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Avodah Zarah Daf 5

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

Benefit of Repentance

The Gemora notes This is akin to the statement of Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini in the name of Rabbi Yonasan. He says: What does the verse mean when it says: *These are the words of David son of Yishai, and the words of the man who established a yoke?* This means that these are the words of David son of Yishai who established the benefit of repentance. (5a)

Mitzvos and Aveiros

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini says in the name of Rabbi Yonasan: Whoever does one *mitzvah* in this world, it precedes him into the World to Come. This is as it says: *And your righteous deeds will precede you, the glory of Hashem will gather you in.* Whoever sins one sin, it encompasses him and goes before him to the Judgment Day. This is as the verse says: *Their ways will encompass them; they will enter wasteland and be lost.*

Rabbi Elozar says: His sin is tied to him like a dog. This is as it says: *And he did not listen to her, to sleep with her and to be with her.* This implies: “*To sleep with her,*” in this world, “*To be with her,*” in the next world. (5a)

There would have been no Death

Rish Lakish says: We must show gratitude towards our forefathers (*the ones who sinned during the Golden Calf*). If not for them, we would not have come into the world (*for they would have been like angels, incapable of fathering*

children). This is as the verse says: *I said you are angelic, sons of the Most High.* However, you have corrupted (*yourself with*) your actions, and *therefore you will die like a man.*

The Gemora asks: This implies that if they would not have sinned, they would not have fathered children. Doesn't the verse say: *And you should be fruitful and multiply?* [*This is a Torah command!*]

The Gemora answers: This only would have applied until the giving of the Torah.

The Gemora asks: After the giving of the Torah the verse said: *Go say to them, return to your tents* (*meaning that they could resume having relations with their wives*)!?

The Gemora answers: This was for the joy of having relations (*not in order to reproduce*).

The Gemora asks: Doesn't the verse say: *In order that it will be good for them and their children after them etc.?*

The Gemora answers: This refers to their sons who were present with them at Mount Sinai.

The Gemora asks: Rish Lakish himself says the following: What is the meaning of the verse: *This is the book of the generations of Adam?* It is to teach us that the Holy One, Blessed be He, showed Adam every generation and its expositors, every generation and its sages. When he came to the generation of Rabbi Akiva, Adam rejoiced at his

learning but was saddened at his death, and said: *And to me, how magnificent are Your thoughts, O God.* Additionally, Rabbi Yosi says: The son of David will not come until all the souls are vacated from *guf*. [There exists a chamber in heaven that contains the souls created during the six days of creation. The mitzvah of procreation is to bring the souls out of *guf* and advance the coming of Mashiach. One who has children fulfills this obligation even if they subsequently die.] This is as the verse says: *For I will not forever fight, and I will not be upset for eternity, for the spirits before Me I will wrap (into a body), and I make the souls.* [All of the above shows clearly that the future generations were going to exist, even if Bnei Yisroel would not have done the sin of the Golden Calf.]

Rather, the *Gemora* answers: Don't say he means they would not have existed, but it would have been as if they did not exist. [The people who stood at Mount Sinai would have forever been the leaders and elders of Bnei Yisrael, as they would not have died, giving no chance for future generations to be leaders.]

The *Gemora* asks: This implies that if they would not have sinned they would not have died. However, doesn't the Torah discuss *yibum* (when a married man dies without having had children etc.) and inheritance?

The *Gemora* answers: This was only on condition that it would be applicable.

The *Gemora* asks: Is there such a concept of verses that are said on condition (of sin)?

The *Gemora* answers: Yes, there is such a concept. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish stated: What is the meaning of this verse: *And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day (why is there an extra "hey" in ha-shishi)?* It teaches us that Hashem made a condition with the works of Creation, saying: If the Jewish people accept my Torah it will be well, but if not, I shall return you to a state of emptiness.

The *Gemora* asks a question from a *braisa*. The *braisa* states: *Who would give, and this heart would be for them etc.* The angel of death could not have been nullified, as there was already a decree (that people should die). Bnei Yisroel accepted the Torah in order that no other nation should be able to rule over them. This is as the verse says: *In order that it should be good for them and their children after them etc.* [This shows that they would have died even after receiving the Torah.]

The *Gemora* answers: Rish Lakish holds like the following *Tanna*. The *braisa* states: Rabbi Yosi says that Bnei Yisroel accepted the Torah in order that they would not be subject to the angel of death. This is as the verse states: *I said you are angelic, sons of the Most High.* However, you have corrupted (yourself with) your actions, and therefore you will die like a man.

The *Gemora* asks: How does Rabbi Yosi understand the verse: *In order that it should be good for them and their children after them etc.?* This implies that while there will be goodness, there will still be death!

The *Gemora* answers: He understands that being that there will be no more death, there is no greater goodness than that!

The *Gemora* asks: What does the *Tanna Kamma* do with the verse: *therefore you will die like a man?*

The *Gemora* answers: Death here refers to poverty. This is as the master stated: There are four types of people who are considered dead. They are a poor person, a blind person, a *metzora*, and one who has no children. A poor person is like dead, as the verse says: *for all of the people (who have sought you out) have died.* Who were these people? This refers to Dasan and Aviram. Weren't they still alive? It must be that they became poor and insignificant (and therefore were no longer a threat to Moshe Rabbeinu).



A blind person is considered dead, as the verse says: *you have put me in darkness like the dead of the world.* A *metzora* is considered dead, as the verse says: *She (Miriam) should not be considered dead.* One who does not have children is considered dead, as the verse says: *Give me children, and if not I am considered dead.* (5a)

Hashem's Will to Listen to the Torah

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: *If you will go in my laws. "If" is a term indicating pleading. This (pleading that Bnei Yisroel keep the Torah) is also found in the verse: If only My nation would listen to Me...I would have subdued their enemies in an instant.* Similarly, the verse says: *If only you would have listened to My commandments, your peace would flow like a river...and your children would be like sand and your offspring etc.*

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: The verse says: *Who can assure that this heart should remain theirs etc.* Moshe said to *Bnei Yisroel*: You are ingrates, the sons of ingrates! When Hashem said this to *Bnei Yisroel*, they should have said, "You give the Torah to us." They are ingrates, as the verse says: *And our soul is disgusted by this unsubstantial bread (the manna).* They are the sons of ingrates, as the verse says: *The woman that You gave to me, she gave me from the tree and I ate.*

Even Moshe Rabbeinu only hinted this to *Bnei Yisroel* after forty years. This is as the verse says: *And I led you in the Wilderness for forty years.* The verse then says: *And Hashem did not give you a heart to understand etc.*

Rabbah says: We see from here that a person does not fully understand his teacher until forty years have passed.

Rabbi Yochanan says in the name of Rabbi Banaah: What is the meaning of the verse: *Praiseworthy are you that sow beside all waters, who send forth the feet of the ox and the donkey?* This teaches us that Israel is fortunate, for whoever

is occupied with the studying of Torah and with kindness their evil inclination is in their control, and not the other way around. This is as the verse says: *Fortunate are you who plant on all of the water* which refers to the giving of charity. This is as the verse says: *Plant for you charity, and harvest according to your acts of kindness.* Water refers to Torah, as the verse says: *All those who are thirsty should go to water.* The *Tanna* of the Academy of Eliyahu taught: *Ones who send forth the feet of the ox and the donkey* means that a person should study Torah like an ox carrying a yoke and a donkey carrying a load. (5a – 5b)

Three Days Beforehand

The *Mishna* states that for three days before their pagan festivals, it is forbidden to do business with them.

The *Gemora* asks: Does one indeed have to wait for three days beforehand? Doesn't the *Mishna* say: Four times a year must an animal seller tell someone that he has sold the mother of this animal or the daughter of this animal. [*This is in order to prevent the prohibition of people slaughtering a mother and its calf on the same day.*] These four times are the day before *Shemini Atzeres*, the day before the first day of *Pesach*, the day before *Shevuos*, and the day before *Rosh Hashanah*. According to Rabbi Yosi ha'Glili, this also applies to the day before *Yom Kippur* in Galilee. [*This implies that one must only suspect the animal will be slaughtered for a festival the day beforehand, not three days beforehand. Why, then, must we refrain from selling idolaters things three days before their holiday?*]

The *Gemora* answers: Being that we eat our meat, one day beforehand is sufficient. However, being that they sacrifice their meat, they take three days to prepare the sacrifice.

The *Gemora* asks: If one is going to prepare a sacrifice, is three days sufficient? Doesn't the *Mishna* say that we inquire into the laws of *Pesach* thirty days before the holiday, while Rabban Gamliel says that we ask for two



weeks before the holiday? [*The Gemora assumes that this is because we have to ensure that our korban pesach is valid, and that it does not have a blemish.*]

The *Gemora* answers: Regarding our *korbanos*, we indeed require this much time because there are many blemishes that can render our *korbanos* invalid. Even cataracts in the eye can make a *korban* invalid! We therefore require thirty days. However, the *korban* of a gentile is only invalid if it is missing a limb. Accordingly, three days suffice. [*Gentiles may offer a korban olah to Hashem, and it is accepted as long as it is not missing a limb. Idolaters adopted the rule that a sacrifice is only valid if it is not missing a limb, even though they started offering sacrifices to idols.*]

- This is as Rabbi Elozar states: How do we know that an animal that is missing a limb cannot be brought as a *korban* (to Hashem) by a gentile? The verse says: *From all of the living (animals), from all flesh, two from each etc.* The Torah indicated that one must bring a *korban* from an animal whose limbs are alive (*i.e. intact*).

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Four People are Considered as Dead

The *braisa* states: There are four types of people who are considered dead. They are a poor person, a blind person, a *metzora*, and one who has no children. A poor person is like dead, as the verse says: *for all of the people (who have sought you out) have died.* Who were these people? This refers to Dasan and Aviram. Weren't they still alive? It must be that they became poor and insignificant (*and therefore were no longer a threat to Moshe Rabbeinu*). A blind person is considered dead, as the verse says: *you have put me in darkness like the dead of the world.* A *metzora* is considered dead, as the verse says: *She (Miriam) should not be considered dead.* One who does not have children is considered dead, as the verse says: *Give me children, and if not I am considered dead.*

Reb Chaim Shmulevitz explains that the common denominator among these four is that they do not feel someone else's pain and that they cannot provide benefit for others.

A poor person is considered as dead not because he is lacking himself, but rather, it is because he cannot give to others.

A blind person cannot see others and therefore, he is unable to perceive their pain or suffering. He cannot join in his tribulation.

A *metzora* is banished from the camp and therefore, he is unable to offer assistance to others.

One who does not have children to nurture is lacking the ability to provide benefit to those that are dear and close to him. It is a natural instinct for a person to desire to give whatever he has to his children.

Only a life where one can share with others is worth living.

Questions about Pesach on Purim

We learn in our *sugya* that "one should ask about the *halachos* of Pesach 30 days before Pesach". One of the implications, as explained in our *sugya*, is that a rabbi should give precedence to such questions in this period (see *Meoros HaDaf HaYomi*, V, p. 266).

Two people once came to their Rav on Purim, one with a question about Pesach and the other with a question about Purim. Whom should the Rav address first? The *Pri Megadim* (429, *Mishbetzos Zahav*, S.K. 1) and HaGaon Rav Shlomo Kluger zt"l (Responsa *HaElef Lecha Shelomo*, I, 383) struggled with this interesting question, as follows.



Learning the *halachos* of Pesach on Purim: A simple calculation shows that Purim is the first of the 30 days before Pesach during which one must learn the *halachos* concerning Pesach. According to Tosfos (Bechoros 57a), it would be fitting to count these 30 days starting with 13 Adar as the Pesach sacrifice is offered on 14 Nisan and most of the *halachos* concerning Pesach treat the sacrifice, but *Chazal* made no difference between the various holidays.

After all, it's Purim today... Now that we have established that these 30 days start on Purim, what should the Rav do? *Pri Megadim* (ibid) indicates that the person with a question about Purim should take precedence as, after all, today is Purim - but Rav Kluger writes (ibid) that the decision is not simple as Pesach is from the Torah whereas Purim is a Rabbinical decree.

However, according to *Pri Chadash* (ibid), "30 days before Pesach" is not a definite starting-point but, rather, *Chazal* meant the period between Purim and Pesach. Could it be, he asks, that in Yerushalayim, where Purim falls on 15 Adar, people should be concerned with the *halachos* of Pesach on 14 Adar instead of with the *halachos* of the approaching Purim? As for the **halachah**, *Mishnah Berurah* (429, S.K. 2) rules that "one should start on Purim itself".

Preparing ornaments for Pesach on Purim: It is interesting to note that in the *kinah* for Tish"ah B"Av starting with *Tziyon yedidos* (#40 in the *Kinos* according to the Ashkenazim) it is mentioned (according to the commentary *Kol Beramah*) that people would prepare golden ornaments for Pesach on Purim as on Purim one should start preparing for Pesach.

We conclude with a number of hints for the obligation to learn the *halachos* of Pesach 30 days beforehand. Maharil (*Hilchos Pesach*) cites in the name of the *Rokeiach* (244) the verses in *parshas Hachodesh* (Shemos 12:2-3) "...this **month...speak** to the whole congregation of Israel" In other words, during the month before Pesach one should discuss

its *halachos*. *Pardes Yosef* quotes a wonderful hint in the name of *Lechem 'Oni*: The Midrash says: " „And you will say, <It is a sacrifice of Pesach>." (Shemos 12:27) From here we learn to ask about the *halachos* of Pesach for 30 days." What does the sacrifice have to do with asking about *halachos*? If we "slaughter" (*zevach*) the letters of *Pesach* – i.e., cut their numerical value in half – we get the following results. *Peh* (80) becomes *mem* (40), *samech* (60) becomes *lamed* (30) and *ches* (8) becomes *dalet* (4), forming the word *lamed* ("learn"). The letter *lamed* is also equivalent to 30, indicating that the *halachos* of Pesach should be learnt during the 30 days before the holiday.

DAILY MASHAL

We Ask and Expound

It is told that the Rabbi of Mannheim – where the Enlightenment (*Haskalah*) had taken hold – once refused to deliver a *derashah* on the Shabos before Pesach. He explained to his wondering congregation that the halachah says that *shoalin vedorshin* - we "ask and expound" the *halachos* of Pesach but if there is no one who asks, we shouldn't expound (*darshan*)