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Sanhedrin Daf 93

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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

Rabbi Tanchum bar Chanilai said: When Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah emerged unscathed from the fiery furnace, all the nations of the world came and smote the enemies of Israel upon their faces, saying to them: You have such a God, yet you worship an image! Immediately they [Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah] opened their mouths and confessed: Yours, O Lord, righteousness belongs to you, but ours is the shamefacedness as of this day.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said in Rabbi Yonasan's name: What is meant by: I said, I would be exalted through the palm tree, but I will take hold [only] of the branches? I said, I would be exalted through the palm tree – this refers to Israel; but now I grasped but the one branch of Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

Rabbi Yochanan said: What is meant by: I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the pool, etc.? What means, 'I saw by night'? — The Holy One, Blessed be He, wished to turn the whole world into night, 'but behold, A man riding.' 'Man' can refer to none but the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is written: The Lord is a man of war: the Lord is his name; 'upon a red horse' — the Holy One, Blessed be He, wished to turn the whole world to blood; but as soon as he looked upon Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah His anger was appeased, for it is written: and he stood among [hadassim] the myrtle trees that were in the pool. Now 'hadassim' refers but to the righteous, as it is written: And he [Mordechai] brought up Hadassah; and 'deep' refers to Babylon, as it is said: that says to the deep (tzulah), Be dry, and I will dry up your rivers. Immediately, those filled of wrath, which had become colored and red, became white. Rav Pappa said: This shows that a white horse is a favorable omen in a dream.

Where did the Rabbis go (after this incident)? — Rav said: They died through an evil eye; Shmuel said: They drowned in the spittle; Rabbi Yochanan said: They went up to the Land of Israel, married and fathered sons and daughters.

[This is] as [the dispute] of Tannaim. Rabbi Eliezer said: They died through an evil eye. Rabbi Yehoshua said: They drowned in the spittle. The Sages said: They went up to the Land of Israel, married and fathered sons and daughters, as it is written: Hear now, O Yehoshua the High Priest and your fellows that sit before you, for they are men of miracle. Now for which men was a miracle performed? — Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah.

Where had Daniel gone? — Rav said: To dig a great spring at Tiberias; Shmuel said: To procure animal fodder; Rabbi Yochanan said: To obtain pigs from Alexandria of Egypt.

The Gemora asks: But is that so? For we learned that Todos the doctor said: No cow or pig leaves Alexandria of Egypt without its uterus being cut out, to prevent reproduction.

The Gemora answers: He procured small ones, to which they paid no attention.

Our Rabbis taught: Three were involved in that conspiracy [to keep Daniel out of the furnace]: The Holy One, Blessed be He, Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: Let Daniel depart from here, lest it be said that they were delivered through his merit. Daniel said: Let me go from here, so that I not be a fulfilment of [the Scriptural declaration]: the graven images of their gods shall you burn with fire. While Nebuchadnezzar said: Let Daniel depart, lest people say he



has burnt his god in fire. And from where do we know that he [Nebuchadnezzar] prostrated himself before him [Daniel]? — From the verse: Then the king Nebuchadnezzar fell upon his face, and prostrated himself before Daniel etc.

The Gemara relates how the false prophets Achav ben Kolayah and Tzidkiahu ben Maaseyah sought to equate themselves with Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah, and the subsequent fate of these false prophets: The prophet Yirmiyahu was told: Thus said Hashem Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Achav the son of Kolayah and concerning Tzidkiahu the son of Maaseyah, who prophesy to you in My name falsely, etc. And it is written further: and a curse shall be taken from them by the entire exile of Yehudah which is in Babylon, saying: may Hashem make you like Tzidkiahu and like Achav, whom the king of Babylon scorched in the fire. Now, Scripture does not state whom the king of Babylon “burned,” but rather whom the king of Babylon “scorched.” To explain this, Rabbi Yochanan reported in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yochai: this teaches us that Nebuchadnezzar made them like toasted grain. Scripture continues that Achav and Tzidkiahu were punished so: Because they committed a disgrace in Israel and consorted with the wives of their fellows.... What exactly had they done? They had gone to Nebuchadnezzar’s daughter. Achav said to her: Thus said Hashem: Consent to Tzidkiah when he approaches to lie with you, while Tzidkiah said to her: Thus said Hashem: Consent to Achav when he approaches you. She went and told her father about it. Nebuchadnezzar said to her: I know that the God of these Jews hates immorality. How could it be that He has given them such instructions?! When they come to you again, send them to me. When they came to her, she sent them to her father. He said to them: Who told you to instruct my daughter so? They replied: The Holy One, Blessed is He, instructed us so. Nebuchadnezzar said to them: But I asked Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah about it and they told me that it is absolutely forbidden and God would never say such a thing! Achav and Tzidkiah replied to him: We, too, are prophets just like them: to them, God did not tell it, but to us He did tell it. Achav and Tzidkiah said to him: The test you

propose would not prove anything, because they were three, while we are two, and to be saved from the furnace requires the collective merit of three righteous people. Nebuchadnezzar said to them: Very well. Choose for yourselves anyone you wish to be cast in the furnace together with you. You will then have the collective merit of three! They said: We choose Yehoshua the High Priest, thinking: Let Yehoshua come and join us, for his merit is great and it will shield us from the heat of the furnace. They brought Yehoshua the High Priest down and cast all three of them into the furnace. Achav and Tzidkiah were scorched by the flames and died; and as for Yehoshua the High Priest, his clothes were singed, as it is written: And the angel showed me Yehoshua the High Priest standing before the angel, of God, etc. and the Accuser was standing by his right to accuse him. And it is written in the next verse: And God said to the Accuser: May God rebuke you, O Accuser.... Is this not one a brand saved from the fire? Nebuchadnezzar said to Yehoshua: I know that you are a righteous person, as you personally were not harmed by the flames. So why did the fire have a slight effect on you, singeing your clothes, whereas in the case of Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah, it had no effect on them whatsoever? He replied to Nebuchadnezzar: they were three, whereas I was only one. Their collective merit succeeded in making them totally impervious to the flames. Nebuchadnezzar said to him: But Avraham was a lone individual when Nimrod cast him into the furnace, yet he emerged with even his clothes unscathed by the fire. Yehoshua answered: There, in the case of Avraham, there were no wicked people with him in the furnace, thus no permission was granted to the fire by Heaven to have any effect whatsoever. Here in my case, however, there were wicked people with me in the furnace, thus permission was granted to the fire by Heaven to have an effect and burn them. Once the flames were granted the power to consume, they were also able to singe my clothes. And thus do people say: If you have two dry brands and one that is wet, the two dry ones will ignite the wet one.

The Gemora asks: Why was Yehoshua punished in that his clothes were singed?

The Gemora answers: Rav Pappa said: Because his sons married women who were unfit for the Kehunah and he did not protest against them, as it is written: And Yehoshua was wearing soiled clothes. Now, was it the practice of Yehoshua, who was the High Priest, to wear soiled clothes? Certainly not! Rather, this teaches us that his sons married women who were unfit for the Kehunah, and he did not protest against them.¹

The Gemara presents a Scriptural exposition of Bar Kappara that relates, among other things, to Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah: Rabbi Tanchum said: Bar Kappara expounded in Tzipori: What is the meaning of that which is written:² [Rus] said: These six barleys did he give me? Now, what is meant by six barleys? If you say it means literally “six barleys”, i.e. six kernels of barley-but was it the practice of the wealthy Boaz to give a present as trifling as six barleycorns? Certainly not! And if you say, rather, that it means he gave her six se’ahs of barley, which is a sizeable gift-but is nit the practice of a

¹ This Gemara is fascinating, in that Yehoshua the High Priest was rendered deficient in character by his singed and soiled clothing. This was because his sons married women who were unfit for the Kehunah and he did not protest against them. What is so special about clothes? The Maharsha writes that since the Kohanim are set apart from the rest of the nation by their special priestly vestments, a profaning of their priestly status is symbolized in the prophetic vision by “soiled” clothes.

What is this distinction that the Kohanim (priests) had over everyone else regarding their clothing? The Gemara¹ states: [If you restrain your foot because it is the Sabbath; refrain from accomplishing your own needs on My holy day; if you proclaim the Sabbath ‘a delight’, and the holy day of Hashem ‘honored’], and you honor it by not engaging in your own affairs, [from seeking your own deeds or discussing the forbidden...] and you honor it, that your Shabbos clothing should differ from your weekday clothing, like Rabbi Yochanan who would refer to his clothing as ‘my honors’. Rashi¹ explains that a persons’ clothing honors its wearers.

This Gemara is difficult to grasp. If Rabbi Yochanan referred to his clothing as his honors, what distinction is there between clothing on Shabbos and those worn on the weekday? The answer to this is found in the Gemara on the next page. The Gemara states: [therefore, the Lord, Hashem, Master of legions, will send a leanness among his fatted ones,] and instead of his glory a burning will burn like a blaze of fire. Rabbi Yochanan said, and ‘instead’ of his glory, but not actually his glory. Rabbi Elazar said, and ‘instead’ of his glory, means his actual glory. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said, and ‘instead’ of his glory, akin to the burning of the sons of Aharon. Just like the souls of (Nadav and Avihu) the sons of Aharon were burned and their bodies were left intact, also here it was a burning of the souls and

woman to carry a burden as heavy as six se’ahs of grain? How did Boaz expect Rus to carry that much barley back to her home? Rather, it indeed means that he gave her six barleycorns-not as an ordinary gift but for a symbolic purpose. For he was indicating to her that six sons [i.e. descendants] were destined to descend from her who would each be blessed with six blessings. And these six descendants were: Dovid, and the Moshiach, Daniel, Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah.

The Gemara shows how the six blessings of these six descendants are indicated in Scripture:

The six blessings are indicated in that which is written:³ And one of the retainers spoke up and said: “Behold I have seen a son of Yishai, the Bethlehemite, one who knows how to play [the harp], and one mighty in courage, and a warrior, and understanding in [all] matters, and a man of appealing looks; and Hashem is with him (etc.). Thus, Dovid is described here as being blessed with six qualities. And Rav Yehudah said in

the body was left intact. Rabbi Acha bar Abba said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan, how do we know from the Torah that one should change his clothing? It is said,¹ He shall remove his garments and don other garments. The study house of Rabbi Yishmael learned, the Torah teaches proper conduct: the clothing that a servant wears when he cooks for his master, he should not wear when he pours a cup of wine for his master. Rashi¹ explains that it is considered an honor before Hashem when one changes his clothing. It is not merely the clothing that one wears that is a source of honor for the wearer and his master (Hashem), but the fact that one changes his clothing in honor of his master. The essence of clothing is in the reason one dons his clothing. A person changes his clothing before attending a wedding. This is a sign that he is prepared to show honor to the groom and bride. The same idea follows when one is preparing for Shabbos. Changing ones clothing demonstrates the honor he will bestow upon the Shabbos. And you honor it by not engaging in your own affairs. The whole week we are engaged in our own affairs. The Divine presence is concealed, so to speak, and we are given Shabbos as an opportunity to rinse off the film of materialism that has cloaked us throughout the week.

The Kohanim in the Bais Hamikdash displayed this way of life daily. Their clothing was a symbol for change and renewal. If the kohen would not live up to the standards required of him by the Torah, his clothing would become soiled, such as was the case with Yehoshua the High Priest. We should merit fulfilling the words of Shlomo Hamelech: Let your garments always be white, and your head shall never lack oil.

² Rus 3:17

³ Shmuel I 16:18

the name of Rav: All the praises of Dovid mentioned in this verse were said by Doeg only with an evil tongue. Rav explains what Doeg meant to intimate with each of his praises: *Dovid is one who knows how to play*-he is one who knows how to ask incisive Torah inquiries. *Mighty*-he is one who knows how to answer difficult Torah questions. *A warrior*-he is one who knows how to engage in the give and take of Torah debate. *A man of appealing looks*- he is one who displays the appealing face of his opinions in halachah, i.e. his arguments are convincing. *And understanding in [all] matters*-he is one who understands one matter from his knowledge of another, i.e. he possesses keen deductive abilities. *And Hashem is with him*-this means that the halachah accords with his opinion in every instance. In response to each successive praise of Dovid, Shaul said to them: My son Yonasan is also like him in that regard. Once, however, [Doeg] said to him *and Hashem is with him*, i.e. the halachah always accords with his opinion- a quality that he [Shaul], too, did not have-Shaul became disheartened and jealous of Dovid. And how do we know that Shaul did not possess this quality but Dovid did? For concerning Shaul it is written:⁴ Wherever he would turn, he

would condemn, whereas concerning Dovid it is written:⁵ Wherever he would turn, he would succeed.

The Gemara proves its earlier assertion that “one of the retainers” was Doeg:

From where is it known to us that it was Doeg who praised Dovid to Shaul? It is written here in the verse cited above: *And “one”* of the retainers spoke up, indicating “the outstanding one” among the retainers, and it is written there in another verse:⁶ And there [in Nov] was a man-one of Shaul’s servants-on that day, detained before Hashem, and his name was Doeg the Edomite; the chief of Shaul’s shepherds.

The Gemara now shows how the six blessings of the second descendant of Ruth are indicated in Scripture:

The six blessings of the Moshiach are indicated in that which is written:⁷ And the spirit of Hashem shall rest upon him-a spirit of wisdom and insight, a spirit of counsel and strength, a spirit of understanding and fear of Hashem.⁸

houses. What were these houses? The house of priesthood and the house of kingship. Yocheved took priesthood and kingship. Aharon was the High Priest, and Moshe was the king, as it is said, He became king over Yeshurun... Miriam received wisdom, because from her descendants was Betzalel, and Dovid, who was a king, descended from her, as is said,⁸ [When Azuvah died, Calev married Efras] who bore him Chur. It is said,⁸ Dovid was the son of a certain Ephrathite... this means that Dovid was a descendant of Miriam who was called Efras.

What did Miriam do to merit these great rewards? She performed acts of kindness for her people, by defying Pharaoh’s orders and allowing the Jewish male newborns to live. This “small” feat earned her the highest honor in Jewish history, to be the forerunner of the messianic destiny. Betzalel was blessed with wisdom due to Miriam’s selfless acts on behalf of her people. Boaz demonstrated to Rus that because she forsook her father and mother and the land of her birth, and went to a people whom she had not known yesterday or earlier,⁸ she would merit six descendants who would be blessed with six blessings. The most significant of these descendants is Moshiach, whose wisdom will light up the world.

⁴ Shmuel I 14:47

⁵ Maharsha (see also Rashash) points out that there is no such verse in Scripture. Mesoras HaShas and Eitz Yosef suggest that the Gemara should read: “whereas concerning Dovid it is written (Shmuel I 18:14) And Dovid was successful in all his ways, and Hashem was with him”. [Mesoras HaShas points out that Yalkut’s version of this Gemara entirely omits any citation of these last two verses. Dikdukei Sofrim, too, observes that these verses are not cited in the earliest prints of the Talmud and Ein Yaakov, and first appear in late editions. Rashi’s citation of the Gemara in Eruvin (see note 12) to support our Gemara’s contention would also indicate that his version of our Gemara did not contain any Scriptural support of its own.]

⁶ Shmuel I 21:8

⁷ Yeshaya 11:2

⁸ The Gemara presents a very subtle but profound lesson. Rus had gone to Boaz at her mother-in-law Naomi’s behest. Boaz gave Rus this present so that she not return empty-handed to her mother-in-law. From this apparently trivial episode, the Gemara derives that Rus merited having Moshiach descend from her. This theme is reflected in the building of the Mishkan. It is said: Moshe said to the Children of Israel, “See, Hashem has proclaimed by name, Betzalel son of Uri son of Chur, of the tribe of Yehudah. He filled him with G-dly spirit, with wisdom, insight, and knowledge, and with every craft. The Medrash elaborates on the praise that was bestowed upon Betzalel and remarks, “And all this praise, from where does it come? From the tribe of Yehudah. And from where did Betzalel merit to attain all this wisdom? In the merit of Miriam, as is said, [And it was because the midwives feared Hashem that] He made them

And he shall be inspired [va-haricho] with the fear of Hashem. Rabbi Alexandri said: This teaches us that he loaded him with good deeds and suffering like a millstone. Rava said: He smells [a man] and judges, as it is written: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, yet with righteousness shall he judge the poor.

Bar Koziva reigned two and a half years, and then declared to the Rabbis: I am the Messiah. They answered: Of Messiah it is written that he smells and judges: let us see whether he [Bar Koziva] can do so. When they saw that he was unable to judge by the scent, they slew him.

[The Gemara reverts to the six blessings:] Daniel, Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah, as it is written of them: In whom was no blemish, but good looking, and skillful in all wisdom, and cunning in knowledge, and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace, and whom they might teach the learning and the tongue of the Chaldeans. What is meant by in whom there was no blemish? — Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said: They did not even bear the scar made by bleeding. What is the meaning of and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace? — Rabbi Chama the son of Rabbi Chanina said: This teaches us that they restrained themselves from levity, conversation, and sleep, and suppressed the call of nature out of royal respect.

Bearing this thesis in mind, we can explain a statement in the Medrash regarding the episode of Eliezer seeking a wife for Yitzchak. The Medrash writes, "Rabbi Acha said, the speech of servants in the Patriarchs house is more cherished than the Torah of their (the patriarchs) descendants (the Jewish People). The portion recording the incident of Eliezer finding a wife for Yitzchak is repeated in the Torah, and a teeming creature (*sheret*) which is considered a fundamental of Torah, the law that states that its blood renders impurity like its skin is only derived from a verse.

I always wondered why the Medrash did not reference the Parshiyos of Vayakhel and Pekudei, which are essentially a repetition of Parshiyos Terumah and Tetzaveh. Now it is clear why it does not have to be mentioned. The Mishkan was built through the kindness that Miriam showed to her people. The Gemara states that Betzalel knew the letters by which heaven and earth were created. It is said, for I said, "Forever will

Now among these were of the children of Judah, Daniel, Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah. — R. Elozar said: They were all of the children of Judah; but Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmani said: Daniel was of the tribe of Judah, while Chananiah, Mishael and Azariah were of the other tribes.

The Gemara analyzes another verse said in reference to Daniel, Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah: Scripture states:⁹ and from your sons that will issue from you, that you will bear, they will take to be eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. What is the meaning of the word *eunuchs* in this verse? Rav says: it means that they were actually eunuchs. And Rabbi Chanina says: it means only that idolatry was emasculated in their days.

The Gemara asks: It is well according to the one who says "that idolatry was emasculated in their days" that which is written in regard to Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah:¹⁰ and there is no wound upon them, for-according to this view- they were never physically mutilated. But according to the one who says that they were made into actual eunuchs, what is the meaning of *there is no wound upon them*? How could Nebuchadnezzar say this if they had previously been castrated?

The Gemara answers: Nebuchadnezzar meant only that there was no wound caused by fire upon them.

[Your] kindness be built, which the Gemara interprets to read: Hashem created a world based on kindness. Betzalel was merely mirroring the world that Hashem created. This was a world of kindness. May we merit the reward mentioned in the Medrash. It is said, May Hashem reward your deed, and may your payment be full from Hashem, the G-d of Israel, under Whose wings you have come to seek refuge. Rabbi Chasa said: under Whose wings you have come to seek refuge. Rabbi Abun said: We know that there are wings of the land, wings of the sun, wings of the Chayos, wings of the Keruvim, and wings of the Seraphim. See how great are the strength of the righteous, and the strength of charity, and the strength of those who perform acts of kindness. They do not take refuge under the morning shade, nor under the wings of the land, nor under the wings of the sun, nor under the wings of the Chayos, the Keruvim, or the wings of the Seraphim. Rather, they take refuge in the shadow of the One who created the world, as is said, How precious is Your kindness, O G-d! Mankind takes refuge in the shelter of Your wings.

⁹ Melachim II 20:18 and Yeshaya 39:7

¹⁰ Daniel 3:25

But it is written elsewhere in the passage:¹¹ and even the smoke of the fire had not seeped into them, which already tells us that that they were untouched by the flames. Does not the verse *there is no wound upon them*, then, refer to the absence of any physical defect?

The Gemara answers: No, the purpose of both verses may be to teach that there was neither wound nor smell of smoke upon them.

The Gemara asks: It is well according to the one who says “that idolatry was emasculated in their days” that which is written:¹² thus says Hashem to the eunuchs who will keep my Sabbaths etc. However, according to the one who says that the term as applied Daniel, Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah

¹¹ Ibid verse 27

¹² Yeshaya 56:4

¹³ The discussion in the Gemara centers on the verses that discuss the righteous who are referred to as eunuchs. It is interesting that the Gemara quotes the verse *thus says Hashem to the eunuchs who will keep my Sabbaths*. What is the association between eunuchs and those who keep the Shabbos?

The Medrash states that Yosef kept Shabbos before the Jewish People were instructed regarding Shabbos. The Gemara states that the Avos kept the whole Torah before it was given. What is significant about the fact that Yosef kept Shabbos? Elsewhere, the Medrash¹³ states as follows: *Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it*. Yosef kept the Shabbos, as it is said: [Yosef saw Binyomin with them]; so he said to the one in charge of his house, “bring the men into the house. Have meat slaughtered, and prepare it [for with me will these men dine at noon]. The word *hachein* (prepare it) denotes the Shabbos, as it is said: *and it shall be that on the sixth day when they prepare what they bring, [it will be double what they pick every day]....* Another interpretation of the words *Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it*: Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah kept the Shabbos as it is said *thus says Hashem to the eunuchs who will keep my Sabbaths*.

It is clear from the Medrash that the ideas that Yosef kept the Shabbos and that the eunuchs kept the Shabbos are related. What is the connection?

The Zohar states that the verse thus says Hashem to the eunuchs who will keep my Sabbaths is a reference to Jewish scholars who refrain from

means that they were actual eunuchs, would the verse speak disparagingly of the righteous?

The Gemara answers: Rav will hold that both were true of them, i.e. they were called “eunuchs” because of their literal mutilation as well as because idolatry was emasculated in their days.¹³

Rabbi Chanina’s opinion is challenged: It is well according to the one who says “they were actual eunuchs” that which is written:¹⁴ and I will give them within My house and walls a monument and memorial better than sons and daughters. Such assurance is appropriate to actual eunuchs, who cannot achieve earthly continuity through children. But according to the one who says “that idolatry was emasculated in their

having marital relations during the week and cohabitately only on Shabbos. What is the simple understanding of the words of the Zohar? Concerning Shabbos, we recite in the Tefillah on Shabbos morning: *You did not give it, Hashem, our G-d, to the nations of the lands, nor did You make it the inheritance, our King, of the worshippers of graven idols. And in its contentment the uncircumcised shall not abide- for to Israel, Your people, have You given it in love, to the seed of Yaakov, whom You have chosen.*

We say that *And in its contentment the uncircumcised shall not abide- for to Israel, Your people, have You given it in love, to the seed of Yaakov, whom You have chosen*. It is not merely the nations of the land and those who worship idols who cannot observe the Shabbos. Those who are uncircumcised, i.e. those who have not subjugated their desires to the service of Hashem, are unfit to honor and keep the Shabbos. Yosef was the paradigm of holiness, as he did not succumb to the temptations of Potipahr’s wife. Yosef demonstrated to his brothers that he had retained his holiness in Mitzrayim, the apex of immorality. He showed them that he was circumcised. This is why Yosef is distinguished as having kept Shabbos in Mitzrayim. The verse that reflects this idea is thus says Hashem to the eunuchs who will keep my Sabbaths. The Zohar interprets this verse as referring to those who restrain their desires. They are the ones who can honor and keep the Shabbos.

We should consider ourselves fortunate to be amongst those who Hashem bestowed the privilege of keeping the Shabbos. If we maintain our sanctity, then we will merit being servants in the palace of Hashem, on the day that will be completely a Shabbos and rest day for eternal life.

¹⁴ Yeshaya 56:5

days,” but they were not actual eunuchs, what is the assurance *better than sons and daughters* doing in this verse?

The Gemara answers: Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: The verse means: greater than the children they had previously, who had died.

The Gemara further expounds the verse just cited: What is the meaning of the conclusion of the verse just cited: *an everlasting name I will give him, which will not be cut off?* Rabbi Tanchum said: Bar Kappara expounded in Tzipori: This refers to the Book of Daniel, which was named after him and thus gave him an everlasting name¹⁵.

Having given a reason why the Book of Daniel is named for him, the Gemara digresses to discuss why a different book was not named for its author:

Now, let us see. All the matters of the Book of Ezra were said [i.e. authored] by Nechemia the son of Chachaliah. So why, then, is the book not named after Nechemia the son of Chachaliah, its author? Rabbi Yirmiah bar Abba said: It was not named for Nechemiah because he took personal credit for his achievements, as it is stated:¹⁶ Remember me, my G-d, for good.

The Gemara asks: But surely Dovid, too, said:¹⁷ Remember me, O Hashem, when You favor Your people; think of me at Your salvation. -? –

The Gemara answers: Dovid was simply appealing for Divine mercy.

Rav Yosef advances a different reason for Nechemiah’s punishment: Rav Yosef says: Nechemiah’s book was not called by his name because he spoke disparagingly of the earlier

ones, i.e. the governors that preceded him. For it is stated:¹⁸ And thee earlier governors who preceded me burdened the people and took from them [taxes] in [the form of] bread and wine, after [taking] forty silver shekels, etc. but I did not do so, for fear of G-d. And even against Daniel, who was clearly greater than he, did he speak. And from where in Scripture do we know that Daniel was greater than he? For it is written:¹⁹ And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, whereas the men who were with me did not see the vision; yet a great fear fell upon them, and they fled into hiding. The verse stated: *and the men who were with me did not see the vision*. Now, who were these men? Rabbi Yirmiyah said, and some say it was Rabbi Chiya bar Abba who said: This refers to the prophets Chaggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

The Gemara adds incidentally: In one way they [Chaggai, Zechariah and Malachi] were superior to him [Daniel], and in another way he was superior to them. They were superior to him in that they were prophets whereas he was not a prophet. And he was superior to them in that he saw the vision and they did not see the vision.

The Gemara returns to the verse cited above in order to explain a point. The Gemara asks: Now since they [Chaggai, Zechariah, and Malachi] did not see the vision, why were they frightened?

The Gemara answers: Even though they did not see anything, their mazal did see the vision. Ravina commented: Learn from this that when one becomes frightened for no apparent reason, even though he has not seen the cause of his fear, his mazal has seen it.

The Gemara continues: What is his remedy? How can he defend himself against this threat that he senses but cannot see? He should jump four amos from his place. Alternatively,

¹⁵ The Book of Daniel was written by the Men of The Great Assembly (Bava Basra 15a). Nonetheless, the Gemara is stating that it is called “Daniel” in order to provide with him an everlasting name. Bar Kappara’s exposition of this verse as a reference specifically to Daniel [rather than to Chananyah, Mishael and Azaryah] is based on [the shift from the plural

used at the beginning of the verse- *And I will give to “them” – to] the singular used at the end- *I will give to him*. (Rashi)*

¹⁶ Nechemiah 5:19, 13:31

¹⁷ Tehillim 106:4

¹⁸ Nechemiah 5:15

¹⁹ Daniel 10:7



he should recite Krias Shema. And if he is standing in a place of filth, where it is prohibited to recite Krias Shema, he should say the following incantation: "The goat at the slaughterhouse is fatter than I".²⁰

3. Grasp My covenant tightly

²⁰ The Gemara states that *an everlasting name I will give him, which will not be cut off* refers to the Book of Daniel, which was named after him and thus gave him an everlasting name. What is the association between an everlasting name and a book being named after him? Although a book will be read by future generations, this does not necessarily constitute an everlasting name.

These three fundamentals were the basic principles that the Patriarchs lived by. They all kept the Shabbos²⁰, they choose to keep the Torah that is referred to as Hashem's desire, and they kept Hashem's covenant, which is the mitzvah of circumcision. Although Daniel was not unique in keeping these basic tenets, he was distinguished in the area of prayer, as it is said:²⁰ *When Daniel learned that the writing had been inscribed, he went home. He had windows open in his upper story, facing Jerusalem, and three times a day he fell to his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his G-d, exactly as he used to do before this.* It is evident that Daniel did not view prayer merely as a benefit for himself. Rather, Daniel prayed three times daily because this was the tradition of the Jewish People since the time of the Patriarchs. This is the meaning of the words: *exactly as he used to do before this.* Daniel upheld the tradition of his forefathers.

It is important to understand a verse in the Torah where it is said: *he blessed Yosef and he said, O G-d before whom my forefathers Avraham and Yitzchak walked-G-d who shepherds me from my inception until this day. May the angel who redeems me from all evil bless the lads, and may my name be declared upon them, and the names of my forefathers Avraham and Yitzchak, and may they proliferate abundantly like fish within the land.* What is meant by the words *and may my name be declared upon them*?

The Gemara offered two opinions as to why the Book of Ezra was not named after Nechemiah. One opinion was because he took personal credit for his achievements. The second opinion was because he spoke disparagingly of the earlier ones, i.e. the governors that preceded him. It is fascinating that both these interpretations reflect on the fact that Nechemiah did not sufficiently respect his predecessors. Instead of taking personal credit for his achievements, he should have attributed his success to the merit of his forefathers. He certainly did not demonstrate proper respect by speaking disparagingly of his predecessors. This is why the Book of Ezra was not named after Nechemiah. Daniel, however, maintained the proper respect for his forefathers and followed completely in their tradition. This is why Daniel merited that the Book of Daniel was named after him.

We often believe that a name is a sign of prestige, as the custom is to memorialize a deceased person with a plaque bearing his or her name. A firm or institution that bears a distinguished name usually reflects a prominent status in society. The Torah, however, has a different approach to status and eminence. If a Jew bears the name of his forebears, and in particular the patriarchs, then he is truly considered illustrious. The Medrash²⁰ states that a person is obligated to declare: "when will my actions reach those of my forefathers, Avrohom, Yitzchak, and Yaakov"? One may never truly reach the level of piety and righteousness that Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov attained. Nonetheless, it is said:²⁰ *The might and vengeance of G-d was salvation for me. This is my G-d and I will build Him a Sanctuary; the G-d of my father and I will exalt him.* Rashi²⁰ writes that the meaning of the words *the G-d of my father* is that I am not the source of holiness. Rather, the holiness and G-dliness is ingrained in me from my forefathers.

When one respects the tradition of his forefathers, he is allowing their name to be declared upon him. This is truly a name of respect and dignity. This is the reason that Yaakov blessed Yosef and his sons: *and may my name be declared upon them, and the names of my forefathers Avraham and Yitzchak, and may they proliferate abundantly like fish within the land.* If they will follow in the footsteps of their forefathers, then they will *proliferate abundantly like fish within the land.* The Gemara²⁰ states that just as it is true of fish in the sea that water covers them and thus the eye has no power over them, so too is it true regarding the progeny of Yosef: the evil eye has no power over them. Yosef emulated all the actions of Yaakov, and he merited this blessing. One has to humble himself to follow and respect the tradition of his forefathers, and then he will merit a monument and memorial better than sons and daughters.

It is said: *For thus said Hashem to the barren ones who observe My Sabbaths and choose what I desire, and grasp My covenant tightly: In My house and within My walls I will give them a place of honor and renown, which is better than sons and daughters; eternal renown will I give them, which will never be terminated.* There are three precepts of the Torah mentioned in this verse:

1. Observe My Sabbaths
2. Choose what I desire