

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Adar (cont.)

According to a second version, R' Nachman unsuccessfully attempted to support Mar Ukva's assertion that the Adar before Nisan is always deficient.

R' Kahana succeeds at refuting the assertion that the Adar before Nissan is always deficient.

2) Elul

Ulla once came to Bavel and informed the residents that the month of Elul was made full. He continued to note the great favor that was done for the Babylonians by making Elul a full, thirty-day month.

Ulla and R' Acha bar Chanina suggest alternative explanations as to why making Elul full is a favor for Babylonians.

The Gemara explores the difference between their reasons.

Once the difference is found, the Gemara explains why it is a favor for the Babylonians and not the people from Eretz Yisroel.

3) Making a month full for communal needs

The premise that a month may be made full for communal needs is challenged.

Rava distinguishes between extending a month, which may be done due to communal considerations, as opposed to sanctifying a month early, which may not be done due to communal considerations.

Support for this distinction is presented and unsuccessfully challenged.

Rava offers an alternative answer to the original challenge against the premise that a month may be made full for communal need.

R' Dimi from Nahardea maintains that witnesses may be intimidated to testify about the appearance of the new moon to declare the thirtieth day as Rosh Chodesh, but it is not permitted to intimidate witnesses who saw the new moon and dissuaded them from testifying because this gives the appearance of falsehood.

4) Sanctifying the new month

Shmuel declares that he was capable of determining Rosh Chodesh for the entire Diaspora.

Abba, the father of R' Simlai, challenged Shmuel's assertion of knowledge and asked whether he knew the Beraisa called "The Secret of Intercalation." Shmuel replied in the negative and Abba informed him that if he did not know that Beraisa, there was probably other things he did not know.

After R' Zeira went to Eretz Yisroel he sent back two statements related to calculating the new month, including an explanation of "The Secret of Intercalation."

R' Zeira in the name of R' Nachman presents facts related to the moment when the new moon becomes renewed (מולד).

R' Yochanan and Reish Lakish offer different sources for R'

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Distinctive INSIGHT

Sanctifying the lunar month

כזה ראה וקדש

Hashem instructed Moshe and Aharon how to establish the calendar based upon visual sighting of the moon as it entered into its new phase. (Shemos 12:1-2) The phases of the moon and the arrangement of Rosh Chodesh are among the laws that caused Moshe confusion. Hashem had to display the appearance of the new moon to Moshe before he was able to understand it properly (ibid., Rashi, v.2).

Rabbi Mordechai Rogow, zt"l, explains. The nations of the world establish their calendar based upon the solar cycle, while the Jews base theirs upon the lunar cycle. The sun dominates during the day, with its light and bright rays showering the world. The sun typifies a condition when vision is clear and people can move about securely and with confidence. The moon, however, commands the night sky, when the world is shrouded in darkness. The moon provides light and guidance at a time when it is difficult to see and when uncertainty prevails.

The nations of the world correspond to the sun in that they develop and thrive during times of affluence and tranquility. Their societies remain intact only as long as the people remain satisfied and content. When adversity strikes, civil unrest and waves of rebellion tear countries apart. People panic as elements of normalcy are threatened, and the secure protection of civilization crumbles. Just as the sun shines only during the day, so too, the nations of the world rise only as long as conditions are ideal.

The Jewish nation, however, responds differently. Even as they endure the long and dark exile, they continue to shine and glow. They maintain their firm hope and confidence in the ultimate redemption as they stay the course through various threats and difficulties. They do so by steadfastly remaining loyal to Torah and its mitzvos, which guides them.

When Hashem informed Moshe about the cycle of the moon, He also indicated that the Jews would symbolically be compared to the lunar cycle. Moshe was confounded as he wondered how the Jews would prevail even as they wandered through the hostile exile and in times of stress, enduring physical as well as spiritual challenges. Hashem reassured Moshe that, indeed, their survival would not be possible if it would only be based upon natural circumstances. However, Hashem showed Moshe "the finger of God" (ibid.) which would guide the Jews throughout their journey. "When you see it like this, then sanctify it." When conditions are dark and dismal, with almost no light or hope, the time has come to act in a spirit of sanctity. That is the time to dedicate oneself to a lifestyle of Torah and avodas Hashem. ■

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated

לעילוי נשמת הרבנית הצדקת מרת שאצא באבטשא, ע"ה
 בת כ"ק אדמו"ר רבי פנחס שלום זצ"ל מקאסאן
 אשת כ"ק אדמו"ר רבי אברהם זצ"ל
 מזידיטשוב-שיקאגו
 ובז"ש הגה"צ כ"ק אדמו"ר רבי שמואל שמעלקא פיינטער זצ"ל
 נלבד כ"ח אייר תשע"ב

HALACHAH Highlight

The latest time for Kiddush Levanah

א"ר זיירא א"ר נחמן כ"ד שעי מכסי סיהרא לדידן שית מעתיקא ותמני סרי מחדתא לדידהו שית מחדתא ותמני סרי מעתיקא

R' Zeira said in the name of R' Nachman: The moon is covered for twenty-four hours. For us (in Babylonia) [it is covered for] six hours of the old moon and eighteen from the new, and for them (in Eretz Yisrael) [it is covered for] six hours of the new moon and eighteen from the old.

The Gemara in Sanhedrin¹ records a dispute between Amoraim whether, according to R' Yochanan, the latest time for Kiddush Levanah is the seventh or the sixteenth of the month. Rav Yosef Karo², the Beis Yosef, in the name of Maharil writes that the sixteenth is too late to recite Kiddush Levanah and the latest time for the recitation of the berachah is the middle of the lunar month (the lunar month being 29 days, twelve hours and 973 chalokim). When the Gemara states that Kiddush Levana could be recited until the sixteenth the intention was that it could be recited up until, but not including, the sixteenth.

The Knesses HaGedolah³ disagrees and cites many Poskim that maintain that Kidduah Levanah could be recited the night of the sixteenth, and the Gemara should be understood literally that Kiddush Levanah could be recited up until and including the sixteenth. Teshuvos Dvar Shmuel⁴ challenges this ruling based on the fact that once the midway point of the month has passed the moon is diminishing and it is no longer appropriate to make the berachah.

STORIES Off the Daf

Tripping up the witnesses

למאי נפקא מינה? אמר רב אשי לאכחושי סהדי

On today's daf we find that the Gemara asks what the use is of the ability to calculate the time of the molad since we are anyway required to establish the new moon through eyewitness testimony? Rav Ashi answers that knowing the time of the molad certainly helps, because it is a piece of information that can be used to ferret out false witnesses. Sometimes, the court needs to be creative to come up with a plan of action that will effectively expose a liar.

A case once came before the Rav of Yerushalayim, Rav Shmuel Salant, zt"l. A lender came to court demanded the return of twenty golden lirot that he claimed another man had borrowed. This man, however, denied ever having borrowed any sum at all.

The Rav first looked penetratingly at the alleged borrower without saying a word. This lasted several minutes, and silence reigned the entire time. All of sudden, the Rav barked, "Why is it that you don't want to return the thirty lirot that you borrowed from him?!"

"Thirty?" stammered the man. "But I only took twenty!"

"If that is the case," decided the Rav, "Hurry up and pay him back that twenty lirot that you admit owing!"

The man flushed a deep scarlet; his own careless words had exposed him. That, and a further threat that if he didn't pay his business would be put into cherem, persuaded him to make the necessary amends. ■

(Overview...continued from page 1)

Zeira's earlier statement that the night and following day must be part of the same month.

Two practical differences between their approaches are offered.

R' Zeira in the name of R' Nachman rules that when there is a doubt as to when Beis Din declared Rosh Chodesh, Yom Tov should be observed on the fifteenth and sixteenth.

This assertion is unsuccessfully challenged. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What are the two benefits for the Babylonians by having Elul made a full thirty day month?
2. Under what circumstances did Beis Din intimidate witnesses who came to testify about the new moon?
3. Why is it important to know the calculation of when the new moon should appear?
4. What is the practical difference between the two sources for the principle that night and day must be part of the same month?

Rav Moshe Sofer⁵, the Chasam Sofer, explains the rationale for the lenient ruling of Knesses HaGedolah from our Gemara. Our Gemara teaches that the new moon is not visible until eighteen hours have passed from the moment it was renewed. Therefore, although on the sixteenth of the month the moon has begun to diminish, it is not visible that it has begun to diminish until eighteen hours from when the midmonth has passed and during the interim it is permitted to make the berachah. ■

1. גמ' סנהדרין מא
2. בית יוסף אר"ח סי' תכ"ו
3. כנסת הגדולה שם הגה"ט אות ב'
4. שו"ת דבר שמואל (אבוהב) סי' רט"ז
5. שו"ת חת"ס אר"ח סי' ק"ב ■