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Megillah Daf 4

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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

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: Lod, Ono and Gei Hecharashim were cities that have been surrounded by walls from the time of Yehoshua.

Rabbi Elozar explains that these cities were surrounded by walls in the times of Yehoshua. They were subsequently destroyed during the *Pilegesh b'Givah* incident. Elpeal rebuilt them. They again fell and Asa came and rebuilt them. (4a)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi ruled: It is obligatory for women to hear the reading of the Megillah, because they benefited also by the same miracle (*Haman's decree to kill all the Jewish people included the women*). (4a)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi ruled: If Purim falls on a Shabbos and thereby the Megillah is read earlier, there is nevertheless an obligation to publicly lecture about Purim.

The Gemora asks: Isn't this true regarding all the festivals? Wasn't it taught in a braisa that Moshe ordained that we should publicly lecture on the duties of each day? We must lecture on the halachos of Pesach on Pesach, the halachos of Shavuos on Shavuos and the halachos of Sukkos on Sukkos.

The Gemora answers that it was necessary to teach this halachah regarding Purim since one might have thought that on Shabbos, the public lectures pertaining to Purim should be prohibited on the account of Rabbah's decree (Rabbah decreed that the Megillah should not be read on Shabbos since one might carry it four amos in a public domain). Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi teaches us that such a precautionary measure is not taken regarding the public lecture. (4a)

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi cites a Scriptural verse demonstrating that one is obligated to read the Megillah on the night of Purim and repeat it on the day of Purim.

It was also stated by Rabbi Chelbo in the name of Ulla from Biri: One is obligated to read the Megillah on the night of Purim and repeat it on the day of Purim, as it is said: So that my soul might sing (about the miracle of Purim) to You (referring to the day) and not be stilled (by night), Hashem my God, forever will I thank You. (4a)

The Mishna had stated that the Megillah is read on the fourteenth of Adar but the villagers may advance to the day of the gathering.

Rabbi Chanina said: The sages were lenient for the inhabitants of villages to read on the days of gathering, so that they will be available on the fourteenth to supply water and food for their brothers who live in the large towns.

The Gemora states that it emerges according to Rabbi Chanina; this leniency was enacted for the benefit of the people residing in the large towns. If so, the Gemora asks, why does our Mishna state that if the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Monday, villages and large towns read on that day; according to Rabbi Chanina, the villagers should advance their reading to the Thursday before?

The Gemora answers that the Thursday before would be the tenth of Adar and that is not a possible date to read the Megillah.

The Gemora asks on Rabbi Chanina from a different case in our Mishna. The Mishna rules that if the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Thursday, villages and large towns read on that day; according to Rabbi Chanina, the villagers should advance their reading to the Monday before, which is the eleventh of Adar (and a possible day to read the Megillah)?

The Gemora answers that the sages did not move the reading of the Megillah from one day of gathering to another.

The Gemora asks on Rabbi Chanina from a Mishna below (5a). Rabbi Yehudah states that the ordinance (*of reading the Megillah early*) was only in those places where the people from the villages came to the towns on Mondays and Thursdays; but in the places where they do not enter the towns, the

Megillah is only read in its main time. If the reason for the leniency was for the benefit of the townspeople, why would the fact that the villagers don't enter the towns prevent us from helping the townspeople?

This is a successful challenge to our initial understanding of Rabbi Chanina. The Gemora clarifies Rabbi Chanina's viewpoint: The sages were lenient for the inhabitants of villages to read on the days of gathering because they supply water and food for their brothers who live in the large towns and this way, they would not be compelled to make another trip into the city on the fourteenth. (4a – 4b)

The Mishna had stated that if the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Monday, villages and the large towns read on that day, etc.

The Gemora asks: Why does the former part of the Mishna follow the order of the days of the month, and the latter part of the Mishna follows the order of the days of the week?

The Gemora answers: If the latter part of the Mishna were to follow the order of the days of the month, the days of the week would be in the reverse order; therefore, the Tanna follows the order of the days of the week. (4b)

The Mishna had stated that if the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Friday, villages advance to the day of gathering, and the large towns and those surrounded by a wall read on that day.

The Gemora states that the Mishna can be following the opinion of Rebbe or the opinion of Rabbi Yosi.

The Gemora explains by citing a braisa: If the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Friday, villages and the

large towns advance to the day of gathering, and those surrounded by a wall read on that day. Rebbe maintains that the large towns are not moved from their regular spot and they read on Friday, the fourteenth.

They both derive their opinions from the verse [Esther 9:27]: *in each and every year*. The Tanna Kamma maintains that just as every year large towns precede walled cities in the reading of the Megillah, so too in this case, the large towns must precede the walled cities and since the walled cities must read on Friday, the fourteenth, the large towns advance to Thursday. Rebbe learns from the same verse that just as every year the large towns do not move from their regular spot, so too in this case, the large towns read on Friday.

The Gemora cites a different braisa: If the fourteenth of Adar falls on a Friday, cities that are surrounded by a wall and villages advance to the day of gathering, and the large towns read on that day. Rabbi Yosi maintains that the walled cities can never precede the large towns and therefore the large towns and those surrounded by a wall read on Friday, the fourteenth.

They both derive their opinions from the verse [Esther 9:27]: *in each and every year*. The Tanna Kamma maintains that just as every year large towns and cities surrounded by a wall read on two different days, so too in this case, the large towns read on that day and the walled cities advance to the day of gathering. Rabbi Yosi learns from the same verse that just as every year the walled cities do not precede the large towns, so too in this case, the walled cities

cannot precede the large towns and they both read on Friday.

It emerges that the Tanna of our Mishna can follow either Rebbe's opinion or that of Rabbi Yosi.

The Gemora presents a contradiction regarding Rebbe's viewpoint. In the braisa cited above, Rebbe maintained that the unwalled cities do not move to the day of gathering; yet Rebbe is quoted in a different braisa regarding a case where the fourteenth of Adar falls on Shabbos. The Tanna Kamma holds that the villages advance and read on the day of gathering, the large towns advance and read on Friday and the walled cities read on Sunday, the fifteenth. Rebbe maintains that once the large towns move from their regular spot, they move to the day of gathering.

The Gemora answers that the only reason the large towns are moved to the day of the gathering is because they are not reading on their regular day anyway; in such a case we move them to the day of the gathering. In the former case, where the fourteenth falls out on Friday, there is no reason to advance the large towns to the day of the gathering. (4b)

All the Tannaim agree that the Megillah must not be read on Shabbos. Rabbah explains: Since everyone is obligated to read the Megillah, but not all are able to read it; the Rabbis issued a decree not to read the Megillah on Shabbos as a precautionary measure, lest one take the Megillah in his hand and go with it to an expert to learn to read it, and at the same time he will carry four amos in a public domain. This is the same reason why we do not blow the shofar on Rosh



Hashanah when it falls on Shabbos, and we do not shake the lulav on Sukkos when it falls on Shabbos.

Rabbi Yosi offered another reason: It is because the poor anxiously wait for the day when the Megillah is read to receive gifts which are usually allocated when the Megillah is read. Since the money cannot be distributed to the poor on Shabbos, they moved the reading of the Megillah to a different day. (4b)

## INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

### THE OBLIGATION OF WOMEN TO READ THE MEGILLAH

➤ Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi ruled: It is obligatory for women to hear the reading of the Megillah, because they benefited also by the same miracle (*Haman's decree to kill all the Jewish people included the women*).

The Rishonim dispute whether a woman can read the Megillah and discharge the obligation for a man. Rashi (Eruchin 3a) maintains that she could and Tosfos cites a Behag that she cannot. There are those that explain the Behag that he holds that a woman is only obligated to *hear* the Megillah but not to *read* it. Rashi's viewpoint is easily understood by the fact that the Gemora explicitly states that women are obligated in the *reading* of the Megillah. The Beis Yosef (O"C 689) writes that according to the Behag, the correct version in the Gemora is that women are obligated to hear the Megillah.

Mishna Berura (689:13) writes that the reason a woman cannot read the Megillah on behalf of a man is because it is similar to Kerias HaTorah, where a woman is disqualified because of public dignity.

The Eshkol offers a different explanation and states that a woman cannot read the Megillah for a man because of the prohibition of "kol b'isha ervoh."

The Imrei Baruch explains the viewpoint of the Behag why women will only be obligated to hear the Megillah and not to read it. The Gemora below (14a) states that the prophets offered a kal vachomer argument in creating an obligation to read the Megillah. If the Jews, who were liberated from slavery in Mitzrayim and brought to freedom, sang praises to Hashem when they saw the Egyptians drowning; certainly we should commemorate our deliverance from death to life. That is why we read the Megillah publicly, where we are thanking Hashem for saving us from Haman's decree. There is a distinction, however, between the way the men sang praise and the way the women sang. Moshe recited each phrase and all the male Jews repeated after him. The women did not sing; Miriam said each phrase and they responded with musical instruments, not with singing. According to this, we can say that the same distinction should apply by Megillah. The men, who sang songs of praise by the sea, have an obligation to read the Megillah; the women who only heard the songs of praise have an obligation to hear the Megillah, but not to read it.