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Bava Basra Daf 118

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Leaving Egypt or Entering Israel?

Rav Pappa asked Abaye: It is understandable according to the opinion that the portions of *Eretz Yisroel* were given to the people who went out of Egypt why the daughters of Tzelophchad complained. *[They complained that they should inherit Tzelophchad’s portion of Eretz Yisroel.]* However, according to the opinion that it was divided amongst the people who entered *Eretz Yisroel*, what was their complaint? Tzelophchad was not alive to enter *Eretz Yisroel* (and therefore they should clearly not deserve a portion)!

The *Gemora* answers: Rather, it must be that this opinion understands that the people entering *Eretz Yisroel* would inherit portions that would then go back to their father and grandfather, who would then bequeath it to their descendants (*among whom were the daughters of Tzelophchad*).

The *Gemora* asks: It is understandable according to the opinion that the portions of *Eretz Yisroel* were given to the people who went out of Egypt why the sons of Yosef (*whose population multiplied considerably between the time that they came out of Egypt until the time that they entered Eretz Yisroel*) complained. This is as the verse says in Yehoshua: *And the sons of Yosef spoke (that they did not have enough inheritance, for they now have many more people)*. However, according to the opinion that it was based on who entered *Eretz Yisroel*, what was their complaint? They all (*who entered Eretz Yisroel*) inherited portions!

The *Gemora* answers: This is because they had a lot of children (*under twenty, or orphans whose fathers died before entering; this phenomena was unique to the children of Yosef and specifically to the Tribe of Menasheh*) when they entered *Eretz Yisroel* (*who did not receive a portion*).

Abaye says: We see from here (*that Scripture writes about Tzelophchad’s daughters and the children of Yosef complaining*) that there was not one other person who did not take a portion (*either through himself or his father, for otherwise, it would have been written about, as well*). If there was someone who would not have had a portion, he would have complained about it. And if you will reject this argument by saying that the Torah only wrote about those who complained and their claims were accepted, but not about those who complained and their claims were not accepted, the sons of Yosef screamed and their claims were not accepted!

The *Gemora* notes that there was a special reason why the Torah wrote about the children of Yosef’s complain (even though it was unsuccessful), and that is to teach good advice, that a person should be careful from the evil eye. This is what Yehoshua told them, as the verse says: *And Yehoshua said to them, if you are a large group then you should go up to the forest*. He was telling them to hide themselves (*i.e. the building of their houses*) amongst the trees of the forest in order that the evil eye should not affect them.

The children of Yosef responded: We are from the tribe of Yosef, and the evil eye cannot affect us. This is as the verse

states: *A charming son is Yosef, a charming son to the eye.* And Rabbi Avahu says: Do not read this as “*to the eye,*” but rather, “*above the (evil) eye.*”

Rabbi Yosi the son of Rabbi Chanina says the source of Yosef being above the evil eye is from a different verse. The verse states: “*v’Yidgu*” -- “*And they will multiply*” *into many in the midst of the land.*” Just as the water cover the fish (*v’yidgu implies fish, from the word dag*) in the sea and they are thereby immune to the evil eye, so too, the children of Yosef are immune to the evil eye. (118a – 118b)

The Portion of the Spies

The *braisa* had stated: Yehoshua and Calev took the portion of the spies.

The *Gemora* asks: How do we know this?

Ulla says that the verse states: *And Yehoshua bin Nun and Calev ben Yefuneh remained alive from those people.* What does it mean, “*they remained alive?*” If it means literally that they remained alive, isn’t there another verse that already states: *And there did not remain from them a man besides Calev ben Yefuneh and Yehoshua bin Nun?* Rather, it must mean that they (*Yehoshua and Calev*) lived in their (*the other spies*) portion in *Eretz Yisroel*.

The *braisa* had stated: The complainers (*in the Wilderness*) and the assembly of Korach did not have a portion in the Land.

The *Gemora* asks: Doesn’t the *braisa* say that the portion of the spies, complainers, and group of Korach was taken by Calev and Yehoshua?

The *Gemora* answers: This is not difficult. One *braisa* understands that we compare the complainers to the spies (*and Yehoshua and Calev took their portions as well*), and one says we do not.

This is as the *braisa* states: “*Our father died in the Wilderness.*” This refers to Tzelophchad. “*And he was not in the congregation.*” This refers to the spies. “*That gathered against Hashem*” refers to the complainers. “*With the congregation of Korach*” is simply translated. One *braisa* understands that we compare the complainers to the spies, and one says we do not.

And Rav Pappa said to Abaye: According to the opinion that we compare the complainers to the spies, Yehoshua and Calev’s portion is multiplied many times, and they ended up inheriting almost all of *Eretz Yisroel!* [*How can this be?*]

Abaye answered: The “*complainers*” refer to the complainers from the group of Korach.

And Rav Pappa said to Abaye: It is understandable according to the opinion that the portions of *Eretz Yisroel* were given to the people who went out of Egypt, this is why the verse says: *And there fell ten strips of the Land to Menasheh.* There were six families of Menasheh, and the daughters of Tzelophchad inherited four portions. They inherited their father’s portion, two portions from their father’s father, and one from their father’s brother (*see Rashbam*). This equals ten. However, according to the opinion that it was divided amongst the people who entered *Eretz Yisroel*, there should only be eight portions - six belonging to the six families, and two belonging to the daughters of Tzelophchad!?! [*They should not get a portion from Tzelophchad himself, nor his brother.*]

Abaye answered back: According to your reasoning, even according to the former opinion they should only have received three portions, totaling nine for Menasheh altogether. What will you say? It must be that they received one from their father’s brother. The latter opinion can therefore answer that it must be they received portions from two brothers of their father. This is as the *braisa* states: “*You should surely give them.*” This is referring to the

inheritance of their father. *“In the midst of their brother’s father.”* This refers to their inheritance from their father’s father. *“And you will pass their father’s inheritance to them.”* This refers to the firstborn portion of Tzelophchad. Rabbi Eliezer ben Yaakov says: They also took the portion of their father’s brother. This is as it says *“Nason titein”* -- “you shall surely give” (*the extra usage of “give” refers to a double portion*). According to the opinion that they inherited from two of their father’s brothers, this could be derived from *“from the possession of the inheritance”* (*also an extra usage, as it did not have to say “from the possession”*).

Abaye told Rav Pappa that by the fact that the verse stated that the daughters of Tzelophchad took their father’s firstborn portion, this teaches us that *Eretz Yisroel* was regarded as being in the possession of those people who left Egypt (*for otherwise, it would only be something that potentially would belong to Chefer, and a firstborn does not inherit a double portion from “potential” property*). (118b – 119a)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

DESCENDANTS OF YOSEF

The *Gemora* in Sotah (36b) explains: Even though Levi was below, the people standing by Mount Gerizim were more numerous because the descendants of Yosef (*who were very populous*) were with them; as it says: And the descendants of Yosef spoke to Yehoshua, saying, “Why have you given me but one lot and one portion for an inheritance, seeing that I am a huge nation?”

Rashi in Yehoshua notes that the descendants of Yosef were from the Tribe of Menasheh. The Radak explains that the descendants of Efraim did not have any legitimate complaint, for they had more people in their tribe when they left Egypt than now, when they entered *Eretz Yisroel*. Menasheh, on the other hand, had a valid complaint, for

they had twenty thousand and five hundred more people now than when they left Egypt. The portions of land were allocated according to the amount of people each tribe had when they left Egypt, and since they were more numerous when they entered *Eretz Yisroel* than when they left Egypt, each one of them would be receiving a lesser portion.

Minchas Yaakov adds that this explanation can be inferred from the verse which states that the descendants of Yosef spoke to Yehoshua. Reb Yaakov Kaminetzky in Emes l’Yaakov asks: Why by the spies, does the Torah state, *to the Tribe of Yosef, to the tribe of Menasheh*, but by Efraim, the Torah only writes, *to the Tribe of Efraim*? Why isn’t Yosef’s name mentioned? He answers that it is written [Breishis 48: 5 – 6]: *And now, as for your two sons, who were born to you in the land of Egypt, until I came to you, to the land of Egypt they are mine. Efraim and Menasheh shall be mine like Reuven and Shimon. But your children, if you beget any after them, shall be yours; by their brothers’ names, they shall be called in their inheritance.* The children born to Yosef afterwards did not merit being included in the Tribe of Yosef. Yosef had the choice of delivering them to any tribe that he wished. Since Menasheh was the firstborn, he combined all of his other children with them. It emerges that the descendants of Yosef, who were not offspring of Menasheh and Efraim, were included in the Tribe of Menasheh. It is for this reason that the Torah writes, *to the Tribe of Yosef, to the tribe of Menasheh*.

Our verse, which states that *“the descendants of Yosef spoke to Yehoshua”* is referring to the Tribe of Menasheh, which consisted of Menasheh’s offspring, plus the offspring of Yosef.

DAILY MASHAL

The origin and correct version of the *Mi shebeirach* prayer (Continued from Previous Daf)

The origin of the *Mi shebeirach* prayer: Over the years a custom developed to bless the ill during the public reading of the Torah with the *Mi shebeirach* prayer, mentioned by the *Rema* as prevalent “in these regions” – i.e., Eastern Europe (ibid; see *Darchei Moshe* on *Shulchan Aruch*, ibid). In his *Aroch HaShulchan* (Y.D., ibid), HaGaon Y.M. Epstein explains that the reading of the Torah is a particularly auspicious time to arouse Hashem’s mercy as listening to the Torah is considered learning and the congregation’s merit is equal to the prayer of the wise. *Mi shebeirach* is also pronounced in the rabbi’s presence, giving it another advantage (see Responsa *Tzitz Eli’ezer*, V, *Ramas Rachel*, Ch. 17, with proof from *Darchei Moshe*) but the Acharonim raised questions about two sections of the prayer:

The first question concerns saying “He will send him/her a complete cure”. On Shabos we must not pray for the ill and anyone visiting the sick should say “Shabos forbids us to cry out but may your cure be immediate” (Shabos 12a) with the exception that we may pray for the critically ill (*Shulchan Aruch*, O.C. 288:10). The *Beis Yosef* was therefore asked how the *Mi shebeirach* could include a plea for a “complete cure” and he offered two solutions in his *Avkas Rochel* (11-12). First of all, he asserts, the statement is not actually meant to be a prayer but that Hashem should approve a certain person’s deeds and charitable acts and, by their merit, cure him completely: “These statements do not arouse sorrow or weeping but hearten the ill and those who care for them, ensuring them that they’ll be saved from their maladies by the merit of this mitzvah.” In addition, the prohibition to pray for the sick on Shabos stems from the concern that people might break out in tears. *Mi shebeirach*, though, is a regular liturgical text for any suffering person: people hear it all year round and there

should be no suspicion that anyone would become particularly agitated or break into tears.

However, the *Magen Avraham* still has doubts about saying “send...a complete cure” (O.C. 288, S.K. 14) and HaGaon Rav Shneur Zalman of Lyadi rules that the *chazzan* should only say “Shabos forbids us to cry out but may your cure be immediate” (*Shulchan Aruch HaRav*, ibid). Indeed, the *Mi shebeirach* now appearing in our *sidurim* combines both versions: firstly, “send him/her a complete cure” but then “Shabos forbids us to cry out”! This text quotes the problematic phrase and its replacement solution and the author of *Aroch HaShulchan* tried to reconcile the text but found no satisfactory answer (ibid).

For her 248 limbs: The second question concerns the passage in *Mi shebeirach* referring to the 248 limbs of a suffering woman. The current text reads “a complete cure for all her limbs” but Rabbi Shlomo Kluger remarked that in his era certain communities had the custom to say “248 limbs” (Responsa *Haelef lecha Shlomo*, C.M. 120). The Gemara in Bechoros 45a states that a woman has more than 248 limbs – in Rambam’s opinion, 251 (*Hilchos Tumas Meis* 2:7) and according to others, even more. Why, then, was there a text referring to only 248? Rabbi Kluger explains that since we ask Hashem to bless the woman by the merit of Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, who had only 248 limbs, their merit can only extend to that number.