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Pesachim Daf 118

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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

MISHNAH. They mixed [and poured] the third cup for him. He then recites Bircas Hamazon. Over the fourth [cup] he concludes the Hallel, and recites the “Blessing of the song.” Between these cups he may drink if he wishes; between the third and the fourth he may not drink. (117b4)

GEMARA: Rav Chanan said to Rava: This proves that Bircas Hamazon requires a cup [of wine]. Said he to him: Our Rabbis instituted four cups as symbolizing freedom: let us perform a mitzvah with each.¹ (117b4 – 117b5)

Over the fourth [cup] he concludes the Hallel, and recites the “Blessing of the song.” What is the “Blessing of the song”? Rav Yehudah said: “[your works] shall praise You, Hashem, our God”; while Rabbi Yochanan said: “The soul of every living [etc.]”. (117b5 – 118a1)

Our Rabbis taught: At the fourth [cup] he concludes the Hallel and recites the great Hallel; this is the view of Rabbi Tarfon. Others say: God is my shepherd; I shall not want.’

What comprises the great Hallel? Rabbi Yehudah said: From ‘Give thanks’ until ‘the rivers of Babylon.’ While Rabbi Yochanan said: From ‘A song of ascents’ until ‘the rivers of Babylon.’ Rav Acha bar Yaakov said: From ‘for God has chosen Yaakov unto himself’ until ‘the rivers of Babylon.’ And why is it called the great Hallel? — Said Rabbi Yochanan: Because the Holy One, Blessed be He, sits in the heights of the universe and distributes food to all creatures.²

¹ Hence Bircas Hamazon is recited over the third. But on other occasions a cup may not be required for Bircas Hamazon.

² Which is a great thing indeed, and for that He is praised by the reciting of the great Hallel.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: To what do these twenty-six [verses of] ‘Give thanks’ correspond? To the twenty-six generations which the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in His world; though He did not give them the Torah, He sustained them by His love.³

Rav Chisda said: What is meant by the verse, Give thanks to Hashem, for He is good? Give thanks to Hashem who exacts man's debts by means of His goodness: the wealthy man through his ox and the poor man through his sheep,⁴ the fatherless through his egg and the widow through her fowl.

Rabbi Yochanan said: Man's sustenance involves twice as much suffering as [that of] a woman in childbirth. For of a woman in childbirth it is written, in pain [be-’etzev — you shall bring forth children], whereas of sustenance it is written, in toil [be-’itzavon — shall you eat]. Rabbi Yochanan also said: Man's sustenance is more difficult [to come by] than the redemption, for of redemption it is written, the angel who has redeemed me from all evil, thus a mere angel [sufficed], whereas of sustenance it is written, the God who has fed [shepherded] me. (118a1 - 118a2)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: When the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Adam, ‘Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to you,’ tears flowed from his eyes, and he pleaded before Him, ‘Sovereign of the Universe! Shall I and my donkey eat out of the same trough!’ But as soon as He said

³ There were twenty-six generations from Adam until Moshe. These, lacking the Torah, could not be sustained through their own merit but only through God's love.

⁴ When people must suffer loss in expiation of wrong, the loss is regulated according to their means.

to him, 'In the sweat of your face shall you eat bread,' his mind was set at rest. Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said: Happy are we that we did not remain subject to the first! Abaye observed: Yet we have still not [altogether] escaped from it, for we eat herbs of the field. (118a2)

Rav Shizbi said in the name of Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah: A man's sustenance is as difficult [to provide] as the dividing of the Reed Sea, for it is written, Who gives food to all flesh, and near it, To Him who divided the Reed Sea in parts. Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah said: Constipation is as painful as the day of death and [as difficult to overcome] as the dividing of the Reed Sea, for it is said, That which is closed will be quick to open, and that is followed by [For I am Hashem, your God,] Who split the sea, and its waves raged. (118a2 – 118a3)

And Rav Sheishes said on the authority of Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah: He who degrades the Festivals is as though he engaged in idolatry, for it is said, You shall not make for yourself molten gods, which is followed by, The Festival of matzos shall you keep. Rav Sheishes also said on the authority of Rabbi Elozar ben Azaryah: Whoever speaks derogatorily of another, and whoever accepts slander, and whoever gives false testimony against his neighbor, deserve to be cast to dogs, for it is said, you shall cast to the dogs, which is followed by, You shall not take up a false report, which may be read [lo sasi] – do not cause a vain report to be accepted. (118a3)

Now since there is the great Hallel, why do we recite this one? Because it includes [a mention of] the following five things: The exodus from Egypt, the dividing of the Reed Sea, the giving of the Torah [Revelation], the resurrection of the dead, and the travails of the Messiah. The exodus from Egypt, as it is written, When Israel came forth out of Egypt; as the dividing of the Reed Sea: The sea saw it, and fled; the giving of the Torah: The mountains skipped like rams; resurrection of the dead: I shall walk before Hashem [in the land of the living]; the travails of the Messiah: Not for our sake, Hashem, not for our sake. Rabbi Yochanan also said: 'Not for our sake, Hashem, not for our sake' refers to the servitude to [foreign]

powers. Others state, Rabbi Yochanan said: 'Not for our sake, Hashem, not for our sake' refers to the war of Gog and Magog.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: [Hallel is recited] because it contains [an allusion to] the deliverance of the souls of the righteous from Gehinnom, as it is said, Please Hashem, deliver my soul. Chizkiyah said: Because it alludes to the descent of the righteous into the fiery furnace and their ascent from it. 'Their descent,' for it is written, 'Not for our sake, Hashem, not for our sake': [this] Chananyah said; 'But for Your Name's sake give glory' was said by Mishael; For Your kindness and for Your truth, by Azaryah; Why should the nations say? by all of them. 'Their ascent from the fiery furnace,' for it is written, Praise Hashem, all nations; [this] Chananyah said; Praise Him, all the states, was said by Mishael; For His mercy has overwhelmed us, by Azaryah; 'And the truth of Hashem endures forever,' by all of them. Others maintain [that] it was Gavriel who said, 'And the truth of Hashem endures forever.' [For] when the wicked Nimrod cast our father Avraham into the fiery furnace, Gavriel said to the Holy One, Blessed be He: 'Sovereign of the Universe! Let me go down, cool [it], and deliver that righteous man from the fiery furnace.' Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, to him: 'I am unique in My world, and he is unique in his world: it is fitting for Him who is unique to deliver him who is unique. But because the Holy One, Blessed be He, does not withhold the [merited] reward of any creature, he said to him, 'You shall be privileged to deliver three of his descendants.'

Rabbi Shimon the Shilonite lectured: When the wicked Nevuchadnezzar cast Chananyah, Mishael, and Azaryah into the fiery furnace, Yurkami, the ministering angel of hail, rose before the Holy One, Blessed be He, and said to Him: 'Sovereign of the Universe! Let me go down and cool the furnace and save these righteous men from the fiery furnace.' Said Gavriel to him, 'The might of the Holy One, Blessed be He, is not thus [manifested], for you are the ministering angel of hail, and all know that water extinguishes fire. But I, the ministering angel of fire, will go

down and cool it within and burn from without,⁵ and will thus perform a double miracle. Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, to him, 'Go down.' It was then that Gavriel commenced [with praise] and said, 'And the truth of Hashem endures forever.'

Rabbi Nassan said: It was the fish in the sea who said, 'and the truth of Hashem endures forever,' this being in accordance with Rav Huna. For Rav Huna said: The Israelites of that generation [sc. of the Egyptian exodus] were men of little faith, and as Rabbah bar Mari expounded: What is taught by the verse, But they were rebellious at the sea, even at the Reed Sea? This teaches that in that moment the Israelites were rebellious and said: Just as we ascend at one side [of the sea] so do the Egyptians ascend from another. Whereupon the Holy One, Blessed be He, ordered the ministering angel of the sea, 'Spit them out on to the dry land.' Said he to Him, 'Sovereign of the Universe! Does a master make a gift to his servant and then take it back from him!' He replied, 'I will give you one and a half times their number.' 'Sovereign of the Universe, he pleaded, 'can a servant claim [a debt] from his Master!' 'Let the brook of Kishon be a guarantor for Me,' He answered. Straightway he spewed them forth on to the dry land, and Israel came and saw them, as it is said, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the sea-shore. What is [this allusion to] 'one and a half times their number'? For in the case of Pharaoh it is written, [and he took] six hundred chosen chariots, whereas in the case of Sisera it is written, [And Sisera gathered . . .] nine hundred chariots of iron. When Sisera came [to fight Israel] he advanced against them with iron staves. Thereupon the Holy One, Blessed be He, brought forth the stars out of their orbits against them, as it is written, The stars in their courses fought against Sisera. As soon as the stars of heaven descended upon them they heated those iron staves. So they went down to cool them and to refresh themselves in the brook of Kishon. Said the Holy One, Blessed be He, to the brook of Kishon, 'Go and deliver your pledge.' Straightway the brook

of Kishon swept them out and cast them into the sea, as it is said, The brook Kishon swept them away, that ancient brook. What does 'that ancient brook' mean? The brook that became a guarantor in ancient times. In that hour the fish in the sea opened [their mouths] and exclaimed, 'and the truth of Hashem endures forever.' (118a3 – 118b2)

Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish said, What does it mean 'Who makes the barren woman [akeres] into a happy mother of children'?⁶ The congregation of Israel said before the Holy One, Blessed be He, 'Sovereign of the Universe! Your sons have made me like a weasel that dwells in the foundation of houses.'⁷ Rava lectured, What does it mean, I love that Hashem should hear [my voice and my supplications]? The congregation of Israel said: Sovereign of the Universe! When am I loved by You? When You hear the voice of my supplications. 'I was brought low [dallosi], and He saved me.' The congregation of Israel spoke before the Holy One, Blessed be He, Sovereign of the Universe! Though I am poor [dallah] in mitzvos, yet I am Yours, and it is fitting that I should be saved.

Rav Kahana said: When Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Yosi fell sick, Rebbe sent to him: Tell us two or three things which you have said to us in your father's name. He sent back to him, Thus did my father say: What is meant by the verse, Praise Hashem, all nations: What business have the nations of the world here?⁸ This is its meaning: 'Praise Hashem, all nations' for the mighty and wondrous deeds which He wrought for them; all the more we, since 'His mercy is great toward us.' Furthermore [he sent word to him]: Egypt is destined to bring a gift to the Messiah. He will think not to accept it from them, but the Holy One, Blessed be He, will instruct him, 'Accept it from them: they furnished hospitality to My children in Egypt.' Immediately, 'Nobles shall come out of Egypt [bringing gifts]. Then Cush shall argue a kal vachomer with herself: If those [the Egyptians] who enslaved them are thus

⁵ To burn those who threw them into it.

⁶ That is the literal translation; our Gemara interprets it homiletically: who transforms the foundation of the house.

⁷ The congregation of Israel is personified here as a woman, as often, and she complains that through the sins of her less worthy children she is

ashamed of the daylight but must hide like the weasels in the dark foundations of houses.

⁸ Why should they praise God because 'His mercy is great toward us'?

[treated], how much the more we, who did not enslave them! At that the Holy One, Blessed be He, shall bid him: 'Accept it from them.' Straightway, 'Cush shall hasten to stretch out her hands unto God.' Then shall the wicked Roman Empire argue a kal vachomer with herself: If those who are not their brethren are thus [accepted], how much the more we, their brethren.⁹ But the Holy One, Blessed be He, will say to Gavriel: Rebuke the wild beast of the reeds [kaneh]; the multitude of [adas] the bulls: rebuke the wild beast [Rome] and take possession [keneh] of the congregation [edah]. Another interpretation: rebuke the wild beast of the reeds, i.e., that dwells among the reeds, as it is written, The boar out of the wood does ravage it, that which moves in the field feeds on it.¹⁰ Rabbi Chiya bar Abba interpreted it in Rabbi Yochanan's name: Rebuke the wild beast all of whose actions may be recorded with the same pen.¹¹ 'The multitude of the bulls [abbirim], with the calves of the people': that means that they slaughtered the valiant [abbirim] like calves which have no owners. 'Everyone opening his hand with the desire of money': they stretch out their hand to accept the money, but do not carry out its owners' wishes. 'He has scattered the people that delight in approaches': what caused Israel to be scattered among the nations? The approaches [to the nations] which they desired.

He also sent to him: There are three hundred and sixty-five thoroughfares in the great city of Rome, and in each there were three hundred and sixty-five towers; and in each palace there were three hundred and sixty-five steps, and each step contained sufficient to provide the whole world with food. Rabbi Shimon ben Rebbe asked Rebbe — others say, Rabbi Yishmael son of Rabbi Yosi asked Rebbe — For whom are all these [other steps]? — For you, your companions and acquaintances, as it is said, And her gain and her hire shall be holiness to Hashem, it shall not be stored nor treasured; for her gain shall be for them that dwell before Hashem. What does 'it shall not be stored' mean? — Rav Yosef learned: 'It shall not be stored' refers to a storehouse [granary]; 'nor

treasured,' to a treasure house. What does it mean 'for them that dwell before Hashem'? — Said Rabbi Elozar: They who recognize their colleagues' place in the academy. Others state, Rabbi Elozar said: They who welcome their colleagues in the academy. What does 'and for one who covers the ancient' [li-mechasseh atik] mean? That refers to he who 'conceals' [mechasseh] the things which the Ancient [atik] of Days concealed. And what is that? The secrets of the Torah. Others explain: That refers to he who reveals the things which the Ancient of Days concealed [kissah]. And what is it? The reasons of the Torah. (118b2 – 119a1)

INSIGHT TO THE DAF

Why is making a living compared to the splitting of the Yam Suf? In his introduction to one of the volumes of Revivos Efraim, Rav Efraim Greenblatt Shlita records an answer that his father gave to the question above. When Bnei Yisroel were at the Yam Suf, Chazal tell us that they were surrounded on all sides with seemingly insurmountable obstacles. A deadly desert on one side, areas with deadly animals on the other, the Egyptians charging them on another side, and the Yam Suf. When thinking of how their salvation would come about, crossing the Yam Suf was the last thing on their minds. They thought that perhaps the "Ananei Ha'Kavod" – "Clouds of Glory" would smooth their way in one of the other two directions, or perhaps they would be helped by Hashem to defeat the Egyptians. They never thought their salvation would come through crossing the Yam Suf. So is it with making a living. Often a person has plans that he will be successful in this way or that way. However, Hashem often shows him that his parnassah salvation will come in a way that he least expected. As long as we believe and put our trust in Hashem, that miraculous unexpected option is always possible.

DAILY MASHAL

The Yam Suf, the Duke and the Loan

⁹ As they are descendants of Esav.

¹⁰ Kaneh is now interpreted as the cane reeds of the forest, the boar (or, swine) being Rome.

¹¹ Kaneh is now connected with the same word meaning feather, quill. — All their activities are of the same nature — evil to Israel.

During the difficult sojourn of the Jewish people in Europe, we were often forbidden from owning land or holding many different professions. As such, many Jews made their livelihood by lending money to gentiles. Collecting debts from the often belligerent gentiles was no simple matter. On one occasion, a Russian nobleman approached Reuven, a Jew who lived in his province, and asked for a large sum of money as a loan. Reuven realized that it was very unlikely he would ever see the loan repaid. When the payment came due, he would not risk his life by demanding the money. Yet on the other hand, refusing the request could also entail dire consequences. Instead, he approached his friend, Shimon, and asked him to loan the money to the nobleman. Shimon expressed the same concerns, so Reuven quickly assured him that he would sign as a guarantor. That way, Shimon would be assured to regain the money. Sure enough, the nobleman failed to repay the loan. When Shimon approached Reuven and asked him to make good on his guarantee, Reuven refused, offering the following excuse. The Gemara outlines two kinds of guarantors, *arev* and *arev kablán*. When a cosigner agrees to be a simple *arev*, the lender must first demand his money from the borrower. If the borrower fails to pay, the lender may then approach the *arev*. When a cosigner agrees to be an *arev kablán*, the lender may go directly to him to demand his money, without first confronting the borrower. Reuven claimed that he never agreed to be an *arev kablán*. "Go demand your money from the nobleman," he said. "If he refuses to pay, I will gladly make good on my guarantee." This was of course a hollow offer, since Reuven knew well that Shimon would not dare confront the nobleman. To this, Shimon replied that he had obviously intended to make Reuven an *arev kablán*. The whole reason that Reuven did not want to lend the money himself was because he knew that they could never confront the nobleman. Shimon also was scared to confront him, and for this reason took Reuven as a guarantor, so that he would not need to do so. Their case was sent to R' Shalom Mordechai Shvadron *zt"l*, author of *Teshuvos Maharsham* and grandfather and namesake of the famed *darshan* of our own generation, R' Shalom Shvadron *zt"l*. The Maharsham (II, 158) answered by citing a fascinating aggadata in our sugya,

in which we find a debate between the Yam Suf and Hashem, as it were. Whether we are meant to understand this debate literally, or if it symbolizes some deep secret of the Torah, is beyond the scope of this article. However it may be, we can learn a halachic inference from here to resolve the case in question.

The Gemara interprets the possuk, "They rebelled by the Yam Suf" (Tehillim 106:7) to mean that the Yam Suf itself hesitated to fulfill Hashem's command. After the Egyptians had drowned in the Yam Suf, Hashem commanded it to spit out their bodies on the seashore, in order that Bnei Yisroel would see their oppressors dead, and not fear that they were still being chased. "Does a master give a gift to his servant, and then ask for its return?" asked the sea. The Yam Suf wanted to keep the bodies of the Egyptians as food for its fish (Rashi s.v. *She'nassan*). Hashem assured the Yam Suf that He would repay it with one and a halftimes what He took. "Does a servant dare demand payment from his master?" asked the sea. Hashem then assured it that the Kishon River would be His guarantor. The Yam Suf agreed and spat out the bodies of the Egyptians. Years later, when Sisera waged war against Eretz Yisroel, Hashem caused a giant wave to drown his soldiers, and carry them down the Kishon River into the Yam Suf.

The Gemara does not specify that the Kishon River was an *arev kablán*. Rather, it seems that the river was a regular *arev*. If so, how did this guarantee appease the Yam Suf, which had complained, "Does a servant dare demand payment from its master?" Unable to demand payment from Hashem first, it would be unable to demand from the river. The Maharsha asks this question, and deduces from here that in a case where the lender cannot demand payment from his master, the guarantor is automatically assumed to act as an *arev kablán*, even if he did not explicitly agree to this. The same is true of Shimon's loan to the duke. Since Reuven knew that Shimon would be unable to demand payment from the duke, it was automatically assumed that Reuven would be an *arev kablán* who may be approached first.