi saying that a new tear is a tefach, and an addition is any size.

### **Multiple tears**

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that if they told him his father died, and he tore, and then they told him his son died, and he added to the tear, he may only repair the bottom part. If the order was the opposite, he may only repair the upper part. If he was told that his father, mother, brother, and sister died, he may tear one tear for all of them, while Rabbi Yehuda ben Besaira says that he must make a separate tear for his parents, since one may not add on to their tears.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak explains that one's parents are important enough to warrant their own separate tear. Shmuel rules like Rabbi Yehuda ben Besaira.

The Gemora challenges this from Shmuel's statement that we always rule leniently in the area of mourning, but answers that that doesn't apply to the area of tearing.

The Gemora asks how far one must tear, and answers that it must be until his navel, while some say until his heart, which is alluded to in the verse which commands us to tear our hearts and not just our clothes. If a person added on to a tear until it reached his navel, he may tear a new tear a distance of 3 fingers away from this one. If the whole front of the garment was filled up with tears, he may turn it around, and start tears again. If the whole top of the

garment was filled with tears, he may turn it upside down, and start tears again. If one tore on the bottom or the side, he didn't fulfill his obligation, but a kohen gadol tears at the bottom, as he may not tear on a dead relative.

The Gemora cites a dispute between Rav Masna and Mar Ukva about multiple tears. One says that during shiva one must make a new tear for a new dead relative, but afterwards he may add on, while the other says that one must make a new tear during all of shloshim.

Rabbi Zaira challenged the one who said that he may not add on during shloshim, presumably because one may not stitch the tear up then, from the ruling that a woman may stitch the tear immediately.

The Gemora answers that a woman's stitching is an exception to accommodate modesty, but doesn't change the basic rule. He challenged the opinion that says he may not add on during shloshim, presumably because until then he cannot fully repair it, from the fact that one may never fully repair a tear for a parent.

The Gemora answers that this restriction on a tear for a parent is an exception to show honor to the parent, but doesn't change the basic rule.

### **When to tear and when not to**

The Gemora cites a braisa which says that if one goes out in front of a dead person with an already torn garment, leading others to think that he tore it for this person, he is stealing honor from the dead, and

tricking the living. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says that if one asked to borrow a garment from his friend, to visit his sick father, and when he arrived he tore it, since he found his father had died, he repairs it and returns it, with payment for the depreciation of the garment. If he didn't tell his friend about his father's condition, he may not tear the garment at all. If someone sick lost a relative, we don't tell him, to avoid his being upset and getting sicker. We don't tear in front of him, and quiet the women around him, to keep the secret. If a child lost a relative, we tear his clothes to sadden everyone. One tears for his mother in law and father in law, out of respect to his wife.

Rav Pappa says that we learned in a braisa that a mourner should not hold a child, since it will bring laughter, leading people to denigrate him for acting lightly during mourning.

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### RENDING BECAUSE OF AN ACCIDENT

Rav Yehudah told me in the name of Shmuel: There is only a requirement to rend your garments if the Torah or tefillin was destroyed forcibly, however, if it happens through an accident, there is no requirement.

Rashi states that if one can prevent the destruction and he doesn't, there is no requirement to rend his garments. Rashi would seem to indicate that if the

sefer Torah was burned by accident, there is a requirement to rend one's garments.

The other Rishonim (Ran, Meiri, Nimukei Yosef) disagree with this. They maintain that there is only a requirement to rend your garments when the destruction of the sefer Torah was with the intent to incite the Ribbono shel Olam, however, if the Torah was destroyed by accident (through a fire or a bird), there is no requirement.

The Chacham Tzvi (17) questions Rashi's logic. It would emerge according to Rashi that if a fire would erupt suddenly and destroy the entire city in a manner where it was impossible to prevent the destruction of the sifrei Torah, one would be required to rend his garments; however, if a small fire would burn a sefer Torah, and one was capable of preventing its destruction, one would not be required to rend his garments. Why would that be?

The sefer Matzeves Moshe explains this according to the Maggid MiDubna. When there is a possibility according to natural law of preventing destruction, Hashem does not involve Himself and create a miracle, however, in a scenario where there is no possibility according to natural law of preventing destruction, Hashem does get involved, if He sees fit, and will produce a miracle to prevent the destruction.

Accordingly, when a preventable fire destroys a sefer Torah, it does not appear as if this was a Heaven-sent sign, and the fact that Hashem did not procure a miracle is not regarded as a desecration of His name for there was ample opportunity for the people

themselves to prevent this occurrence; there is no requirement to rend one's garment. However, when there is an enormous fire, one that is unpreventable and the only manner in which the sifrei Torah can be saved is through a miracle from Above; the lack of a miracle demonstrates that we were not deserving of one, thus resulting in a desecration of Hashem's name and therefore there is a requirement to rend one's garments.

## DAILY MASHAL

### Eliyahu is still Alive

It is brought in the name of the Ariza"l that this idea is hinted at in the verse from Mishlei (3:34): "If [one is drawn] to scoffers, he will scoff; but if to the humble, he will find favor", since the head-letters spell "Eliyahu chai" ("Eliyahu lives").

The Zohar says (Ray"ah Mehemna, Bereishis 25b; 253) that even though Moshe Rabbeinu was the teacher of all of Israel, his interpreter was Aharon HaKohen, as it says, "He will be a mouth for you" (Shemos 4:16), since Moshe had a "heavy mouth" and "heavy tongue." In the "End of Days" in the generation of Moshiach, Moshe will return to teach Torah to Israel and will still be of "uncircumcised lips." However, Eliyahu, who will be "chai," will be his interpreter, and this is the sod of the posuk, "Pinchas the son of Elazar the son of Aharon HaKohen" (Bamidbar 25:11). This is as it is written, "If [one is drawn] to scoffers, he will scoff" (Mishlei 3:34): when they will need a translator for Moshe, Eliyahu who

will be "chai" will translate and be Moshe's interpreter. (Sha'ar HaGilgulim, Chapter 36)

It misses something in the translation. The Hebrew word for "scorn" in this posuk is "yalitz," and the word for "interpreter" is "meilitz," basically the same word. Therefore, on a Pshat-level, Shlomo HaMelech is talking about how G-d scorns the scorners, but on a Drush-Sod-level, it is an allusion to what it will be like at the end of days.

Thus, even in Yemos HaMoshiach, Moshe's level of understanding will still be far too sophisticated for those meriting to learn from the teacher of all teachers. Like in Egypt, we will again require someone capable of understanding Moshe Rabbeinu's teachings and also possess the ability to bring it down to our level. That will be Eliyahu HaNavi, nee Pinchas ben Elazar ben Aharon HaKohen, in payment for having been prepared to risk his life for G-d and Torah.