

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The third of Tishrei as a Yom Tov (cont.)

The Gemara questions why the third of Tishrei should be identified as a Yom Tov due to it being the day Hashem's name was successfully removed from contracts. It should be observed as a Yom Tov due to it being a reversal of a day that was observed as a fast day during the Second Beis HaMikdash.

The purpose of the enactment, Rav explained, was to prohibit fasting the day before.

In the ensuing discussion, the Gemara teaches that Biblical laws as well as laws that come from the Prophets do not require additional strengthening as does Rabbinic law.

Rav Tovi bar Masna presents another challenge to the position that Megillas Ta'anis was nullified.

The Gemara is forced to admit that there is a dispute between Tannaim regarding the issue of whether Megillas Ta'anis was nullified.

The final conclusion is that Chanukah and Purim remain from Megillas Ta'anis, but the other days mentioned in that list are no longer observed.

2) Sending forth messengers

The Gemara asks why messengers are sent to the Diaspora for Tishrei if messengers were already sent for Elul, and Elul is only twenty-nine days.

The Gemara answers that Elul could, theoretically, be extended to be a thirty-day month if there was a strong need to adjust for the other Yomim Tovim.

It is noted that the Mishnah does not mention that messengers are sent out for Adar Sheni during a leap year. This would be inconsistent with Rebbi's opinion.

The point of the dispute is explained.

3) Adar

In the name of Kahala Kadiasha of Yerushalayim, R' Yehoshua ben Levi testified that both Adars are sanctified on the thirtieth.

This position is at odds with R' Nachman bar Chisda who maintains that the two Adars can either both be made full, both deficient, or one full and one deficient. Rav, however, advises that one should assume that one is full and the other is deficient unless one knows for certain that this pattern was not followed.

Mar Ukva states that the Adar immediately preceding Nisan is always deficient.

R' Nachman unsuccessfully challenged this statement. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Fasting on the day before Purim

כאן בחנוכה ופורים

The Gemara reports that with the destruction of the Beis HaMikdash, the celebrations associated with the list of mini holidays which comprise Megilas Ta'anis was cancelled, except for the holidays of Chanukah and Purim. The Rishonim note that the conclusion of our Gemara must be evaluated in light of the Gemara in Ta'anis (18a), where Rabbi Yochanan and Shmuel dispute the status of the days before and after the Megilas Ta'anis dates. Rabbi Yochanan rules that fasting is prohibited on the days before and after each holiday. Although Shmuel argues, we generally rule according to Rabbi Yochanan against Shmuel. We must understand, therefore, why fasting is allowed on Ta'anis Esther, the day before Purim, when our Gemara teaches that the celebrations of the holidays of Purim and Chanukah have not be cancelled. Several answers have been given to this question.

Tosafos and Ritva explain that because we conclude that the celebrations of Megilas Ta'anis holidays have been cancelled, except for Chanukah and Purim, we rule leniently according to Shmuel in this one detail to allow fasting before and after these remaining observances.

Rabeinu Tam (see Rosh, Megillah 1:1) explains that Ta'anis Esther was established as a fast day together with the original commemoration of the holiday of Purim. We fast on this day as a sign of solidarity with those who entered into battle in a spirit of teshuvah and prayer against our enemies at that moment of national danger. Therefore, Ta'anis Esther is not an example of allowing a fast to be observed on the day before a Megilas Ta'anis date.

Ran writes that the thirteenth of Adar is not only the day before Purim, but it is the calendar date of **יום ניקנור** (see Ta'anis 7a), which was in Megilas Ta'anis and was therefore prohibited in fasting. Once the main significance of the thirteenth of Adar as Nikanor Day was nullified, and it became permitted as a fast day due to the cancellation of Megilas Ta'anis, it no longer makes sense to re-establish a restriction to fast on that day merely as it being ancillary to Purim. ■

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated By Dr. & Mrs. Shmuel Roth

In loving memory of their father

ר' יצחק יעקב בן ר' יחיאל צבי, ע"ה

HALACHAH Highlight

The force of Divrei Kabbalah

ודברי קבלה כדברי תורה דמו

The laws of the Prophets are like the laws of the Torah

Poskim disagree about the extent of the principle that the laws of the Prophets – דברי קבלה – are like the laws of the Torah. The She'iltos¹ writes that when there is doubt related to rending one's garment upon the loss of a relative, a law derived from the Prophets, one must follow the strict approach. The reason is that the obligation for a mourner to rend his garment is derived from the Prophets, and as such, it is treated the same as a Biblical mitzvah where the principle regarding doubt is to follow the strict approach (ספק דאורייתא לחומרא). Rabbeinu Shlomo ben Aderes², the Rashba, adopts a different perspective. Rashba writes that when there is a matter of doubt concerning the reading of Megillas Esther we follow the lenient approach based on the principle of ספק דרבנן לקולא – one follows the lenient approach regarding matters that are Rabbinic in origin. Rav Yosef Teomim³, the Pri Megadim, similarly expresses doubt whether the rule “the laws of the Prophets are like the laws of the Torah” instructs us to treat matters of doubt regarding the laws of the Prophets like laws of the Torah, and to follow the strict approach when in doubt.

Another application of this question is relevant for the issue of whether a boy who arrives at his thirteenth birthday is assumed to have physically matured as well. The general rule is that regarding Biblical matters we do not rely on the assumption that thirteen-year old boys have reached physical maturity as well, which is necessary to halachically be considered an adult, whereas regard-

REVIEW and Remember

1. Is it permitted to fast on the day before or after Shabbos and Yom Tov?
2. What chant did the Jews repeat during their protest?
3. Is any part of Megillas Ta'anis still observed?
4. What is the עיבור of a month?

ing Rabbinic matters we do rely on this assumption. What is the rule concerning laws of the Prophets? If they are treated like Biblical law we would not rely on the assumption, but if they are treated like Rabbinic laws we would rely on the assumption. Rav Shlomo Zalman Braun⁴, the Shearim HaMetzuyanim B'Halachah, follows the strict approach on this matter and, for example, would not permit a thirteen-year-old boy to read Megillas Esther for others, thus relying on the assumption that the boy has developed physical signs of maturity as well. Others⁵ disagree and maintain that a thirteen-year-old boy could read the Megillah for others under the assumption that he has produced physical signs of maturity. ■

1. שאילתא ל"ה וע' בהעמק שאלה שם סק"ב
2. רשב"א למגילה ה' ד"ה ה"ג
3. פרי מגדים או"ח סע' תרצ"ב מש"ז סק"ג
4. שערים המצויינים בהלכה סי' קמ"א סק"ז
5. ע' שו"ת אבני ישפה או"ח סע' קל"א שמדייק כן מדברי הפמ"ג (א"א סי' רפ"ב סק"ו) ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Badges of honor

מה עשה יהודה בן שמוע וחביריו? הלכו ונטלו עצה ממטרוניתא אחת... בואו והפיגנו בלילה

On today's daf we find that the 29th of Adar was once celebrated as a festival because anti-Jewish decrees made by the Romans were annulled on that day. How did they come to be retracted? Rav Yehudah ben Shamma and his friends asked advice of a matron who circulated in the upper echelons of Roman society. She told them to make a demonstration at night, and they followed her advice and succeeded to overturn the decrees. Waging protest against evil was a practice embraced by our gedolim throughout the ages.

Once, a group of “free-thinkers” de-

cidated to hold a conference in the venerable shul of the Old Yishuv in Jerusalem, the famous Churvah of Rav Yehudah HaChassid in the Old City. As soon as the Mahari”l Diskin, zt”l, heard about the planned desecration, he immediately ordered Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zt”l, and two other great Rabbonim of the Old Yishuv to interrupt the proceedings, alight the bimah, and wage a public and earnest protest.

The three went just as they were told, but when they got to the synagogue they saw that the group convening inside had anticipated their arrival. To stave them off, they had set up a group of toughs at the entrance to dissuade anyone who planned to disrupt their conference.

The other two Rabbonim who had accompanied Rav Yosef Chaim saw the

men and decided to turn back, in fear for their own safety. Rav Yosef Chaim, on the other hand, pushed on ahead past the men and climbed straight up to the bimah. He slammed his fist upon it loudly and strafed the crowd with his uncompromising protest. After a few minutes, the group of bullies pulled him off the bimah and began to beat him soundly. He was fortunate to escape the scene alive, but told no one about the beatings he had received.

It was only some time later, while in the mikveh, that someone noticed that the Rav was literally covered with wounds and bruises. When people asked him what had happened, he said, “These are my badges of honor—just like a captain in the army is given his stripes when he moves up in rank!” ■