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Gittin Daf 57

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

Moshe Raphael ben Yehoshua (Morris Stadtmauer) o”h

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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

Onkelos son of Kelonikos was the son of Titus's sister. He had a mind to convert himself to Judaism. He went and raised Titus from the dead by magical arts, and asked him: Who is most prominent in the World to Come? He replied: Israel. What then, he said, about joining them? He said: Their observances are burdensome and you will not be able to carry them out. Go and attack them in that world and you will be at the top as it is written: His adversaries have become leaders etc.; whoever harasses Israel becomes a leader. He asked him: What is your punishment [in the other world]? He replied: What decreed for myself. Every day my ashes are collected and sentence is passed on me and I am burned and my ashes are scattered over the seven seas.

He then went and raised Bilam by incantations. He asked him: Who is most prominent in the World to Come? He replied: Israel. What then, he said, about joining them? He replied: You shall not seek their peace nor their prosperity all your days forever. He then asked: What is your punishment? He replied: With boiling hot semen.

He then went and raised by incantations the sinners of Israel. He asked them: Who is most prominent in the World to Come? They replied: Israel. What about joining them? They replied: Seek their welfare, do not seek their harm. Whoever touches them touches the apple of his eye. He said: What is your punishment? They replied: With boiling hot excrement, since a Master has said: Whoever mocks at the words of the Sages is punished with boiling hot excrement. Observe the difference

between the sinners of Israel and the prophets of the other nations who worship idols.

It has been taught: Note from this incident how serious a thing it is to put a man to shame, for God espoused the cause of Bar Kamtza and destroyed His House and burned His Temple. (56b3 – 57a1)

The Rooster, Hen, and Tur Malka

Due to a rooster and hen, the city of Tur Malka (*in Hebrew "Har Hamelech"*) was destroyed. They used to have a custom that when a bride and groom would go out (to their wedding), a rooster and hen would go before them. This was as if we were saying to them, "Be fruitful and multiply like hens." One day, some Roman troops passed by and seized the rooster and the hen. The Jewish observers who saw this fell on the Roman troops and beat them up. They informed Caesar of this incident, saying "The Jews are rebelling against you." He therefore decided to send his army to fight the Jews of Tur Malka.

There was a Jewish warrior from the south who used to leap one mil (*approximately a kilometer*) and proceed to kill (the Roma soldiers). Caesar placed his crown on the ground and said, "Master of the entire universe! If it is good before You, do not give that person (*referring to himself*) and his kingdom into the hands of one man!"

The Jewish warrior's mouth made him stumble (as he was relying on his own strength, and that he did require God's

assistance), as he said, *“Is it not You, O God, Who has left us, and You do not go out with our army.”*

The Gemora asks: Didn't David Hamelech also state this verse?

The Gemora answers: David was saying it in a way of bewilderment. [*David was crying out at this fact and wanted Hashem to join them, while this person from the south was more or less stating that he was relying on his own strength.*]

When the warrior from the south proceeded to the outhouse, a poisonous snake came and disemboweled him, and he died. When Caesar heard about this, he said, *“Being that a miracle happened for me, I will leave them be this time.”* He left them and went (without attacking). Due to the withdrawal, the people of Tur Malka jumped with joy, and ate and drank. They lit many lights (and it was so well-lit) that people (Roman soldiers) a mil away from the city could see the design on a signet ring. Caesar proclaimed: The Jews are making fun of me! He then attacked them again.

Rav Assi said: Three hundred thousand swordsmen went up to Tur Malka, and they went on a killing spree for three days and three nights. But on the other side of the mountain, they were still celebrating and dancing, and those (on one side of the mountain) did not know what was happening with those (on the other side).

Hashem swallowed them up without mercy all the dwellings of Yaakov. When Ravin arrived (in Bavel), he said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: This is referring to the six hundred thousand cities that King Yannai had in Har HaMelech (*Tur Malka*). This is as Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav Assi: King Yanai had six hundred thousand cities in Har Hamelech, and in each and every city, there were as many people as those who went out of Egypt, except for three of them, where the population

was double the amount of people who left Egypt. These (three cities) were: Kfar Bish, Kfar Shichlayim, and Kfar Dichraya. Kfar Bish (bad village) was named this because they would not provide a house (for lodging) to any guests. Kfar Shichlayim was named so because their livelihood was from (selling) cress (shichlayim). Kfar Dichraya got its name, as Rabbi Yochanan said: Because their wives would first give birth to sons (*“dichraya” in Aramaic refers to males*), then they would bear a girl at the end, and then, they would stop bearing children.

Ulla said: I saw that place (Har Hamelech), and it would not even hold six hundred thousand reeds (and certainly, it could not contain six hundred thousand people).

A Sadduce (*part of a group who did not believe in the Oral Torah*) said to Rabbi Chanina: You are lying (*about how many people were in Har Hamelech*)! Rabbi Chanina said to him: Eretz Yisroel is referred to as *“Eretz Tzvi”* -- *“land of the deer.”* Just as a deer (after it has been flayed), its skin would not be able to accommodate all of its flesh, so too Eretz Yisroel - when people are living there (*as in when the deer is alive*), it expands (to accommodate its residents); but when they are not people are not living there, it shrinks.

Rav Manyumi bar Chilkiyah, Rav Chilkiyah bar Toviyah, and Rav Huna bar Chiya were sitting together. They said: If there is someone present who knows about the nature of the people of Kfar Sachanya in Egypt, let him say. One of them began and said: There was an incident regarding a man and his betrothed wife who were captured by idolaters, and they (the captors) wed them (*presumably so that they should have children who would also be slaves*). She (the wife) said to him (her betrothed), *“Please, do not touch me, as I have not received a kesuvah from you.”* He did not touch her until the day of his death. When he died, the woman said to the people, *“Eulogize this person, for he belittled his evil inclination (i.e., his desire) even more than Yosef. For regarding Yosef, it was*



only one time (that he fought against his desire), whereas with this man – it was every day. Yosef was not in the same bed (*with the wife of Potifar*), while this man was in one bed (with that woman). Additionally, regarding Yosef (he was tempted by a woman, where) she was not his wife, whereas this man was tempted by his wife (*betrothed*).

Another (Sage) began and said: It once happened (in that city) that the price of forty modiyos (equal to one se'ah) stood at one dinar. The rate went down by one modiya (to thirty-nine modiyos of grain). They checked (for the source) and found that a father and son had both cohabited with a betrothed woman on Yom Kippur. They brought them (the father and son) to Beis Din and stoned them, and then the price (of grain) went back to the usual rate.

Another (Sage) began and said: It once happened (in that city) that a man wanted to divorce his wife, but her kesuvah was great (and he couldn't afford to pay it). What did he do? He went and invited his friends. He gave them to eat and he gave them to drink. He caused them to get drunk and had them all lie on one bed (with his wife). He took the white of an egg (which has the appearance of semen) and put it between them (to make it appear as if one of them cohabited with his wife; this would cause her to lose her kesuvah). He arranged for witnesses to see, and he came to Beis Din. There was an elderly Sage there who had been a student of Shammai the Elder, named Bava ben Buta. He said to them: I received the following tradition from Shammai the Elder: The white of an egg, when exposed to fire, contracts (and forms a scab on top of clothing), while semen flows away from fire (and will become absorbed into the clothing). They checked and found (that it was the white of an egg) like Bava stated (*and saw that the man had made a false accusation*). They brought the man to Beis Din and gave him lashes, and they collected her kesuvah from him.

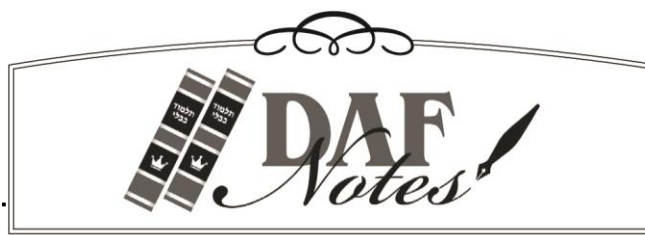
Abaye said to Rav Yosef: Being that they (the people of that city) were such great righteous people, why did they get punished?

Rav Yosef said to him: It was because they did not mourn (the destruction of) Yerushalayim. This is as its written: *Gladden Yerushalayim and rejoice with her all those who love her; be elated with her, all those who mourned for her.* (57a1 – 57a3)

Beitar

Due to the side of a wagon, Beitar was destroyed. They had a custom that when a baby boy was born, they would plant a cedar tree, and when a baby girl was born, they would plant a pine tree. When the children would marry, they would chop these trees down and make the wedding canopy out of them. One day, the daughter of Caesar was passing by, and the side of her wagon broke. Her attendants proceeded to chop down one of these cedars in order to place it (on the side of the wagon). The Jewish observers proceeded to beat up the attendants. They (the Romans) went and informed Caesar of this incident. [They said:] The Jews are rebelling against you. He therefore came upon them (the Jews of Beitar).

He chopped off in anger all of the dignity (horns) of Israel. Rabbi Zeira said in the name of Rabbi Avahu who said in the name of Rabbi Yochanan: This refers to the eighty thousand commanders (*who blow the war horns*) who entered Beitar when it was captured. They killed men, women, and children, until their blood went and ran into the Great Sea. Perhaps one might say that the Sea was close by, it, as a matter of fact, was a mil away. It was taught in a Baraisa: Rabbi Eliezer the Great said: There were two rivers in the Valley of Yadayim, one flows one way and one the other flows the other way, and the Chachamim estimated that they were comprised of two parts water and one part blood (*after this incident*).



A Tanna taught in a Baraisa: For seven years, idolaters fertilized their vineyards with the blood of the Jews, and they did not require any fertilizer. (57a3 – 57a4)

Nevuzaradan

Rabbi Chiya bar Avin said in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua ben Korchah: One of the elderly residents of Yerushalayim told me that in this valley, Nevuzaradan, the head executioner, killed two hundred and eleven myriads (i.e., two million, one hundred and ten thousand people). In Yerushalayim he killed ninety-four myriads (i.e., nine hundred and forty thousand people) on one rock, until their blood flowed into the blood of Zecharyah. This fulfilled that which is stated: *And blood touched blood.*

Nevuzaradan found the blood of Zecharyah that was boiling and bubbling (on the floor of the Temple), and he asked (the Kohanim), "What is this?" They said to him, "It is the blood of sacrifices, which has been spilled." So he slaughtered animals and compared the blood, but they were dissimilar. "If you tell me whose blood this is, fine; but if not, I will tear your flesh with iron combs," he threatened. They replied, "What can we tell you? There was a prophet among us who would rebuke us regarding Divine matters, and we rose up against him and killed him. It has already been many years that his blood has not rested." He said to them, "I will appease him." So he brought (the judges of) the Great Sanhedrin and the minor Sanhedrin, and killed them over him (Zecharyah's blood), yet it did not rest. He brought boys and girls and killed them over him, still it did not rest; he brought schoolchildren and killed them over him, still it did not rest. He then said to him (the blood), "Zecharyah, Zecharyah, I have destroyed their best; do you desire me to massacre them all?" When he said this, it rested.

At that time, thoughts of repentance came into his mind. He said, "If the punishment for killing only one soul is so severe, then that man (referring to himself), who has

killed so many people, how much more so?" So he fled and sent a will to his household, and he converted.

The Rabbis taught in a *Baraisa*: Naaman was a resident convert. Nevuzaradan was a righteous convert. Descendants of Haman learned Torah in Bnei Brak. Descendants of Sisera learned Torah in Jerusalem. Descendants of Sancheirev taught Torah in public. And who were they? Shemayah and Avtalyon. Regarding this the verse states: *I (God) put her (referring to Zecharyah) blood on a flat rock so that it will not be covered over (absorbed in the ground).*

The voice is the voice of Yaakov and the hands are the hands of Esav. "The voice" (referring to a voice of great crying) refers to (the crying of the Jews who were slaughtered by) Hadrian Caesar, who killed in Alexandria of Egypt sixty myriads (six hundred thousand people) in addition to another sixty myriad, which is double the amount of Jews who left Egypt. "The voice of Yaakov" refers to (the crying of the Jews who were slaughtered by) Vespasian Caesar, who killed in the city of Beitar four million people, and some say it was forty million people. "And the hands are the hands of Esav" refers to the evil empire (of Rome) that destroyed our Temple, burned our Sanctuary, and exiled us from our land.

Another teaching: "The voice is the voice of Yaakov" teaches that there is no prayer that is helpful where a descendant of Yaakov (is not a participant). "And the hands are the hands of Esav" teaches us that there is no victorious war where a descendant of Esav (is not a participant).

This (*that through lashon hara the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed*) is as Rabbi Elozar explains the verse: When the tongue is 'shoat,' hide. This implies that when there is slanderous talk, you should hide. [*This is Rashi's understanding of the Gemora. For a different explanation, see Maharsha.*]

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: What does the verse mean when it is written: *Alongside the river of Babylon, there we sat and also cried when we remembered Zion.* This teaches us that the Holy One, Blessed be He, showed David the eventual destruction of the First Temple and the Second Temple. We know that he showed him the first destruction as it is stated: *Alongside the river of Babylon, there we sat and also cried.* We know that he also showed him the second destruction, as it is written: *Remember, Hashem, the day of Yerushalayim for the descendants of Edom, for those who would say "Raze it! Raze it, to the foundation."* (57b1 – 57b2)

Giving Up their Lives to Sanctify God's Name

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel, and some say Rabbi Ami, and some say that a Tanna taught in a Baraisa: There was an incident with four hundred boys and girls who were taken captive (in a boat headed to Rome) for shameful purposes¹. They realized themselves the purpose of their captors. They said, "If we drown ourselves in the sea, will we merit the World to Come (*or will we be punished for killing ourselves*)?" The oldest amongst them expounded the following verse: *Hashem said: From Bashan I will bring back, I will bring back from the depths of the sea. From Bashan I will bring back* [means that Hashem will rescue people] from between the teeth of the lion. *I will bring back from the depths of the sea* is referring to those who drown in the sea. Once the girls heard this, they all jumped overboard and fell into the midst of the sea. The boys made a kal vachomer regarding their own status. They said: If the girls, who are being forced to act in a natural manner, jumped overboard, then we, who are being forced to act in an unnatural manner, should certainly do so. They also jumped into the midst of the sea. Regarding them the

¹ Rashi explains that the boys were taken for homosexual purposes, and the girls were taken to become concubines.

verse says: *Because for Your sake we are killed every day, we are regarded like sheep for slaughter.*

Rav Yehudah says: This verse refers to a woman and her seven sons. They brought the first son to Caesar and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *I am Hashem, your God.*" They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *You shall have no other gods before Me.*" They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *One who sacrifices to other gods shall be destroyed.* They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *Do not bow down to another god.* They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *Listen, O Israel, Hashem is our God, Hashem is One.*" They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *And you will know this day, and you will take to your heart that Hashem, He is the only God in heaven up high and on the ground below; there is no other.*" They took him out and killed him. They brought another son before Caesar, and said to him, "Bow to this idol." He said to them, "It is written in the Torah: *You have singled out Hashem [today to be your God, etc.] and Hashem has singled you out today [to be His people]. And we have already sworn to the Holy One, Blessed be He, that we will not exchange Him for another god, and He too has sworn to us that He will not exchange us for another nation.*" Caesar said to him, "I will throw down my signet ring. Bend down and pick it up, so that they (people) will say that he (you) has accepted the authority



of the king.” The boy said to him, “Woe to you, Caesar! Woe to you, Caesar! Regarding your honor you are so concerned, so regarding the honor of the Holy One, Blessed be He, how much more so (*is there a concern!*)” They took him out to be killed. His mother said to them, “Give him to me, so I can kiss him a little.” She said to him, “My son, go and tell Avraham you father: You bound (one sacrifice) on one altar, but I have bound (seven sacrifices) on seven altars.” Afterwards, she also went to the rooftop, fell down and died. A Heavenly voice rang out and said: *The mother of the children rejoices.* (57b2 – 57b3)

DAILY MASHAL

Haman’s Descendants

The *Gemora* had stated that some of Haman’s grandchildren (*his son’s sons*) taught Torah in Bnei Brak.

There are those who ask the following: How is this possible? Why, behold, we do not accept converts from Amalek!?

Reb Yosef Engel answers that it is possible in the following scenario: An Amaleki woman got married to an idolater from a different nation. She gave birth to a son. That son is not regarded as an Amaleki, for the law regarding idolaters is that a child’s heritage is based upon his father, not his mother. A child from this son could be accepted as a convert. It emerges that the *Gemora* did not mean that Haman’s son’s sons converted; rather, there were descendants from Haman who converted and taught Torah in Bnei Brak.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM YESTERDAY’S DAF

to refresh your memory

Q: Who were the three men of great wealth in Yerushalayim?

A: Nakdimon ben Gurion, Ben Kalba Savua and Ben Tzitzis Hakeses.

Q: Why couldn’t Vespasian take off the shoe he was wearing?

A: Good news causes the feet to swell.

Q: What three things did Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai request from Vespasian?

A: He asked if he could spare the city of Yavneh and its Sages, and the family of Rabban Gamliel (*he wanted to ensure that the Nasi’s family, the royal family from King David will not be broken*), and physicians to heal Rabbi Tzadok.