

Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

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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

1. Sanctification

Beis Shammai learns that oaths can be undone by a court of three from the juxtaposition of the section on oaths after Moshe’s commanding the nation to keep the holidays. The verse concluding the section of the holidays states the Moshe told the Jews about the holidays of Hashem. The use of the phrase *mo’adai Hashem – the holidays of Hashem*, even though the context would make it clear that this was what Moshe taught, is excluding another area from the rule of the holidays.

Rabbi Yossi Hagelili says that the phrase teaches that only holidays require sanctification by the court (*by declaring the start of the month*), but not Shabbos, which arrives once a week, without human intervention.

Ben Azzai says that the phrase teaches that only holidays need expert judges to proclaim the new month, but an oath (*discussed in the next Torah section*) can be undone by a court of simple judges.

Rav Chisda said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan that one expert is also sufficient. (120b – 121a)

Fifteenth of Av

The *Gemora* cites a *Mishna*: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: There were no holidays for Israel as the fifteenth of Av and as Yom Kippur, for on them, the daughters of Yerushalayim go forth in borrowed white garments, so as not to embarrass whoever does not have.

The *Gemora* asks that it is understandable that Yom Kippur should be a day of rejoicing, because that is a day of forgiveness, and on that day the Second Tablets of the Ten Commandments were given to Moshe. However, why should the fifteenth of Av be considered a day of rejoicing?

The *Gemora* offers several different explanations for this.

Rav Yehudah answers in the name of Shmuel: On that day permission was granted to the members of the different tribes to intermarry. (*There was a prohibition applicable only to the generation who entered Eretz Yisroel with Yehoshua. The reasoning for this was out of concern regarding a woman’s property transferring to her husband’s tribe after she dies.*)

Rabbah bar bar Chanah answered in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: On that day the members of the tribe of Binyamin were permitted to intermarry with the other tribes. (*There was a prohibition applicable only to the people who took an oath not to give their daughters in marriage to a man from Binyomin due to the episode of the concubine of Givah.*)

Rav Dimi bar Yosef answered in the name of Rav Nachman:: This was the day that the last of those who were destined to die in the desert died and that was when Hashem returned to speak to Moshe.

[*Rashbam cites the words of Chazal which are found in the Yerushalmi and the Medrashim in Eichah. Rabbi Levi said: Each year on the eve of Tishah b’Av, an announcement would be sent throughout the camp, saying: “Go out and dig graves, go out and dig graves.” The people would go out and dig graves and sleep in them. In the morning it would be announced to separate the dead from the living. They would arise and find*

their number diminished. In the last of the forty years, they did this but found themselves undiminished. They said, "We must have made a mistake in counting. Could it be that the Elders had miscalculated the beginning of the month through a mistaken sighting of the new moon?" They did the same thing on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, but still no one died. When the moon was full, they said, "It seems that the Holy One has annulled the decree from all of us," so they made the fifteenth a holiday. They rejoiced at the realization that their entry to Eretz Yisroel was imminent. It was at that time that prophecy returned to Moshe.]

Ulla answers: This was the day that the sentries appointed by Yeravam to prevent the Jewish people from coming to Yerushalayim were abolished by Hoshea the son of Elah, and he said, "Let them go wherever they choose."

Rav Masneh answers: This was the day that permission was granted to bury the dead who were killed in battle at the city of Beitar. Rav Masneh stated further: On that day, when it was permitted to bury those killed at Beitar, the Sages in Yavneh ordained the fourth blessing in Birchas Hamazon: "Who is good and Who confers good." What is the meaning in these words? By 'good' is meant that the bodies were not left to putrefy, and by 'confers good' that burial was permitted.

Rabbah and Rav Yosef both said: This was the day they ceased to cut wood for the Mizbeach, as we have learned in a *braisa*: Rabbi Eliezer the Great said: From the fifteenth day of Av and onward the heat of the sun was lessened and the timber was no longer dry, so they ceased to cut wood for the Mizbeach.

Rav Menasheh said: They called it, "The day of the breaking of the axe" (for it was not needed any longer).

From that day on, he who increases his hours of Torah-study as the night grows longer will add years and days to his life. One who does not will die early. (This is because the days begin to shorten at that time and one must use the time at night to make up for the time lost during the day.) (121a – 121b)

2. Entering Eretz Yisroel

The *Gemora* cites a *braisa*: There were seven men whose life spanned the whole world. For Mesushelach saw Adam; Shem saw Mesushelach; Yaakov saw Shem; Amram saw Yaakov; Achiyah the Shilonite saw Amram; Eliyahu saw Achiyah the Shilonite, and he is still alive.

The *Gemora* asks: And did Achiyah the Shilonite see Amram? Surely it is written: *And not a man was left of them, except Calev the son of Yefuneh, and Yehoshua the son of Nun!*?

Rav Hamnuna answered: The decree (*that they will die in the Wilderness*) was not directed against the tribe of Levi; for it is written: *Your carcasses shall drop in the Wilderness; all that were numbered in all of your countings, from twenty years old and above.* This implies that a tribe that was counted from twenty years old and above came under the decree; however, the tribe of Levi, having been counted from thirty years old and above, was excluded.

The *Gemora* asks: Did none of the members of the other tribes enter *Eretz Yisroel*? Surely it was taught: Yair the son of Menasheh and Machir the son of Menasheh were born in the days of Yaakov and did not die before the Jewish people entered *Eretz Yisroel*; for it is written: *And the men of the Ai smote of them about thirty and six men.* It was taught regarding this: Actually thirty six men were killed; these are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Nechemiah, however, said to him: Did it say "thirty – six"? Surely it said: "about thirty-six"! This must refer to Yair the son of Menasheh who was equal to the greater part of the Sanhedrin!? [Evidently there were others who survived and entered *Eretz Yisroel*!]

Rather, Rav Acha bar Yaakov said, the decree was not directed against one who was under twenty years of age, nor against one who was over sixty years of age. (121b)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

CALCULATIONS OF DEATHS

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: There were no holidays for Israel like the 15th of Av and Yom Kippur. The *Gemora* offers several reasons for the celebration on the fifteenth of Av. Rabbah bar bar Chanah states in the name of Rabbi Yochanan that this was the day that the last of those who were destined to die in the desert died and that was when Hashem returned to speak to Moshe.

Rashbam cites the words of Chazal which are found in the Yerushalmi and the Medrashim in Eichah. Rabbi Levi said: Each year on the eve of Tishah b'Av, an announcement would be sent throughout the camp, saying: "Go out and dig graves, go out and dig graves." The people would go out and dig graves and sleep in them. In the morning it would be announced to separate the dead from the living. They would arise and find their number diminished. In the last of the forty years, they did this but found themselves undiminished. They said, "We must have made a mistake in counting. Could it be that the Elders had miscalculated the beginning of the month through a mistaken sighting of the new moon?" They did the same thing on the tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, but still no one died. When the moon was full, they said, "It seems that the Holy One has annulled the decree from all of us," so they made the fifteenth a holiday. They rejoiced at the realization that their entry to *Eretz Yisroel* was imminent. It was at that time that prophecy returned to Moshe.

Tosfos asks that according to this, they ceased to die on the ninth of Av preceding the last year. Why wasn't the prophecy returned to Moshe from that year? He answers that since they were still under the impression that the following year, there once again will be thousands of deaths; they were still in a state of sadness and the *Shechinah* does not rest on one who is not happy. It wasn't until the fifteenth of Av when they came to the realization that there will be no more deaths; that brought about joy and the *Shechinah* came down to Moshe.

Tosfos states that every year there would be a little more than twenty-one thousand deaths. The deaths over twenty-one

thousand totaled fifteen thousand over the duration of the forty years.

The Maharsha and other commentators ask on Tosfos that there were 603,000 people who came out of Egypt, and according to Tosfos, if you make the calculation, it would emerge that over the course of forty years, there will be over eight-hundred thousand deaths.

The Chavos Yair (250) cites from Harav Dovid Oppenheim who explains that any year that Tisha b'Av occurred on Shabbos; there would be no deaths. According to the calendar, it would emerge that there were nine times that this occurred in the Wilderness. It emerges that there were only twenty-eight years that the *Bnei Yisroel* would die. Multiply twenty-one thousand times twenty-eight and that will total five-hundred and eighty eight thousand. The numbers more than twenty-one thousand, over the course of the forty years equaled fifteen thousand and that is how the 603,000 people died.

DAILY MASHAL

Can one with a Family to care for be fully engaged in Torah Study?

Rabbi Shaul of Amsterdam was blessed with a sagacious and learned wife, renowned for her vast knowledge of the Torah even as a young woman. Once she was asked why Tzelofchod's daughters are listed throughout the Torah in the order of their wisdom except in *Mas'ei*, where they are mentioned according to their age. "From my experience", she replied, "as long as I didn't have to care for the house, I kept making strides in my learning but now that I'm married, even what I've learnt is escaping me. Therefore, before they married, Tzelofchod's daughters were counted in the order of their wisdom but afterwards, just in the order of their age" (*Neiros Shabos, Mas'ei*).