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Bava Basra Daf 74

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Daf Notes is currently being dedicated to the neshamot of

**Moshe Raphael ben Yehoshua (Morris Stadtmauer) o”h**

**Tzvi Gershon ben Yoel (Harvey Felsen) o”h**

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

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said: He (the Arab merchant) said to me: Come and I will show you Mount Sinai. [When] I arrived I saw that scorpions surrounded it and they stood like white donkeys. I heard a Heavenly voice saying: Woe is to Me (God) that I have made an oath (to exile My people) and now that I have made the oath, who will annul it for Me?

When I came before the Rabbis, they said to me: Every Abba is (stupid as a) donkey and every bar bar Chanah is a fool. You should have said, “It is annulled for you.”

He, however, thought that perhaps it was the oath in connection with the Flood.

The Gemora asks: And the Rabbis?

The Gemora answers: If so; why, “Woe is to Me”?

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said: He (the Arab merchant) said to me: Come, I will show you the men of Korach that were swallowed up. I saw two cracks that emitted smoke. He took a piece of wool shearings, dipped it in water, attached it to the point of a spear and let it in there. And when he took it out it was singed. [Thereupon] he said to me: Listen attentively [to] what you [are about to] hear. And I heard them say: Moshe and his Torah are true and we are liars. He said to me: Every thirty days Gehinnom causes them to turn back

here as [one turns] meat in a pot, and they say thus: Moshe and his Torah are true and we are liars.

Rabbah bar bar Chanah said: He (the Arab merchant) said to me: Come, I will show you where earth and heaven touch one other. I took up my [bread] basket and placed it in a window of heaven. When I concluded my prayers I looked for it but did not find it. I said to him: Are there thieves here? He replied to me: It is the heavenly wheel revolving. Wait here until tomorrow and you will find it.

Rabbi Yochanan related: Once we were travelling on board a ship and we saw a fish that raised its head out of the sea. Its eyes were like two moons, and water streamed from its two nostrils as [from] the two rivers of Sura.

Rav Safra related: Once we travelled on board a ship and we saw a fish that raised its head out of the sea. It had horns on which was engraved: I am a small creature of the sea, I am three hundred parsasos [in length] and I am [now] going into the mouth of Leviathan. Rav Ashi said: It was a sea-goat which searches [for its food] and [for that purpose] has horns.

Rabbi Yochanan related: Once we were travelling on board a ship and we saw a chest in which were set precious stones and pearls and it was surrounded by a species of fish called karsha. There went down a diver



to bring [the chest], but [a fish] noticed [him] and was about to dismember his thigh. Thereupon, he threw upon it a skin bottle of vinegar and it sank. A Heavenly voice came forth, saying to us: What have you to do with the chest of the wife of Rabbi Chanina ben Dosa who is to store in it techeiles for the righteous in the World to Come.

Rab Yehudah, the Ethiopian, related: Once we were travelling on board a ship when we saw a precious stone that was surrounded by a sea-monster. A diver descended to bring it up. [Thereupon] the sea-monster approached with the purpose of swallowing the ship, [when] a female raven came and bit off its head and the waters were turned into blood. A second sea-monster came, took [the precious stone] and attached it [to the body], and it revived. Again [the sea-monster] approached with intent on swallowing the ship. Again a bird came and severed its head. [Thereupon the diver] seized the precious stone and threw it into the ship. We had with us salted birds. [As soon as] we put [the stone] upon them, they (revived and) took it up and flew away with it.

Our Rabbis taught in a braisa: It happened that Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua were travelling on board a ship. Rabbi Eliezer was sleeping and Rabbi Yehoshua was awake. Rabbi Yehoshua shuddered and Rabbi Eliezer awoke. He said to him: What is the matter, Yehoshua? What has caused you to tremble? He said to him: I have seen a great light in the sea. He said to him: You may have seen the eyes of Leviathan, for it is written: His eyes are like the eyelids of the morning.

Rav Ashi said: Rav Huna bar Nassan related to me [the following]: Once we were walking in the desert and we had with us shank meat. We cut it open and picked out

[the forbidden fat and the sciatic nerve] and put it on herbs (to roast). While we were fetching wood, the shank regained its original form and we roasted it. When we returned after twelve calendar months, we saw those coals still glowing. When I came before Ameimar, he said to me: That herb was samtrei (that heals cut flesh). Those glowing coals were of rosem wood (that burn for a very long time).

[It is written]: And God created the great sea-monsters. Here they explained: The sea-gazelles. Rabbi Yochanan said: This refers to Leviathan the straight serpent, and to Leviathan the curved serpent, for it is written: On that day, God with His hard, great and strong sword will punish [Leviathan the straight serpent, and Leviathan the curved serpent].

(Mnemonic: Every time, Jordan.) Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: All creatures that the Holy One, Blessed be He, created in his world, He created male and female. Likewise, Leviathan the straight serpent and Leviathan the curved serpent He created male and female; and had they mated with one another they would have destroyed the entire world. What [then] did the Holy One, Blessed be He, do? He castrated the male and killed the female preserving it in salt for the righteous in the World to Come; for it is written: And He killed the serpent that is in the sea.

And also the behemos of a thousand hills, God created male and female, and had they mated with one another they would have destroyed the entire world. What did the Holy One, Blessed be He, do? He castrated the male and cooled the female and preserved it for the righteous for the World to Come; for it is written: Behold, now, his strength is in his loins – this refers to the male; and his force is in the navel of his belly - this refers to the female.

The Gemora asks: There also, [in the case of Leviathan], he should have castrated the male and cooled the female [why then did he kill the female]?

The Gemora answers: Fish are dissolute (and cooling it would be ineffective).

The Gemora asks: Why did He not reverse the process?

The Gemora answers: If you wish, say: [It is because a] female [fish] preserved in salt is tastier. If you prefer, say: Because it is written: There is Leviathan whom You have formed to sport with, and with a female this is not proper.

The Gemora asks: Then here also [in the case of behemos] he should have preserved the female in salt?

The Gemora answers: Salted fish is palatable, salted meat is not.

Rav Yehudah in the name of Rav further said: At the time when the Holy One, Blessed be He, desired to create the world, He said to the angel of the sea: Open your mouth and swallow all the waters of the world. He (the angel) said to Him: Lord of the Universe, it is enough that I remain with my own. Thereupon, He struck him with His foot and killed him; for it is written: He split the sea with his power and by His understanding He smote Rahav. Rabbi Yitzchak said: From this it may be inferred that the name of the angel of the sea was Rahav. And had the waters not covered him, no creature could have stood his [foul] odor; for it is written: They shall not hurt nor injure in all of My sacred mountain etc. as the waters cover the sea. Do not read: They cover the sea, but [in the sense]: They cover the angel of the sea.

Rav Yehudah further stated in the name of Rav: The Jordan issues from the cavern of Pame'as. It has been taught likewise: The Jordan issues from the cavern of Pame'as and passes through the Lake of Sivchi and the Lake of Tiberias and rolls down into the Great Sea from where it rolls down until it reaches into the mouth of Leviathan; for it is said: It is confident because the Jordan rushes forth into its mouth.

Rava bar Ulla objected: This [verse] is written regarding the behemos of a thousand hills!

The Gemora answers: Rather, Rava bar Ulla said: When is the behemos of a thousand hills confident? When the Jordan rushes into the mouth of Leviathan.

## DAILY MASHAL

### *An Eighth of an Eighth of Pride*

Our *sugya* informs us that the height of Mt. Tavor is four *parsaos*. A *parsah* is four *mil*, a *mil* is 2,000 cubits and Mt. Tavor is therefore 32,000 cubits high.

The Midrash relates that when Hashem was about to give us the Torah, Mt. Tavor wanted the honor because of its height. Hashem, though, ignored all other mountains and chose low Mt. Sinai to teach us the value of humility (Sotah 5a), as stressed by Yeshayahu (57:15): "...I dwell...with the lowly..." (*Midrash Rabah*, Vilna ed., 99). According to *Midrash Rabah (Parashas Bo)*, Mt. Sinai is 500 cubits high, one sixty-fourth (an eighth of an eighth) the height of Mt. Tavor. Hence, Rebbe Heshel of Krakow zt"l asserted that the Gemara learns therefrom that a Torah scholar should have an eighth of an eighth of pride (*Chanukas HaTorah*).