

22 Mar-Cheshvan 5782  
Oct. 28, 2021



Rosh Hashanah Daf 19

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### **MORE ON MEGILLAS TAANIS**

Rav Tovi bar Masnah asks (on the opinion that holds that Megillas Taanis was abrogated from an incident cited in Megillas Taanis): On the twenty-eighth of Adar (in the times after the second Beis Hamikdosh was destroyed), good tidings came to the Jewish people – that they would not be required to remove themselves from the study of Torah. For the Romans had decreed that the Jews could not study Torah, perform circumcisions and that they should desecrate the Shabbos. What did Yehudah ben Shamua and his colleagues do? They went and took advice from a Roman noblewoman, who was frequented by all the aristocrats of Rome. She said to them, “Go out into the streets at night to protest.” They went and cried out at night. They said, “Are we not your brothers (the Jews and the Romans), and are we not children from the same father, and are we not from the same mother? In what ways are we different than every other nation and tongue That you (the Romans) are issuing such harsh decrees on us? The Romans listened and revoked the decree. This day was pronounced as a festival. The Gemora asks: If it should enter your mind that Megillas Taanis was abrogated, the first ones were already abrogated, is it logical to assume that they would add a new festival?

The Gemora suggests and rejects a possible answer: And should you reply that this also was in the time when the Temple was still standing, this cannot be, because Yehudah ben Shamua was the disciple of Rabbi Meir, and Rabbi Meir was after the destruction of the Temple. We know that (Yehudah ben Shamua was R’ Meir’s disciple) because it has been taught in a Baraisa: If glass vessels are

perforated and molten lead is poured into them, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: Yehudah ben Shamua said that Rabbi Meir declares them *tamei*, while the Sages declare them *tahor*. [*The perforated glass vessel is supported by the lead, i.e., it can be used only through the lead; therefore, according to R’ Meir, it is a metal, which can be purified in a mikvah, and not a glass vessel.*]

The Gemora concludes that it is a Tannaic dispute if the halachos from the Megillas Taanis still apply. This is proven from a Baraisa which states: These days which are mentioned in the Megillas Taanis are prohibited (to fast upon them), whether in the period when the Temple is standing or in the period when the Temple is not standing; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosi says: In the period when the Temple is standing they are prohibited, because it is a time of happiness; in the period when the Temple is not standing they are permitted, because it is a time for mourning.

The Gemora rules: The law is that Megillas Taanis is abrogated and the law is that they are not.

The Gemora asks: There is a contradiction, is there not, between these two laws?

The Gemora answers: There is no contradiction, as one ruling relates to Chanukah and Purim (where they were not abrogated), whereas the other to the other days. (19a2 – 19b1)

### **MESSENGERS FOR TISHREI**



[The Mishnah had stated that at the beginning of certain months, messengers would be sent out to notify the Jewish communities as to which day was determined to be the first of the month.] Messengers were sent in the month of Elul on the account of Rosh Hashanah. They were sent out during Tishrei because of the festivals (Yom Kippur and Sukkos).

The Gemora questions the necessity for sending out messengers in Tishrei since they were already sent out in Elul.

The Gemora suggests and rejects a possible answer: And should you reply that the messengers were sent out because of the possibility that they (Beis Din) made Elul full (thirty days); that cannot be, for Rabbi Chinana bar Kahana said in the name of Rav: From the time of Ezra and on, we never found Elul to be full!

The Gemora answers that even though, since the times of Ezra, Elul always had twenty-nine days but the possibility existed, that if necessary, they would have to make Elul thirty days. The messengers were sent out to notify the public if Elul had twenty-nine days like usual or thirty days.

The Gemora asks: But if they made Elul full, it would emerge that Rosh Hashanah would be interfered with (for the people who lived far away)?

The Gemora answers: It is better that Rosh Hashanah should be interfered with (for some people) and the observance of all other festivals would not be interfered with.

Proof to this (that we were concerned about the other festivals) is from the Mishna which states: They were sent out during Tishrei because of the festivals. (19b1 - 19b2)

## SECOND ADAR

The Mishnah had stated that messengers were sent out during Kislev because of Chanukah and during Adar because of Purim.

The Gemora notes that the Mishna does not mention that they would send messengers in the second Adar (if there was a leap year) on account of Purim. This would be inconsistent with Rebbe, for it was taught in a Baraisa: Rebbe said: If the year was intercalated [after Adar began], messengers would also be sent in the beginning of the second Adar on account of Purim.

Shall we say that the point on which they join issue is this, that one authority holds that all the mitzvos observed in the second Adar are observed also in the first,<sup>1</sup> while the other holds that the mitzvos observed in the second are not observed in the first? — No. Both hold that the mitzvos observed in the second are not observed in the first, and here they differ on the question regarding the intercalation the year [i.e., the amount of days that there are in the month of the first Adar].<sup>2</sup> For it was taught in a Baraisa: How many days is the intercalation of the year? Thirty days. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A month. But why should only [the one who says] thirty days [require no messengers to be sent]? Because, you say, people in this case know when the month ends? If the period is a month, they also know! — Rav Pappa said: The one who said 'a month' holds that [the Beis din may

<sup>1</sup> If one maintains that he has fulfilled the mitzvos, there is no necessity to send messengers for the second Adar.

<sup>2</sup> The Mishna can hold that the first Adar is always thirty days and therefore there is no necessity to send out messengers for the second Adar.

prolong the year] either by thirty days or by a month at their option.<sup>3</sup> (19b2 – 19b3)

[The Gemora cites other opinions regarding the two months of Adar.] Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi testified in the name of the Holy Assembly that was in Yerushalayim concerning both months of Adar – that they<sup>4</sup> are sanctified on the their day of intercalation.<sup>5</sup> This is equivalent to saying that we make them deficient but we do not make them full, and excludes the statement made in a discourse by Rav Nachman bar Chisda; Rabbi Simai testified in the name of the Prophets, Chagai, Zecharya and Malachi concerning the two months of Adar that if they [the Beis din] desired they could make both of them full, and if they desired they could make both of them, deficient, and if they desired they could make one full and the other deficient; and such was the custom in the Diaspora. It was stated in the name of our teacher (Rav) that it should always be assumed that the first Adar will be full and the second Adar will be deficient until it becomes known to you (from Eretz Yisroel) explicitly that Rosh Chodesh was fixed in its time (i.e., the first Adar only had twenty-nine days). (19b3)

### TWENTY-NINE DAYS OF ADAR

They sent to Mar Ukva that the Adar which is next to Nissan will always be deficient. Rav Nachman asked from a Mishnah: The witnesses coming to Beis Din to offer testimony regarding Nissan and Tishrei are permitted to desecrate the Shabbos (by traveling further than their techum boundary). Now if you say that [the Adar before Nissan] is sometimes full and sometimes deficient, I can understand how occasions arise for desecrating the Shabbos, but if it is always deficient, why should they

<sup>3</sup> Rebbe can hold like Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel who maintains that the first Adar could be twenty-nine days or thirty and therefore we would be compelled to send messengers at the beginning of the second Adar.

<sup>4</sup> The Rosh Chodesh of the next month.

desecrate it?<sup>6</sup> — The Gemora answers that there is a mitzvah for Beis Din to sanctify the new moon through witnesses testifying that they saw the moon.

According to another version, Rav Nachman said: We also have learned: For the fixing of two months the Shabbos may be desecrated, for those of Nissan and of Tishrei. Now if you say that the Adar which precedes Nissan is always deficient, there is no difficulty; the reason why Shabbos may be desecrated is because it is a mitzvah to sanctify [the Rosh Chodesh] on the strength of actual sighting. But if you say that it is sometimes full and sometimes deficient, why should [the Shabbos] be desecrated? Let us prolong [the month] today and sanctify [the Rosh Chodesh] the following day? — If the thirtieth day happens to be on Shabbos, that is actually what we do. Here, however, we are dealing with the case where the thirty-first day happens to fall on Shabbos [and we allow the Shabbos to be desecrated because] it is a mitzvah to sanctify on the strength of actual sighting.

Rav Kahana asked from a Mishnah: In the times of the Beis Hamikdash, the witnesses could desecrate Shabbos in order to testify in Beis Din by all months. This was because of the korban mussaf that needed to be offered on Rosh Chodesh. It emerges from this Mishnah that the reason to desecrate the Shabbos is not because of the mitzvah of sanctifying the new month through witnesses and yet after the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed, they desecrated Shabbos only for Nissan and Tishrei. If Adar always was deficient, there would be no necessity to desecrate Shabbos. The Gemora concludes that this is a legitimate refutation of that opinion. (19b3 – 20a1)

<sup>5</sup> On the thirtieth day of the month. Accordingly, both months are always twenty-nine days.

<sup>6</sup> Rav Nachman is asking that why were they allowed to desecrate Shabbos since even if they wouldn't come, Beis Din will sanctify the thirtieth day as Rosh Chodesh.



## DAILY MASHAL

### A True Ruler

The Gemora (18b) relates that the Greeks had decreed that the Jews could not mention Hashem's name. After the Greeks were defeated by the Kingdom of the Chashmanoim, they established that Hashem's name should be written on all contracts. The Chachamim heard about this and stopped this because they were concerned that when the borrower will repay the debt, the unnecessary document will be thrown in the garbage. It was the third day of Tishrei when the Chachamim abolished this enactment and they made that day into a festival.

The Gemora in Shabbos which relates the story of Chanukah refers to the Chashmanoim in the same manner as our Gemora – the Kingdom of the Chashmanoim. A question is asked that at that time they were not the kings yet. It was only after the victory that the Chashmanoim assumed the throne but not before.

The commentators ask on the Rashi in Breishis. The chief cupbearer is relating to Pharaoh of an incident that transpired when he was in prison. The verse states "And there with us was a Hebrew lad, a slave of the chief slaughterer, and we told him, and he interpreted our dreams for us." Rashi cites from a Medrash "A slave and in the statutes of Egypt it is written that a slave may neither reign nor wear princely raiment." (Judaica Press)

What compelled the sar hamashkim to state that in the Egyptian constitution it is written that a slave cannot ascend the throne. What made him think that by Yosef interpreting the dreams, this would lead him to become a ruler in Egypt?

The answer is that a true ruler does not have to don a crown or wear princely raiment or sit on a throne. A ruler

is one who can rule over himself, someone who is capable of control his desires. The Medrash states that Shlomo Hamelech was a king over seven different kingdoms but the highest level was that he ruled over himself.

The chief cupbearer recognized this in Yosef even when he was in prison. Yosef was clearly destined for leadership and that is what compelled the chief cupbearer to tell Pharaoh as to what was written in the Egyptian statutes.

This can be the explanation of the Gemora. It was true that the Chashmanoim did not ascend the throne until after they were victorious over the Greeks but they were kings beforehand as well. While some of the other Jews could not hold themselves back from joining the Greek culture and shunned the Torah and mitzvos, the Chashmanoim were steadfast and strong. They were kings over their desires and this was the characteristic which they possessed which ultimately led them to victory.