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Taanis Daf 15

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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

PROCEDURE OF THE FAST

➤ The Mishna proceeds to describe the process of the prayers that were recited on a communal fast due to lack of rain. They would take the Ark into the streets of the town and we would place ashes on the Ark and on the head of the Nasi and upon the head of the Rosh Beis Din (Head of the Court). Each person would place the ashes on his head. The eldest among them addressed them and said words that would inspire them to mend their ways: "Our brothers, it is not said regarding the men of Nineveh, "And Hashem saw their sackcloth and their fast," but rather, "And Hashem saw their actions that they repented from their evil way" (Yonah 3:10); and in the Kabbalah it states, "And rend your hearts, and not your garments" (Yoel 2:13).

They would send a chazzan to lead the prayer who was an elder and fluent in the prayers. He should have children and his house should be empty (lacking the necessary funds to support his family) in order that his heart will be completely devoted in the prayer. He recites before them the twenty-four blessings; eighteen as on every day and there are an additional six due to the fast.

The six additional brochos are: Zichronos and Shofaros, "To Hashem, in my distress I called Him and

he answered me," "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains...," "From the depths, I have called you, Hashem," "A prayer of the afflicted, when he faints." Rabbi Yehuda says that he did not have to say Zichronos and Shofaros, but instead he said, "If there be a famine in the land, if there will be a plague...," and "The word of the Hashem that came to Yermiya concerning the droughts."

The Mishna continues that each of these blessings had a conclusion as well. For the first brocha (this was actually for the brocha of Geulah as the Gemora will explain) he would conclude, "He Who answered Avraham on Mount Moriah, He will answer you and He will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Redeemer of Israel." For the second brocha, which is Zichronos (the first of the additional blessings), he says, "He Who answered our forefathers at the Red Sea, He will answer you and He will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who remembers forgotten things." For the third brocha, which is Shofaros (the second of the additional blessings), he says, "He Who answered Yehoshua in Gilgal, He will answer you and he will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who hears the blowing of the shofar." For the fourth brocha, he says, "He Who answered Shmuel at Mitzpah, He will answer you and he will listen to the sound of your crying on this day.

Blessed are You, Hashem, Who hears crying." For the fifth he says, "He Who answered Eliyahu on Mount Carmel, He will answer you and He will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who hears prayer." For the sixth he says, "He Who answered Yonah from the fish's belly, He will answer you and he will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who answers in time of distress." For the seventh he says, "He Who answered Dovid and his son, Shlomo in Yerushalayim, He will answer you and he will listen to the sound of your crying on this day. Blessed are You, Hashem, Who has mercy on the land."

The Mishna relates an incident which occurred during the time of Rabbi Chalafta and Rabbi Chananyah ben Tradyon. The leader passed before the Ark and concluded the entire blessing, and they did not respond after him "Amen." They responded by saying Boruch shem kevod malchuso l'olam vo'ed, which is the response usually reserved for the Beis Hamikdosh.

The attendant announced: "Blow the tekiah, kohanim, blow the tekiah!" He then said: "He Who answered our father Avraham on Mount Moriah, He will answer you and listen to the sound of your crying on this day." "Sound the teruah, sons of Aaron, sound the teruah!" "He Who answered our forefathers at the Red Sea, He will answer you and listen to the sound of your crying on this day." And when the issue came before the Sages, they said, this was not our custom, (responding with Boruch shem instead of answering Amen) except at the Eastern Gate and on the Temple Mount.

The kohanim were divided into twenty-four groups, referred to as mishmoros. Each mishmar contained seven families, batei avos. Each mishmar had a turn to serve in the Beis Hamikdosh for one week on a rotating basis. Each beis av had a designated day of the week to perform the service.

The first three fasts, members of the mishmar (who were not working on that particular day) would be required to fast but they would not complete the fast; and members of the beis av (the group that was performing the service on that day) did not fast at all. Regarding the second series of fasts; members of the mishmar would fast and complete it; and members of the beis av would fast but not complete it. On the last seven fasts; the members of the mishmar and the beis av would fast and complete. These are the words of Rabbi Yehoshua. The Chachamim disagreed and maintain that on the first three fasts, the members of the mishmar and the beis av would not fast at all. Regarding the second series of fasts; members of the mishmar would fast but not complete it, and members of the beis av would not fast at all. On the last seven fasts; members of the mishmar would fast and complete it, and members of the beis av would fast but they would not complete it.

The Mishna digresses to discuss other distinctions between the members of the mishmar and the members of the beis av.

Members of the mishmar are permitted to drink wine at night but not during the day because they might be called upon to help perform the service and a drunkard is prohibited from serving in the Beis Hamikdosh. Members of the beis av are not allowed



to drink wine during the day and even at night. The members of the mishmar and members of the ma'amad (Klal Yisroel was divided into twenty-four groups in order to fulfill the requirement of standing by the korban tamid – some went to the Beis Hamikdosh and others remained in their cities) are prohibited from cutting their hair and from laundering clothes, however on Thursday, they are permitted to cut their hair and perform laundering in honor of Shabbos.

Any minor festival that is written in Megillas Taanis with the restraint of "not to eulogize" on it, the day beforehand is also prohibited but the day afterwards would be permitted. Rabbi Yosi maintains that the day before and after is prohibited. Any minor festival that is written in Megillas Taanis with the restraint of "not to fast" on it, the day beforehand and afterwards is permitted. Rabbi Yosi holds that the day before is prohibited but afterwards is permitted.

The Mishna resumes discussing the fasts that were decreed because of the lack of rain. The Chachamim would not decree a communal fast which would begin on a Thursday, in order to prevent a raise in the market prices. The first three fasts would be declared for Monday, Thursday and Monday and the second series of fasts would be on Thursday, Monday and Thursday. Rabbi Yosi maintains that just like the first series cannot commence on a Thursday, so, too, the second series and the last seven do not begin on a Thursday.

Rabban Gamliel said that the Chachamim would never decree that the first day of the series of fasts should be on Rosh Chodesh, Chanukah, or Purim. If

the fasts began already and one of the days of the fasts fell out on Rosh Chodesh, we would not interrupt the fasts. Rabbi Meir maintains that even though Rabban Gamliel said that they do not interrupt, he would admit that the fast should not be completed. This halacha is identical to a case where Tisha B'av fell on Erev Shabbos. (15a – 15b)

ASHES

➤ The Mishna had stated that they would place ashes on the head of the Nasi and upon the head of the Rosh Beis Din (Head of the Court). Each person would place the ashes on his head.

The Gemora asks from a *braisa*: Rebbe says that in matters of prominence, we commence with the greatest, and in matters of cursing, we begin with the least important. He explains: In matters of prominence, we commence with the greatest, as it is written: And Moshe spoke to Aaron and to Elozar and to Issamar, his sons that were remaining: *Take* etc. And in matters of cursing, we begin with the least important, for first the serpent was cursed, and then Eve, and then Adam!?

The Gemora answers that placing the ashes on the head of the Nasi and the Rosh Beis Din is an honor for them since the people are telling them that they are prominent enough to beg for compassion for the entire congregation. (15b)



INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

PURCHASING FOOD FOR SHABBOS THURSDAY OR FRIDAY?

➤ The Magen Avraham (250:1) quotes the Arizal as saying that it is more preferable to purchase items for Shabbos on Friday, rather than on Thursday. Some explain that the reason for this is based on the verse “v’hayah bayom hashishi, v’heichinu eis asher yaviu” – “And it will be on the sixth day, you should prepare for Shabbos.”

The Magen Avraham concludes by instructing us to analyze the ruling of the Shulchan Aruch (O”C 572:1) where it is implicit that purchases for Shabbos were done on Thursday and not on Friday.

The Mishna in Taanis states that they would not decree an initial fast on Thursday because that would cause an unwarranted price increase. Rashi explains that when the storekeepers will observe people purchasing food in large quantities, they will assume that a famine is coming and thereby raise all the prices. The sellers would not realize that people are buying food for two large meals, one to break the fast this evening and the other for Shabbos. It is evident from this Gemora that people purchase food for Shabbos on Thursday.

A proof to the Arizal’s viewpoint can be found in the Gemora Taanis (8b). Rabbi Yitzchak said that even during an extreme drought, rain that falls on a Friday is nothing but a curse since it will inconvenience those that are shopping for Shabbos.

Rabbi Tzvi Yaakov Abramowitz in the sefer Ta’am Hatzvi answers the Magen Avraham’s question from our Mishna. Generally, people purchase food for Shabbos on Friday, but when they are going to the stores on Thursday anyway to buy food for the meal after the fast, they will simultaneously purchase food for Shabbos. While it is true that the meticulous people will wait for Friday to prepare for Shabbos, most of the community will not wait and that is why we try to avoid beginning the first series of fasts on a Thursday.

DAILY MASHAL

The chapter ended as follows: Not all are destined to share in the light, nor all in the gladness. Light shall be for the righteous and gladness for the upright. ‘Light for the righteous,’ for it is written: Light is sown for the righteous; ‘and gladness for the upright,’ for it is written: And gladness for the upright in heart.

The Sheim MiShmuel expounds: The term ‘righteous’ is in reference to someone who has a desire creep up on him and he bends his yetzer to protect himself, similar to Yosef the Righteous; an upright person, however, is one whose crookedness (inside of him) is all straightened out and he has transformed the darkness to light and the bitterness to sweetness. Therefore, a righteous person, who has overridden his evil inclination, merits the lighting up of the darkness, but the darkness still inherently exists. An upright person, however, merits gladness as well. The spirit of evil is completely removed from him, and the ultimate joy will ascend to the world.