

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The first of Nisan

A Baraisa enumerates three, or according to others four, matters for which the first of Nisan is the beginning of the New Year.

Two unsuccessful attempts are made to identify the source for the Baraisa's ruling that Nisan is the New Year for months.

Six different pesukim in Neviim and Kesuvim are cited that clearly indicate that Nisan is considered the first of the months.

A reason is given why the Tanna of our Mishnah did not include this New Year in the list of New Years in the Mishnah.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok explains that the Baraisa's statement regarding intercalations (עיבורין) means that once Nisan arrives it is no longer permitted to declare the year a leap year.

The Gemara digresses to analyze the dispute whether Purim is the final date to make the year into a leap year.

A reason is given why the Tanna of our Mishnah did not include this New Year in the list of New Years in the Mishnah.

R' Yoshiyah identifies the source that the first of Nisan begins the new fiscal year for shekalim.

R' Yehudah in the name of Shmuel elaborates on the law that beginning with the first of Nisan it is a mitzvah to pay for communal korbanos from the new shekalim.

A Baraisa echoes the same idea.

The last statement of the Baraisa is explained regarding the donation of the private individual for communal korbanos.

A reason is given why the Tanna of our Mishnah did not include this New Year in the list of New Years in the Mishnah.

A Baraisa elaborates on the fourth issue for which Nisan is considered the New Year.

A reason is given why the Tanna of our Mishnah did not include this New Year in the list of New Years in the Mishnah.

2) Identifying the author of the Mishnah

The Gemara notes an apparent contradiction regarding the author of the Mishnah.

R' Yosef suggests that the Mishnah was authored by Rabbi who follows different Tannaim regarding different matters.

This explanation is challenged.

Rava and R' Nachman bar Yitzchok offer different resolutions to the Gemara's challenge.

A Baraisa is cited that challenges the answers offered by Rava and R' Nachman bar Yitzchok.

Two out of a total of three answers to this challenge are presented. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Deciding after Rosh HaShanah to add a month to the year

מעברין אותו אחר ראש השנה מיד

Tosafos Ri"d notes that the Gemara in Sanhedrin (11b) gives three reasons why an extra month would have to be added to the lunar year. One reason we add a month of Adar (1) is in order for the grain of the field to be ripe and ready (for the omer offering for Pesach). A second reason to add a month is in order that the fruit of the trees be ready to be brought as Bikkurim on Shavu'os. They must be ripe by this time, and if Sivan would fall out in the spring, the fruits would not be ready in time. The third reason to add a month to the lunar year is in order to maintain a proper alignment of the festivals, so that Nisan occurs in the spring. If we did not add an extra month, the months of Tamuz and Av would quickly encroach backwards and fall out during the spring season.

The Gemara concludes that if even two out of these three reasons is present, the year can be extended. If, however, only one of the reasons is noted to be applicable in a particular year, the extra month of Adar should not be added. We must ask, therefore, how it is possible to decide immediately after Rosh HaShanah to add a month to the year. We would not be able to determine whether the grain or fruit is ripening on time at this point, and the only factor which would be apparent is the calendar alignment of Tamuz being scheduled to come out too early. This one factor is not enough to justify an early decision.

Tosafos Ri"d answers that our Baraisa holds that the need to combine two factors is only referring to the considerations of the grain and fruit. However, the one factor concerning the calendar is enough by itself.

Turei Even answers that the Gemara in Sanhedrin itself suggests that even when only one factor is present, we can include other minor factors into the process to decide to add a month already from Rosh HaShanah. For example, if the sheep gave birth relatively late, and they must be a year old in order to be used as the Korban Pesach. Knowing this already at Rosh HaShanah can influence and help to finalize an early decision. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Counting Nisan as the first month

תנו רבנן באחד בניסן ראש השנה לחדשים

The Rabbis taught: The first of Nisan is the New Year for months.

Ramban¹ writes that the Torah instructed the Jewish People to count months beginning with Nisan to commemorate the fact that Yetzias Mitzrayim took place in that month. For this reason the Torah did not give a name to any of the months, rather the months are referred by their number with Nisan as the first of the months. This is similar to the way we refer to the days of the week. Sunday is called **יום ראשון**; Monday is called **יום שני** etc. in order to give significance to Shabbos. Along these same lines, the months are counted from Nisan to give importance to Yetzias Mitzrayim. The names of the months were introduced after the Jewish People were exiled and later returned from Bavel. The names of the months (Nisan, Iyar, Sivan, etc.) are Persian, and they were incorporated to publicize the fact that the Jewish People descended to Bavel and our appreciation that Hashem returned them to Eretz Yisroel.

Rav Yosef Albo in Sefer Ikarim² writes that originally the Biblical commandment was to refer to the months by their numbers with Nisan counted as the first month of the year. When the Jewish People returned from Bavel a new commandment was given to note the new appreciation for Hashem returning the Jewish People to Eretz Yisroel, and the mitzvah was altered. The months were to be identified by their Persian names and the mitzvah to refer to the months by their number no longer applied.

HaKosev³, found in Ein Yaakov, strongly disputes the assertion that a mitzvah changed over the course of history.

STORIES Off the Daf

Thirty days before Pesach

דאמר מר שואלן בהלכות הפסח קודם לפסח שלשים יום

On today's daf there is an extensive discussion about the calculation of leap years. One of the opinions presented is that the decision to declare a leap year can only be made until Purim because of a basic fact of Jewish life. Since the laws of Pesach are publicly taught during the thirty days that precede the festival, people would not accept the deferment of

the holiday after having already spent time in intensive preparation. Even now, the thirty days just before Pesach is a period that presents unique challenges for both the homemaker readying his/her home for the festival, as well as the Rav responsible for making sure that his community knows the appropriate halachos.

One year, well in advance of Pesach, the Rav of a large city came to visit with the renowned Tiferes Shlomo of Radomsk, zt"l. He had come to receive a brachah from the great tzaddik.

"Rebbe," he said, "Please bless me so that I won't stumble in any of the halachic rulings that I am going to have to

make regarding Pesach. So many people come to me with difficult questions about chometz, and I am so in need of siyatta d'shemaya!"

The Radomsker Rebbe answered his visitor, "The greatest possible segulah for success in your rulings is to review all of the relevant halachos very, very thoroughly. As you well know, we begin our real study of the laws of Pesach from thirty days before the festival. If you'll follow the words of Chazal and delve into the halachah as you should, you will merit to receive all of the siyatta d'shemaya that you need!" ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why didn't the other Amoraim cite the pasuk **בחדש ניסן** as proof that Nisan is the first month?

2. What marked the beginning of the new fiscal year for communal korbanos?

3. What is the minimum duration of the rental of a home?

4. Why does the Mishnah state that there are four New Years when there are more?

Therefore, he writes that the mitzvah continues to refer to Nisan as the first month of the year. However, the mitzvah applies only when identifying the month by a number (For example to refer to December by the number 12); there is no restriction against referring to the month by a name. Consequently, the new practice to refer to the months by their Persian names did not contradict the Biblical commandment in any way (see there for a discussion of whether one may use the names January, February, etc.) Others⁴ take a more lenient approach noting that even the Ramban did not include this as one of the mitzvos and therefore it is not an essential practice and thus one could be lenient when necessary. ■

1. רמב"ן פרשת בא (יב:ב)
2. ספר העקרים מאמר ג' פט"ז
3. הכותב פ"ק דמגילה
4. ע' שר"ת דברי יואל סי' ט"ו המובא בספר מנהג ישראל תורה לעניני חקת הגוי סי' י"ז סוף אות ב' עמ' קי"ח ■