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Taanis Daf 22

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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

Rabbi Beroka of Bei Chuzai would frequent the market of Bei Lefet. Eliyahu HaNavi was accustomed to meeting him there. “Is there anyone in this market,” Rabbi Beroka asked Eliyahu, “worthy of the World to Come?” “No,” said Eliyahu HaNavi. Then he spotted a certain man wearing black shoes (unlike the custom of the Jews), and no *tzitzis* on his garment. “That man,” said Eliyahu HaNavi, “is worthy of the World to Come.” Rabbi Beroka ran over to the man. “Tell me what you do,” he said to him. “Leave me today,” the man answered, “and ask me tomorrow.” The next day Rabbi Beroka spotted the man. “Tell me what you do,” he said to him. “I am a prison guard,” he told him, “and I am careful to keep the men separate from the women. I place my bed between them that they shouldn't sin in any way. When I see that the non-Jews there are eyeing a Jewish girl, I risk my life to save her from them. One day, there was a betrothed young woman (faced just such a difficulty) on whom the non-Jews were eyeing. I took wine dregs (which look like blood), and splashed them on the bottom of her dress. ‘She is menstruating,’ I told them, and they left her alone.”

“Why don't you have *tzitzis* on your garment,” Rabbi Beroka asked him, “and why do you wear black shoes, unlike other Jews?” “I mix with non-Jews,” the man answered, “and I don't want them to recognize that I'm Jewish. In this way when I hear that the government is plotting against the Jews, I inform the Rabbis that they may pray and nullify the decree.”

“Yesterday, when I approached you,” Rabbi Beroka asked him, “you said, leave me today, ask me tomorrow. Why was that?” “I was hurrying to tell the rabbis of just such a decree, so that they may pray regarding the matter” the man answered.

While they were talking, two people passed by. “They also,” Eliyahu HaNavi said to Rabbi Beroka, “are worthy of the World to Come.” “What do you do?” Rabbi Beroka asked them. “We are comedians, and we cheer up those who are depressed,” they answered. “Also, if we see two people fighting, we make a special effort to make peace between them.” (22a1 – 22a2)

The Mishnah had stated that we declare a fast and cry out when wild animals come.

The Gemora cites a Baraisa: We cry out everywhere on account of the following calamities: windblasts, yellowing, locust, chasil locusts and wild beasts. Rabbi Akiva says: For the slightest attack of windblast and yellowing; and in the case of locust and chasil locusts - even if only one winged creature is seen in Eretz Yisroel, we cry out over them. (22a2)

The Mishnah had stated that we declare a fast and cry out when wild animals come.

The Gemora cites a Baraisa which rules that we cry out only if the wild animals are Heaven-sent but if it is not Heaven-sent (rather, the animals are behaving in their usual manner), we don't cry out. When is it Heaven-sent, and when is it not Heaven-sent? If it is seen in the city, it is Heaven-sent, but if it is the fields, it is not Heaven-sent. If it is seen by day, it is Heaven-sent, but if it is by night, it is not Heaven-sent. If the animal saw two people and chased them, that is Heaven-sent, but if it hid from them, it is not Heaven-sent. If it killed two people but ate only one, it is regarded as Heaven-sent. If it ate both, it is not Heaven-sent (since we would assume that the animal was hungry). If it climbed onto a roof and grabbed

a baby from its crib, this is deemed to be Heaven-sent (and therefore we would cry out).

Isn't this [Baraisa] self-contradictory? [First] you say: If it makes its appearance in the city it is Heaven-sent, and no distinction is made whether this happens by day or by night, and then you add: it is Heaven-sent, but by night it is not! — There is no contradiction. This is what is meant: If it makes its appearance in the city by day it is Heaven-sent, but in the city by night it is not. Or, in the field even by day it is not Heaven-sent.

[First you say:] If the beast sees two persons and pursues them it is Heaven-sent, which implies that if it remains still it is not Heaven-sent, and then you add: if it hides itself on seeing then it is not Heaven-sent; this would imply that if it remains still it is Heaven-sent! — This is no contradiction. In the one case it speaks of [a beast] in a field near a marsh; in the other in a field not near a marsh.¹

[You say:] If it kills two men and devours one of them, that is Heaven-sent, but if it devours both of them it is not. But did you not say that even if it only pursues [two people] that is Heaven-sent? — Rav Pappa replied: That speaks of a case [where the beast is standing] in a marsh.

The [above] text [states]: If it climbed the roof and carried off an infant out of the cradle it is Heaven-sent. Is not this self-evident? Rav Pappa replied: This statement is meant to refer to [the case of a beast carrying off an infant out of a cradle in] a hunter's cave.² (22a2 – 22a3)

The Mishnah had stated that we cry out on the account of the sword.

¹ The Gemora explains that if an animal is in a field which is near a marsh and it stands still, that is not unusual since it could easily flee into its natural habitat; however, if it is in a field that is not near the marsh and nevertheless, it remains standing, this is unnatural and obviously Heaven-sent.

The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: By 'sword' is meant not only a hostile attack by an invading army but also the sword of peace.³ For there could be no more friendly army than that of Pharaoh-Necho, and yet through it King Yoshiahu met his fate, as it is said: He sent ambassadors to him, saying: What have I to do with you, you king of Judah? I do not come against you this day, but to the theater of my war: and God has given command to speed me; do not meddle with God, who is with me, so that He does not destroy you.

What is meant by 'God who is with me'? — Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: This refers to a pagan deity. Yoshiahu said [to himself]: Since he [Pharaoh-Necho] puts his trust in his idols I will prevail over him.

And the archers shot at King Yoshiahu; and the king said to his servants: Move me away, for I am gravely ill. What is meant by, 'For I am gravely ill'? Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: This teaches that his whole body was perforated like a sieve.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini said in the name of Rabbi Yonasan: Yoshiahu was punished because he should have consulted Yirmiyahu and he did not. On what did Yoshiahu rely? — On the divine promise contained in the words: Neither shall the sword go through your land. What sword? Is it the warring sword? It is already stated [in the same verse]: And I will give peace in the land. It must surely refer to the peaceful sword. Yoshiahu, however, did not know that his generation found but little favor [in the eyes of God]. When he was dying Yirmiyahu observed that his lips were moving and he feared that perhaps, Heaven forbid, [Yoshiahu] was saying something improper because of his great pain; he thereupon bent down and he overheard him justifying [God's] decree against himself saying: Hashem is righteous; for I have rebelled against His word. He

² Rav Pappa explains that the Baraisa refers to a case where a hunter builds a structure in an uninhabited area, a place that wild animals do not fear. It is nevertheless considered unusual for the animal to climb onto the roof and grab a baby and therefore we would fast and cry out.

³ The passing en route of a friendly army.

[Yirmiyahu] then cited of him: The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of Hashem. (22a3 - 22b1)

The Mishnah had stated: It happened that the elders returned from Jerusalem to their own cities etc. The question was asked: [Does the Mishnah mean] as an oven full of grain, or as an oven full of bread? — Come and hear: As much as would fill the opening of an oven. The following question however still remains: Does it mean [as much bread] as would close the opening of an oven, or a row of loaves extending to the opening of the oven? This is left undecided. (22b2)

The Mishnah had stated that they once declared a fast due to an incident when wolves devoured two children on the other side of the Jordan River.

Ulla said in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yehotzadok that there once was an incident where wolves swallowed two babies and excreted them through the excretory canal. The Chachamim heard about this and stated that the flesh of the babies is considered tahor (*since it is viewed as excrement and not flesh*) but the bones can transmit tumah. (22b2)

The Mishnah had stated: For these we cry out even on the Shabbos etc. Our Rabbis have taught: When a city is surrounded by hostile gentiles, or threatened with inundation by the river, or when a ship is foundering in the sea, or when an individual is being pursued by gentiles or robbers or by an evil spirit, we cry out [even] on the Shabbos; and on account of all these an individual may afflict himself by fasting. Rabbi Yosi says: An individual may not afflict himself by fasting for he may come to need the help of his fellow men and it may be that they will not have mercy upon him.

Rav Yehudah said in the name of Rav: Rabbi Yosi's reason is because it is written: And became a living soul; Scripture thereby implies, [God says], Keep alive the soul which I gave you. (22b2)

The Mishnah had stated: Shimon the Timnite said: Also on account of pestilence etc.

The question was asked: Did the Rabbis disagree with him only when it was a question of crying out on the Shabbos, but on weekdays they agreed with him; or, perhaps they did not agree with him in any circumstances? — Come and hear: We cry out on account of pestilence on the Shabbos, and, it goes without saying, on weekdays. Rabbi Chanan bar Pitom, a disciple of Rabbi Akiva, said in the name of Rabbi Akiva: We may not under any circumstances cry out on account of pestilence. (22b2 – 22b3)

The Mishnah states that we call out for any catastrophe that threatens the city except for an overabundance of rain. The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: On any catastrophe that threatens the city we cry out except for an overabundance of rain. What is the reason for this? Rabbi Yochanan explains that it is not proper to pray for something which is good to cease. Rabbi Yochanan further said: From where do we derive that we may not pray on account of an excess of good? For it is said: Bring all the tithes into the storehouse ... [and I will pour out blessing to you without limit]. What is the meaning of: without limit? — Rami son of Rav Yud interpreted: Until your lips grow weary with
Saying: Enough!

Rami son of Rav Yud said: In the Diaspora we cry out on account of this. It has been taught likewise: In a year of excessive rain the Men of the Mishmar send [a message] to the Men of the Ma'amad: Think of your brethren in the Diaspora that their houses may not become their graves.

Rabbi Eliezer was asked: How excessive must the rainfall be to warrant prayer for it to cease? He replied: When a man standing on Keren Ofel is able to dabble his feet in water. But has it not been taught 'his hands'? — I mean, his feet [at the same time] as his hands. Rabah bar bar Chanah related: Once as I was standing on Keren Ofel I saw [below] an Arab with a spear in his hand riding on a camel and to me he looked as small as a worm. (22b3 – 22b4)



The Gemora cites a Baraisa which expounds on a verse in Vayikra (26:4) which states: I will give your rains in their time. The blessing described here is that the earth will not be drunk (overly drenched) with rain, nor will it be thirsty; rather it will be reasonably wet. Excessive rain makes the earth muddy and it will not be able to produce fruit. An alternative explanation is that the "proper time" is referring to Tuesday and Friday nights.⁴

In the days of Shimon ben Shetach, the rains would fall on Tuesday and Friday nights, when people are at home. The blessing was so great that wheat grains were the size of kidneys -- barley, the size of olives -- lentils, the size of golden *dinarim*. They stored specimens of them for future generations in order to demonstrate to them the effects of sin, as it is said: Your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have withheld good from you. Similarly, in the days of Hordos, when the people engaged in renovating the Beis Hamikdosh, the rains fell only at night. The next morning, the wind scattered the clouds, the sun shone, and the people came to their work. They knew that their work was for the sake of heaven, and that the heavens had approved their efforts. (22b4 – 23a1)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

THE WORLD TO COME HAS MANY DIFFERENT LEVELS

Rabbi Beroka of Bnei Chuzai would frequent the market of Lefet. Eliyahu HaNavi was accustomed to meeting him there. "Is there anyone in this market," Rabbi Beroka asked Eliyahu, "worthy of the World to Come?" "No," said Eliyahu HaNavi.

Sheorim Mitzuyanim B'halachah asks that it seems strange that there would be nobody in the entire market area that would be worthy of the World to Come. Rabbi Akiva Eiger points out a Toras Chaim in Sanhedrin (88b) who explains the Gemora which states that every Jew has a portion in the World to Come. This is referring to a person after he dies and

⁴ Generally, people are not outside on these nights and therefore the rains will not be a nuisance to them.

is punished for his sins; he then becomes eligible for the World to Come. Rabbi Beroka was searching for someone that is worthy for the World to Come even while he is alive. From the answer of our Gemora, it would seem that a simple person who performs mitzvos merits a portion in the World to Come providing that he doesn't sin.

Rav Aharon Kotler (Mishnas Reb Aharon 3, P. 243) makes a distinction between the Mishnah in Avos which states that every person has a portion in the World to Come and our Gemora which is referring to someone who is destined for the World to Come, someone whose entire being and life can be describes as an '*olam habodike yid*.'

The Shalah Hakodosh writes that there are three levels in the World to Come. Someone can merely have a portion in the World to Come. Others can inherit the World to Come. The highest level is someone who is a 'ben olam habah.'

DAILY MASHAL

HAPPINESS BREEDS HAPPINESS

The Gemora concludes the story with Rabbi Beroka and Eliyahu HaNavi that while they were talking, two brothers passed by. "They also," Eliyahu HaNavi whispered to Rabbi Beroka, "are worthy of the world to come." "What do you do?" Rabbi Beroka asked them. "We are happy, and we make others happy," they answered. "If we see someone sad, we make a special effort to cheer him up. Also, if we see people fighting, we make a special effort to make peace between them."

A question is asked: Why was it necessary for them to say "We are happy"? Would it not have been sufficient for them to say that they make others happy? The Yalkut Meam Loez learns from here, that if one wants to make others happy, he himself must be happy. If they were sad people, then even if they would want to make others happy, they would not be able to.