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Taanis Daf 11

Produced by Rabbi Avrohom Adler, Kollel Boker Beachwood

Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamah of

Tzvi Gershon Ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h

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

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: One who starves himself during a famine year when other Jews are in distress, will be saved from an unusual death, as it is said: In famine He will redeem you from death. [Scripture should have said] ‘from famine’. This is therefore what [Scripture] meant to convey. As a reward for starving himself in years of famine one will escape unnatural death.

Rish Lakish rules that one who has children should not engage in marital relations during a famine year, as it is said: And to Yosef were born two sons before the year of famine came.

The Gemora cites a Baraisa: Those lacking children (they have not fulfilled their mitzvah of procreation) may have marital relations during a famine year. (11a1)

The Gemora cites a Baraisa regarding one who distances himself from the community while they are suffering; two ministering angels will place their hands on him and declare that he should not see the comfort of the community when they are released from their affliction.

A similar Baraisa is cited which states that at the time when the community is suffering, one (who is not afflicted) should not say: I will go to my house, eat and drink and not be concerned about anyone else. Regarding him Scripture says: And behold joy and gladness, [and the people said to each other:] slay cattle and kill sheep, eat meat and drink wine — ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die’. What follows after this [verse]? — And your words are revealed to My ears, Hashem, Master of Legions; [I have sworn:] surely this iniquity shall not be atoned for you until you die. This is the conduct of the average man, but what does Scripture say

of the conduct of the wicked? Come and I will get wine, and we will get drunk with old wine; and tomorrow shall be as this day. What follows after this [verse]? The righteous man has perished, and no man takes it to heart . . . that because of the evil the righteous is gathered to his grave. But rather a man should share in the distress of the community, for so we find that Moshe, our teacher, shared in the distress of the community, as it is said: But Moshe’s hands were heavy; and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Did Moshe not have one mattress or one cushion to sit on? This is then what Moshe meant [to convey]: As Israel are in distress I too will share with them. He who shares in the distress of the community will merit and witness the consolation of the community. And perhaps a person might ask: Who will testify against me [that I am not sharing in the suffering of the community]? - The stones of his house and the beams of his house will testify against him, as it is said: For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.

In the school of Rabbi Shila it was taught: The two ministering angels who accompany every man testify against him, as it is said: For He will give His angels charge over you. Rabbi Chidka says: A man's own soul testifies against him, as it is said: From that which lies in your bosom [i.e., your soul], guard the openings of your mouth. And some say: A man's own limbs testify against him, as it is said: You are my witnesses, said Hashem.

A God of faithfulness, without perversion: Just like an evil person is punished in the World to Come even on a minor sin that he committed, so too a righteous person will be punished in this world even on a minor sin that he committed. *Without perversion:* Just like a righteous person

will be rewarded in the World to Come even for a minor mitzvah that he performed, so too an evil person will be rewarded in this world even for a minor mitzvah that he performed. *He is just and upright.*

The Sages said: When it is time for a person to depart this world to his eternal home, all of his deeds leave him and they say to him: Did you do thus and thus at such and such a place on such and such a day? He responds: Yes. And they say to him: sign! And he signs [affirming the record of his deeds], as it is said: He has it signed by the hand of every man. And what is even more, he acknowledges the justice of the verdict and he says: You have judged me correctly, in order that the words of Scripture may be fulfilled: That You may be justified in Your words. (11a1 – 11a3)

Shmuel said: One who fasts is referred to as a sinner. Shmuel's opinion is consistent with this Tanna, for it was taught in a Baraisa: Rabbi Elozar Hakapar the eminent says: What is the Torah referring to when it says [of the nazir who has become tamei through corpse tumah]: And make atonement for him, for that he sinned by reason of the soul. Against which soul did he sin? Rather [a nazir is referred to as a sinner], he distressed himself by abstaining from wine. Now, does this not teach a kal vachomer: If one can be called a sinner for abstaining from only wine, he will certainly be called a sinner for abstaining from all foods!

Rabbi Elozar says: He (one who fasts) is termed a holy man, as it is said: He shall be holy, he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long. If this man [a nazir] who denied himself wine only is termed a holy man, how much more so he who denies himself the enjoyment of each and every thing! — How will then Shmuel explain the verse where he is termed a holy man? — That refers to the locks growing long. And how will Rabbi Elozar explain the statement that he is termed a sinner? - That is because he contaminated himself [by contact with a corpse]. But did Rabbi Elozar say so? Did he not say: Let a man always consider himself as if holiness dwells within his intestines, as it is said: In your midst is holy, and I will not enter the city? —

This is no contradiction. The one speaks of he who is able to bear self-affliction and the other of one who is not able.

Rish Lakish says: He (who fasts) is termed pious man, as it is said: One who weans his soul is a pious man, and one who destroys his flesh [is cruel].

Rav Sheishes said: The young scholar who fasts, let a dog devour his meal.

Rabbi Yirmiyah bar Abba said that there are no public fasts (with all the strict prohibitions) in Bavel except for the Ninth of Av alone.

Rabbi Yirmiyah bar Abba said in the name of Rish Lakish that a Torah scholar is forbidden to fast since it will diminish the work of Heaven (as it will weaken him and detract from his learning). (11a3 - 11b1)

The Mishnah had stated: They may eat and drink after nightfall [before the fast]. Rabbi Zeira said in the name of Rav Huna that an individual who accepts to fast, even if he eats and drinks the entire night [before the fast], he may, on the morrow, recite the tefillah of the fast - he can say tefillas aneinu. If he continued sleeping through the next night without eating, he does not say aneinu on the next day.

Rav Yosef inquires as to the explanation of Rav Huna. Why does he not recite aneinu the next morning? Is it because he maintains that a fast for a few hours is not a binding fast or is a fast for a few hours considered a fast but one who fasts an abbreviated fast does not recite aneinu?

Abaye answers that Rav Huna maintains that one can fast for a few hours and aneinu would be recited for one who fasts for several hours. Rav Huna's case is ruled differently because there were hours at night that he did not accept as a fast from beforehand (and therefore the fast is not deemed to be significant enough to recite aneinu).

Mar Ukva arrived in the city of Ginzak. He was asked if someone fasts for a few hours, is that regarded as a fast. He did not have an answer at hand. They also asked him regarding earthenware jugs of idolaters that were used to store wine, if the jugs are prohibited from being used or permitted. He did not have an answer at hand. A third question was asked to him: What garments did Moshe wear when he was performing the service during the seven days of the Mishkan's consecration. He did not have an answer at hand. He went to the *Beis Medrash* and asked these questions. They told him that one may fast for hours and if he completes the fast, he says *aneinu* during his prayer. The halachah is that jugs of idolaters are permitted after twelve months (*for the taste of the nesech wine has dissipated by then*) and Moshe served while wearing a white linen garment. Rav Kahana taught that his cloak did not have a hem (*so he should not be suspected of concealing jewels or money from the Mishkan there*).

Rav Chisda said: That which you said that we fast for several hours only applies if [the man concerned] had not tasted anything until the evening (either before the fast or afterwards). Abaye said to him: This is then a full fast! — No! It is necessary for the following case: A person fasted for the first few hours of the day unintentionally and he changed his mind in middle of the day and accepted to fast the remainder of the day. [This is considered a fast for hours and he should recite *aneinu* when he davens later.] (11b1 – 12a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

MARITAL RELATIONS DURING A FAMINE

Rish Lakish rules that one who has children should not engage in marital relations during a famine year.

His source is from the fact that the Torah states that Yosef's two sons were born prior to the famine. This would indicate that once the famine has begun, it would be prohibited from engaging in marital relations.

Tosfos asks that Yocheved, who was born as they were entering Mitzrayim, was born to Levi two years after the famine had already started.

Tosfos concludes that this is not a general prohibition that everyone must follow; rather it is only for people who wish to conduct themselves in a pious manner. Yosef decided to on such a course but Levi did not.

The Sfas Emes explains that it was not regarded as a universal prohibition prior to the receiving of the Torah; however after the torah was given, there is a prohibition that everyone is obligated to follow.

The Maharsha explains Tosfos that there was a prohibition even before the Torah was given but not for people that did not yet fulfill the obligation of fathering children. Those people had a choice and Yosef chose to conduct himself in a pious manner and Levi did not.

There are many other answers on Tosfos' question. The Ritva answers that there is only a prohibition when the famine strikes a Jewish community. Yosef was under the impression that his family did not have food and that is why he refrained from having marital relations. Levi, on the other hand, knew that they had sufficient food and therefore it was permitted for him to engage in marital relations and that is when Yocheved was born.

The Beis Yosef (574) writes that the prohibition did not apply at all prior to the giving of the Torah.

The Maharsha cites a Yerushalmi that rules that on the night that a woman immersed herself in the mikvah; it will be permitted for the man to cohabit with his wife. Perhaps Levi had relations with his wife on the night that she went to the mikvah.

The Beis Yosef rules in accordance with this Yerushalmi. The Magen Avraham disagrees and maintains that the Yerushalmi means that someone who didn't father children

yet is permitted to cohabit with his wife on the night that she went to the mikvah but this does not apply to someone who already has children.

The Netziv answers that the famine was not so severe in Eretz Canaan where the shevatim were and therefore they were not subject to this prohibition. He states that the famine affected the rich people there since they were lacking their usual delicacies but for the common person, there was ample food. The Chida cites the Rosh that the famine did not strike the city where Yaakov and his sons were living at all.

It is brought in the name of Rabbi Yehuda Hachasid that Yosef knew when the famine will end and therefore he did not have relations with his wife. Levi, who did not know at all when the famine will end was permitted to cohabit with his wife for otherwise how long should he wait. The Chida questions this answer since if it would be correct, the prohibition will almost never apply. During a famine, it is not known how long it will last and therefore it should be permitted to engage in marital relations.

REPENTANCE ON THE LOCATION AND THE DAY

The Chachamim said that when it is time for a person to depart this world, all of his deeds leave him and they ask him if he committed a sin on such and such a day in such and such a place. He responds that he did and he signs affirming the record of his deeds. The person then declares that he was judged correctly.

Why is it necessary to declare the name of the place that he committed the transgression? What difference does it make?

The Ben Ish Chai writes that it is well known that when a person commits a sin, there is a spirit of tumah that remains in that location. This will be harmful to anyone that happens on this place in the future because the power of that tumah will cause them to stumble in sin.

This is why a person must mention the place where he committed the transgression when he is repenting since he will be punished not only for the sin but also for anyone that sins because of the tumah hovering in that location.

What is the importance of mentioning the day that the sin was committed? The Ben Ish Chai continues that there is a general Judgment every day where all the mitzvos that were performed are placed on one side of the scale and all the transgressions committed are placed on the opposite side. It is possible that because of his sin on that day, the scale tipped towards the transgressions and not towards the mitzvos. He must repent for this, as well.

DAILY MASHAL

SHARING IN THE SUFFERING

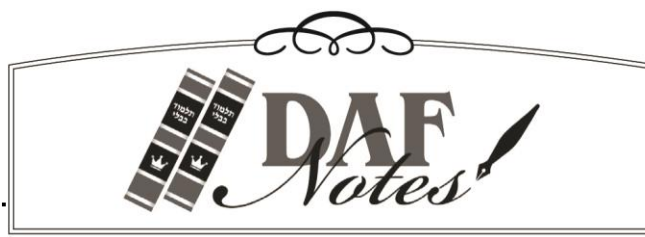
Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav that one, who starves himself during a famine year when other Jews are in distress, will be saved from an unusual death.

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A similar Baraisa is cited which states that at the time when the community is suffering, one (who is not afflicted) should not say that he will go to his house, eat and drink and not be concerned about anyone else. It is said regarding one who neglects the anguish of the community that Hashem will not forgive him for this sin.

The Baraisa proves from Moshe that one should suffer together with the community. It is written that Moshe's hands were heavy and he sat on a stone. The Gemora



wonders why Moshe didn't use a pillow or a mattress in order to sit comfortably. The answer given is that Moshe said if Klal Yisroel were suffering (due to the war with Amalek), he will suffer along with them.

The Maharsha writes that we learn from this Gemora that a person is obligated to share in his friend's suffering even if he is not in distress at all. The famine did not affect Yosef and the war didn't affect Moshe and yet they felt it necessary to join in the suffering.

The Ohev Yisroel comments similarly that Amalek attacked Klal Yisroel because they became lax in Torah. Moshe did not have this fault at all and nevertheless he felt obligated to share in their distress.

Rav Aharon Kotler writes that it seems from this Gemora that not sharing in the suffering of others is tantamount to desecrating Hashem's name since our Gemora cites a Scriptural verse that one will not have atonement for this sin until hid death. This is the precise verse that the Gemora in Yome mentions regarding desecrating Hashem's name. This can be explained by the following: one of Hashem's attributes is that He suffers along with Klal Yisroel. The Iyun Yaakov comments that one has to join in the distress of others because there is an obligation to attach yourself to Hashem. He is compassionate so we should be as well. Someone who shirks this responsibility is desecrating Hashem's name.

I noticed a vort on this week's parsha on this topic in the sefer Ner Shabbos and my friend Reb Oizer wrote this up as well.

After listing the sons of Jacob's two oldest sons, Reuven and Shimon, the Torah records, "And these are the names of the sons of Levi in order of their birth: Gershon, Kehas, and Merari." Why does the Torah emphasize that it is stating the names of Levi's sons, a point which isn't mentioned with regards to the sons of Reuven and Shimon?

The Shelah HaKadosh answers based on Rashi's comment (5:4) that the tribe of Levi wasn't included in Pharaoh's enslavement of the Jews and therefore lived relatively easy and comfortable lives. It would have been easy for them to isolate themselves in Goshen, learning Torah all day and turning a blind eye to the plight of their brethren.

In order to combat such natural feelings, Levi specifically gave his children names which would eternally remind them of the suffering of the rest of the Jews. The name Gershon alludes to the fact that the Jews were considered foreigners and temporary dwellers in Egypt, not fitting in and belonging there no matter how easy life may have been in Goshen. K'has hints to the fact that the backbreaking labor set their teeth on edge, and Merari refers to the bitterness of the Egyptian enslavement.

So many times we hear of pain and suffering – with illness, jobs, finding a spouse, raising children, or in Israel – and our first reaction is to dismiss it as not germane to our comfortable lives, but Levi teaches that the suffering of every single Jew is indeed relevant and we must feel their plight!

The Chofetz Chaim's wife once panicked when she awoke in the middle of the night to find his bed empty. Upon finding him sleeping on the floor, he explained to his puzzled Rebbitzin that with World War I raging all around them and Jews being chased from their houses all across Europe, how could he possibly allow himself the comfort of sleeping in a comfortable bed?

Similarly, when a great fire once ravaged most of the Jewish section of the town of Brisk, Rav Chaim Soloveitchik (the Rav of the town, whose house was spared) insisted on sleeping in the synagogue together with the rest of his homeless congregants in order to share in their suffering. Not at all surprising, considering that the Chofetz Chaim was a Kohen and Rav Chaim a Levi, and they clearly learned well the lessons of their great-great grandfather!