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The Tekufah and the Leap Year

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Shmuel: We do not intercalate a month into the year unless the new *tekufah* was not in the majority of the month. [The solar year which consists of three hundred and sixty-five and a quarter days is divided into four equal parts, each period consisting of ninety-one days and seven and a half hours. These are called respectively the Nissan (vernal), Tammuz (summer), Tishrei (autumnal), Teves (winter) Tekufos. The lunar year which forms the basis of our calendar comprises altogether three hundred and fifty-four days. Though according to Biblical tradition, our months are to be lunar, yet our Festivals are to be observed at certain agricultural seasons; Pesach and Shavuos in the Spring; Sukkos in the Autumn. In order to harmonize the lunar and solar years, a second Adar is intercalated once in two or three years. Our Gemara lays down certain principles by which the intercalators are to be guided.] How much is most of the month? It is sixteen days. [The greater part of Tishrei must be taken in to complete the *tekufah* of Tammuz; if Tishrei’s *tekufah* begins on the 17th of Tishrei, we add an extra month to that year in order that the *tekufah* of Tishrei will begin before the beginning of Sukkos; if, however, *tekufas* Tishrei began on the 16th of Tishrei, there is no need to make a leap year.] These are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Yosi says: It must be missing twenty-one days. [If Tishrei’s *tekufah* begins on the 22nd of Tishrei, we add an extra month to that year in order that the *tekufah* of Tishrei will begin before the end of Sukkos; if, however, *tekufas* Tishrei began on the 21st of Tishrei, the last day of Chol Hamoed, there is no need to make a leap year.] They derive their law from the same verse. The verse says: “The holiday of gathering, the

tekufah of the year.” One opinion says that this means the entire festival of *Sukkos* must be in the new *tekufah*. Another says that a portion of it must be in the new *tekufah*.

The *Gemara* asks: What do they hold? If they hold that the day that the new *tekufah* starts is still considered part of the old *tekufah*, both opinions should not hold the way they do! [Rabbi Yehudah should not even hold that the 15th is good, as the entire holiday is not in the new *tekufah*, and Rabbi Yosi should not even hold the 20th is good, as even part of the holiday is not in the new *tekufah*, being that the new *tekufah* on the 21st means it only actually starts on the 22nd!?]]

The *Gemara* answers: It therefore must be that they both hold that the day of the new *tekufah* is counted as the first day of the new *tekufah* (not the last of the old *tekufah*).

The *Gemara* asks a question on this from a *Baraisa*. The *Baraisa* states: The day that the new *tekufah* starts is still considered part of the old *tekufah*. These are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Yosi states: The day that the new *tekufah* starts is considered part of the new *tekufah*. [This means that Rabbi Yehudah does not hold as Shmuel stated!?]]

Additionally, the *Baraisa* states: We do not make a leap year unless the new *tekufah* is missing for most of the month. How much is most of the month? It is sixteen days. Rabbi Yehudah says: Two hands of the month. What does this mean? It means twenty days. Rabbi Yosi says: We



consider the amount of days. If there are sixteen days before *Pesach* (meaning sixteen days of Nissan from the old *tekufah*), we make a leap year. If there are sixteen days before *Sukkos* (meaning sixteen days of Tishrei from the old *tekufah*), we do not make a leap year. [Rashi explains that Rabbi Yosi understands the problem is *Sukkos*, not *Pesach*. However, if the new *tekufah* of Nissan only starts on the 17th of Nissan, this means that the next *tekufah* of Tishrei will only start on the 22nd of Tishrei, missing the entire *Sukkos*.] Rabbi Shimon says: Even if there are sixteen days before *Sukkos*, we do make a leap year. Others say: If there is a minority (we make a leap year). How much is a minority? It is fourteen days. The *Gemara* concludes that this is a question (and that these *braisos* clearly contradict *Shmuel's* statement).

Rabbi Yehudah says: Two hands of the month, meaning twenty days. Rabbi Yosi says: We consider the amount of days. If there are sixteen days before *Pesach* (from the old *tekufah*), we make a leap year. This is basically the same opinion as Rabbi Yehudah (being that they both hold that twenty days can be missing, not more)!?

The *Gemara* answers: The difference between them is whether the day of the new *tekufah* is counted as the first day of the new *tekufah* or the last of the old *tekufah*. [According to Rabbi Yehudah it is the last of the old *tekufah*. Therefore, in a case where the *tekufah* is on the 20th, the 21st day starts the new *tekufah*, and part of *Sukkos* is in the new *tekufah*. According to Rabbi Yosi, it is part of the new *tekufah*. This is why he holds the new *tekufah* can fall on the 21st itself without having to make a leap year.] (12b4 – 13a3)

The master had stated: [Rabbi Yosi says:] If it is sixteen days from the old *tekufah* before *Sukkos*, we do not make a leap year.

The *Gemara* asks: This implies that according to Rabbi Yosi we do not make a leap year if there are sixteen days from

the old *tekufah* in *Tishrei*. However, if there are seventeen or eighteen such days, we would make a leap year. However, didn't Rabbi Yosi say in his previous statement that if there are sixteen days before *Pesach* (meaning sixteen days of Nissan from the old *tekufah*), we make a leap year (because there will be twenty days of the old *tekufah* during *Tishrei*)! This implies that if there will be less than twenty days of the old *tekufah* during *Tishrei*, we would not make a leap year!?

The *Gemara* answers: No. In all of these cases where there are twenty days of the old *tekufah* or less, we would not make a leap year. Being that Rabbi Yosi started his statement by discussing sixteen days of the old *tekufah* in *Nissan*, he ended by saying that there is no leap year if there are sixteen days of the old *tekufah* in *Tishrei*. However, even if there would be more days of the old *tekufah* in *Tishrei*, he still would not make a leap year. (13a3 – 13a4)

Rabbi Shimon said: Even if there are sixteen days before *Sukkos*, we do make a leap year.

The *Gemara* asks: Isn't this the opinion of the *Tanna Kamma*?

The *Gemara* answers: The difference between them is whether the day of the new *tekufah* is counted as the first day of the new *tekufah* or the last of the old *tekufah*. However, it is not clear who holds what (one holds one way and the other holds the other way). (13a4 – 13b1)

Others said: If there is a minority (we make a leap year). How much is a minority? It is fourteen days.

The *Gemara* asks: What do the "Others" hold? If they hold that the last day of the *tekufah* belongs to the old *tekufah*, and the entire *Sukkos* must be in the new *tekufah*, this will be fulfilled anyway! Why is it necessary to make a leap year?

Rav Shmuel bar Rav Yitzchak explains: The “Others” are talking about *Pesach*, not *Sukkos*. This is as the verse states, “Guard the month of Aviv (the ripening grains).” This teaches us that we should guard that the *tekufah* of the sun (*Nissan*, when the grain ripens) should start during the time when the moon is still new (*first half of the month*).

The *Gemara* asks: Why don’t we just add an extra day to *Adar* (to ensure that this happens, instead of having to add a whole month)?

Rav Acha bar Yaakov says: The *Tanna* is listing the possibilities from top to bottom. He is saying that until the minority, meaning fourteen days, we can merely make an extra day in *Adar*. [However, if this is not enough, we make a leap year.]

Ravina says: Actually, the “Others” are discussing *Tishrei*. They hold that the entire *Sukkos*, including the first day, must be in the *tekufah* of *Tishrei*.

The *Gemara* asks: Why should the first day be in the new *tekufah*? Doesn’t the Torah call *Sukkos* “the holiday of gathering (in the *tekufah* of the new year),” implying that the new *tekufah* must start on the first day of *Chol Hamoed*?

The *Gemara* answers: It means that the festival that is at the time of gathering (even the first day) should be in the new *tekufah*. (13b1 – 13b2)

Leaning

The *Mishnah* had discussed the *semichah* of the elders.

The *Baraisa* states: “And the elders will lean.” One might think this could include elders who hang around the marketplace. This is why it says, “(elders) of the congregation.” This might mean the small (in stature) people of the congregation. This is why it says, “the

congregation” implying the important people of the congregation.

How many are required? “And they will lean” implies two and “Elders” implies two. We add another as a *Beis Din* be composed of an even amount of people, totaling five. These are the words of Rabbi Yehudah. Rabbi Shimon says: “Elders” is two, and we add another as a *Beis Din* be composed of an even amount of people, totaling three.

The *Gemara* asks: Why doesn’t Rabbi Shimon also derive from “And they will lean” that another two judges are required?

The *Gemara* answers: He requires this to teach us the basic law of the verse (and it is therefore not available to teach another law).

Rabbi Yehudah does not agree that this is required to teach the basic law of the verse. If it were so, the verse should have read, “The hands of the elders of the congregation should be on the bull.”

Rabbi Shimon counters that if the verse would say this, I would think that “al” -- “on” means “next to,” not on top.

Rabbi Yehudah counters that we would not have thought this, as we would have derived a *gezeirah shaveh* (one of the thirteen principles of Biblical hermeneutics; it links two similar words from dissimilar verses in the Torah) using the word “*rosh*” from a *korban olah* that it means on top.

Rabbi Shimon does not derive such a *gezeirah shaveh*. (13b2 – 13b3)

The *Baraisa* states: Leaning, and the leaning of the elders, is with three judges.

The *Gemara* asks: What is leaning and the leaning of the elders?

Rabbi Yochanan says: It (*semichah--leaning*) refers to giving people rabbinic ordination.

Abaye asked Rav Yosef: How do we know that rabbinic ordination is done with three people? If you will say it is due to the verse, “*And he (Moshe) leaned his hands on him (Yehoshua),*” one person should suffice!?! If you will say that Moshe is considered equivalent to seventy-one judges, we should require seventy one judges for rabbinical ordination as well! *The Gemara* concludes that this is difficult.

Rav Acha the son of Rava said to Rav Ashi: Does one have to literally put his hand on someone’s head when giving him rabbinic ordination?

He answered: We lean on him in name only, calling him a Rabbi, and giving him permission to judge cases involving fines. (13b3 – 13b4)

DAILY MASHAL

How the Talmudic Sages were Given their Titles

Rav Acha the son of Rava said to Rav Ashi: Does one have to literally put his hand on someone’s head when giving him rabbinic ordination?

He answered: We lean on him in name only, calling him a Rabbi, and giving him permission to judge cases involving fines.

Gadol meraban shemo – “greater than *raban* is his name” is an expression used by many to praise an exalted Torah personality. The description first appears in a responsum from the Babylonian Ge’onim – Rav Sherira Gaon, the *Rosh Yeshiva* of Ge’on Yaakov, and his son Rav Hai Gaon, called the *Av beis din* of Yeshivas Ge’on Yaakov. They were asked to explain the titles used for the sages of the Talmud, such as *Raban, Rabbi, Rav, Mar* and the like, in contrast to the

lack of titles when mentioning others such as Hillel, Shammai or Shimon ben Shetach. Their long and detailed responsum appears in *He’Aruch*, in the article on Abaye, (see also introduction of Rambam to *Peirush HaMishnayos* ch 7) and cites the rule that “greater than *rav* is *rabbi*, greater than *rabbi* is *raban* and greater than *raban* is his name alone.” The very first sages were known only by their names and therefore no titles were ever used to describe Avraham, Yitzchak, Yaakov, the prophets, the kings, the members of the Kenesses HaGedolah or the sages up to the middle of the era of the *Tannaim* before the destruction of the Second Temple. The title *Raban* became to be used for the Nesi’im in the generation of Raban Gamliel HaZaken while other sages in *Eretz Yisroel* were known as *Rabbi*. The *Sefer HaYuchasin* states that the title *Rabbi* was used to distinguish genuine sages from Sadducean imposters and since then various titles have been employed to describe our sages. On the other hand, the sages not called by their real names – such as Abaye, whose true name was Nachmeini – were left without a title (see *ibid* as to the meaning of the name *Abaye* and why he was not called by his real name). The only one of our forefathers with an added title is Moshe Rabbeinu and even then his title always appears **after** his name, as it is not meant to honor him but to honor us, that we had the merit that he was our *rav* (see *Otzar HaGeonim*).

The difference between *rav* and *rabbi*: Rav Sherira Gaon and Rav Hai Gaon explain that the sages of *Eretz Yisroel* were called *rabbi* whereas those of Babylonia were titled *rav*. Indeed, the *Gemara* calls Rav Zeira by that title while he was in Babylonia, but refers to him as **Rabbi** Zeira after his arrival in *Eretz Yisroel* and the *Gemara* in Kesuvos 43b discusses whether a certain *halachah* was stated by Rav Zeira, while still in Babylonia, or by **Rabbi** Zeira in *Eretz Yisroel* (according to Rashi, *ibid*, but Tosefos in Menachos 40b, s.v. *Rabbi Zeira*, disagree). Rashi (*ibid*) explains that the difference in titles stems from the fact that there was no traditional *semichah* – rabbinical ordination – in Babylonia (see *Sefer HaShtaros* by Rabbi Yehudah El-



Barceloni, one of the first Rishonim and author of *Sefer Ha'Itim*). Real *semichah* was eventually discontinued for certain reasons and was replaced by a symbolic *semichah* "so that students should adhere to the sages' attributes and gradually advance along the levels of wisdom and its uses" (Rabbi Y. El-Barceloni, *ibid*). The *Sefer HaShtaros* ("Book of Documents") therefore includes a "document of *semichah*" to authorize students to be called *rav*, *rabbi* or *chacham*.

An unlearned person called by a rabbinical title: The use of titles has spread since that period such that people who are not *talmidei chachamim* are sometimes called by the above appellations. The matter may even have *halachic* implications, as in the instance of a bill of divorce (*get*). The author of *Get Pashut* (129, s.k. 31, s.v. *Harav*) asserts that because of the proliferation of titles we must not disqualify a *get* in which the husband is called *rav* even if he lacks any Torah knowledge.

HaGaon Rabbi Akiva Eiger zt"l states that if he could, he would completely do away with titles in our era. Those who give a title to anyone, he complains, are guilty of minor flattery and those so titled might be tempted to assume false pride or dislike those giving them such titles if they think they deserve better (Preface to Responsa *Rabbi Akiva Eiger*).

HALACHAH ON THE DAF

Lo Adu Rosh

The *Gemara* continues to discuss the laws of making a leap year. The *Gemara* records a dispute between Rabbi Yehudah and Rabbi Yosi. Rashi explains the opinion of Rabbi Yosi, and an important part of the calculation, is *lo adu rosh*, meaning that the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* cannot fall out on a Sunday, Wednesday or Friday.

In the times of the Bais Hamikdash they established the length of the month based on testimony from witnesses that saw the new moon. But that all changed when Hillel

made a calendar whose specific rules would allow the smooth running of the Jewish year. Each year has a set amount of months, whose length is either a 29 or 30 day month. Every couple of years, there is a need to add an additional month in order to enable the holidays to fall in the same season each year (*the seasons follow the solar year, and the Jewish calendar follows the lunar year*). There is a set timeline as to which year will be a leap year. [This is known as "gu-ach adzat" – every third, sixth, eighth, eleventh, fourteenth, seventeenth and nineteenth year of the nineteen year cycle is deemed a leap year.]

According to the calendar's calculation, there are specific days which will never fall out on a given Yom Tov.

Rosh Hashana - Sunday, Wednesday and Friday.

Yom Kippur - Sunday, Tuesday and Friday.

Hoshana Rabbah - Tuesday, Thursday and Shabbos.

Chanukah - Tuesday. Incidentally, this is the reason for the custom to distribute "Chanuka Gelt" on the 5th day of Chanuka, since it can never fall out on a Shabbos (Steipler).

Ta'anis Esther - Sunday, Tuesday and Friday.

Purim - Monday, Wednesday and Shabbos.

Pesach - Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Shavuos - Tuesday, Thursday and Shabbos.

Shiva Asar B'tamuz - Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Tisha B'av - Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

Another calculation that manifests itself through the calendar is the correlation between two important days. Meaning the day of the week in which A falls out will always be the same day as B (i.e. the upcoming B).

The first day of Pesach - Tisha B'av.

The second day of Pesach - Shavuos.

The third day of Pesach - Rosh Hashanah.

The fourth day of Pesach - Simchas Torah.

The fifth day of Pesach - Yom Kippur.

The sixth day of Pesach - Purim (of that year)

Purim - Lag B'omer