

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Crossing the Jordan River (cont.)

The Gemara continues to cite a Baraisa related to the crossing of the Jordan River.

Tangentially the Baraisa teaches that the Jews should have experienced a miracle when they returned during the time of Ezra but sin caused that not to happen.

The Gemara concludes its description of the crossing of the Jordan River.

A Baraisa mentions that the tzirah did not cross the river with them.

This assertion is unsuccessfully challenged.

2) The term והחציו

R' Kahana suggests that the term והחציו found in the Torah's description of the blessings and curses of Har Gerizim and Har Eival teaches that the tribes were also divided on the stones of the ephod.

A long Baraisa is cited that successfully challenges R' Kahana's interpretation.

A Baraisa offers an alternative explanation of the term והחציו.

The Gemara clarifies the explanation of the Baraisa.

The Gemara challenges the earlier-cited Baraisa's statement that there were fifty letters on the shoham stones where there should have been forty-nine letters.

R' Yitzchok offers one resolution to this matter.

R' Nachman bar Yitzchok challenges this explanation and an alternative resolution is offered.

3) The names of Yosef and Yehudah

R' Chana bar Bizna in the name of R' Shimon Chasida states that Yosef had one letter of Hashem's name added to his name since he sanctified Hashem's name in private and Yehudah contains the entire name of Hashem since he sanctified Hashem's name in public.

A lengthy description of the incident of Yosef and Potiphar's wife is recorded.

A Baraisa teaches that Yosef was supposed to have twelve sons, but as a result of the incident with Potiphar's wife ten of these sons were born to Binyamin who named them for Yosef.

R' Chiya bar Abba in the name of Yochanan recounts the story of Yosef learning the seventy languages and how he used his knowledge of different languages as leverage against Pharaoh.

A Baraisa that presents different opinions about the events that transpired when the Jews reached the edge of the sea following the exodus from Egypt is cited as the incident in which Yehudah publicly sanctified Hashem's name. ■

Gemara GEM

The image of Yaakov in the window

באותה שעה באתה דיוקנו של אביו ונראתה לו בחלון

Our Gemara notes that at the moment the wife of Potiphar caught hold of the garment of Yosef (Bereshis 39:12), the image of his father's (Yaakov's) face appeared to Yosef from the window.

Whenever people make a decision and act upon it, they invariably think to themselves what others might think if they would see them acting in this manner. Accordingly, a person weighs his actions based upon how he might explain what he is doing to people who notice and then question him about it. Generally, the more directly a person feels this supervisory aura, the more closely he will judge his ways and the more careful he will be in his conduct. If someone feels as if that "person" who is watching is right at the window looking in, he will exercise utmost care in doing only that which is proper and correct at all times. This same attitude carries over and reflects upon the type of Jew a person is as well, for this is a function of the fulfillment of the dictum (Tehillim 16:8): "I consider Hashem before me constantly."

We can now appreciate how great was the righteousness of Yosef. Even when he was situated in a foreign land which was pervaded with licentiousness, and even while being pursued by the wife of Potiphar, Yosef was able to protect himself by reaching deeply into his moral and ethical reserves to guide himself to safety. Now, if the image he reflected upon had always been some king or some other prominent official, Yosef would have probably failed the test, and he would have sinned by succumbing to the urges of the moment. However, the character of Yosef was such that he set before him the image of his saintly father at all times. This model of immersion in Torah and commitment to integrity and truth is that which Yosef had fixed in his mind over the years he spent in Egypt. This is what guided and protected him from the corrupt values and insipid and debased morals which pervaded the society where he was situated for so many years.

The lesson is clear, for we also find ourselves in a culture where the values are often contrary to the norms which the Torah teaches. The secret to withstanding the insidious messages which society broadcasts is to remain steadfast and focused upon the images and models which our Torah and its teachers place before us. There will always be trials and tests for us to overcome, and the only manner by which we will prevail is to keep symbols and models of Torah achievement foremost in our minds and fixed in our thoughts. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

The correct spelling of the name Binyomin

אלא כל התורה כולה בנימן כתיב והכא בנימין שלם

Rather throughout the Torah [Binyomin's name is] written בנימן but here it is written בנימין

In order to reconcile the Baraisa's statement that there were fifty letters on the Shoham stones the Gemara explains that although throughout the Torah the name Binyomin is written without a ם between the ן and the ך, nevertheless, on the Shoham stones it was written with a ם, since when Yaakov gave Binyomin his name it is written with a ם. Teshuvos Terumas Hadeshen¹ notes that there are seventeen times the name Binyomin is written with the second ם and many more instances in Nevi'im so we must assume that when the Gemara declares that throughout the Torah it is written without a ם it means the majority of times and should not be understood literally. Basing himself on our Gemara, Terumas Hadeshen rules that when writing the name Binyomin in a גט the name should be written without the second ם. Since the Gemara declares that the Torah writes the name without the second ם it is assumed that the correct spelling is without the second ם and Hashem had a particular reason why He wanted the name written with the extra ם on the Shoham stones.

Aruch Hashulchan² notes that the correct way to spell Binyomin is disputed by the Poskim. Shulchan Aruch³ rules that the name should be spelled without the second ם in accordance

REVIEW and Remember

1. What happened to those who stood against the Jewish people on the day they crossed the Jordan river?
2. How many letters were on the stones the Knohen Gadol wore on his shoulders?
3. Why does Yehudah's name contain the four letters of Hashem's name?
4. How did Yosef use his knowledge of different languages as leverage against Pharaoh?

with the position of Terumas Hadeshen. Beis Shmuel rules that the name should be written with the second ם because even a name that should be written missing a letter (חסר) that has the letter added is acceptable since adding that letter does not change the pronunciation of the name so certainly when there is a dispute whether a name should have a letter (מלא) or not (חסר) the safest position is to write the name with the letter. Aruch Hashulchan also writes that our custom is to write Binyomin with the second ם but he adds that בדיעבד the גט will be valid with or without the second ם.■

1. שו"ת תרומת הדשן סי' רל"ג
2. ערוה"ש אה"ע סי' קכ"ט סע' קל"א אות ב'
3. שו"ע אה"ע סי' קכ"ט סע' ל'
4. בית שמואל שמות אנשין ריש אות ב' ■

STORIES Off the Daf

"Then I will go and annul your vow..."

א"ל זיל אישתיל אשבועתך

A man once became very upset because he was engaging in a particular behavior that he regretted. He decided that the only way to avoid it would be to swear not to do it anymore. He realized, however, that merely swearing was not enough; he needed to be sure that his vow would never be annulled. The only device that this man could come up with to make his vow permanent was to swear that he would never tell a soul the particulars of the vow. That way, no one would pressure him to annul it.

After a time, his situation changed

and the man wished to annul his vow. It turned out that the behavior that he had forbidden himself could actually bring him great benefit. But what could he do? In order to annul his vow, the particulars of the oath would have to be told to a chacham. Yet his secondary vow prohibited this. When asked, that man's rabbi admitted that he couldn't answer for certain. "I will consult with the author of the Shoel U'Meishiv."

The rabbi told the entire story to the Shoel U'Meishiv, and added, "My doubt stems from Sotah 36. There, we find that Pharaoh made Yosef HaTzaddik swear not to reveal that the king was ignorant of l'shon hakodesh. When Yosef later told Pharaoh that he had sworn to bury Yaakov in Eretz Yisrael, Pharaoh told him to annul the oath. Yosef countered that if he

could annul his oath to his father, he could also annul his oath to Pharaoh.

He continued, "The question is: How could Yosef annul his oath to Pharaoh? He cannot tell it to a chacham. But maybe one can tell a chacham what the oath is after it is annulled..."

The Shoel U'Meishiv answered, "The Sha'ar HaMelelech writes that one may tell the chacham after the fact, since revealing the details of one's vow to the chacham who annuls it is a Rabbinic requirement to ensure that a sage avoid permitting a vow that cannot be permitted. If there is a compelling reason, one can tell the chacham afterward, however.

He concluded, "Clearly, once he has annulled the first vow, the second vow of not telling what he vowed is irrelevant. He is no longer bound by his vow!"■