

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Teachings from R' Yirmiyah or R' Chiya bar Abba (cont.)

The Gemara concludes its unsuccessful attempt to challenge R' Yirmiyah or R' Chiya bar Abba's assertion that the Nevi'im introduced the end letters to the aleph-beis.

R' Yirmiyah or R' Chiya bar Abba teach that Onkelos wrote an Aramaic translation of the Torah, Yonasan ben Uziel wrote a translation of Nevi'im which caused the land to shake and was prevented from writing a translation of Kesuvim.

The assertion that Onkelos wrote the Aramaic translation of the Torah is unsuccessfully challenged.

The Gemara explains why the land shook when Nevi'im was translated and not when the Torah was translated.

R' Yirmiyah or R' Chiya bar Abba explain a verse in Sefer Daniel.

The Gemara digresses to discuss visions seen by one's mazal.

2) Interrupting activities to hear the megilla

R' Yosi bar Chanina explains that the words משפחה ומשפחה teach that kohanim and levi'im must interrupt their activities to hear the megilla.

Similar statements related to interrupting one's activities to hear the megilla are cited.

The last assertion, i.e. that megilla reading overrides Torah study, is unsuccessfully challenged from an incident when Yehoshua was visited by an Angel.

The assumption that the Torah study of the individual is a light matter is unsuccessfully challenged.

3) Prioritizing activities

Rava teaches how to prioritize different activities that come in conflict with one another.

Rava inquires which is a higher priority, megilla or burying a meis mitzvah.

He subsequently answered the inquiry and taught that burying the meis mitzvah is a higher priority.

4) Teachings of R' Yehoshua ben Levi

An earlier statement of R' Yehoshua ben Levi, i.e. towns that are near or can be seen with walled cities are treated like the walled city is cited.

A Beraisa elaborates on these halachos.

Three more statements of R' Yehoshua ben Levi that relate to walled cities are cited. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

The study of Torah even in times of stress

אמר לו על איזה מהן באת? אמר לו עתה באתי

The Navi (Yehoshua 5:13-14) tells us of a meeting between Yehoshua and an angel. Our Gemara (3a) describes the conversation between them in greater detail. The angel confronted Yehoshua, "Yesterday you neglected the afternoon Korban Tamid and now you have neglected the study of Torah." Yehoshua asked the angel, "For which case of negligence have you come?" The angel responded עתה באתי, implying that the current crisis was the issue - referring to the neglect of Torah study. As Tosafos explains, the word עתה alludes to Torah, as we find (Devarim 31:19): "And now (ועתה), write this song for yourselves, and teach it to Bnei Yisrael, place it in their mouth, so that this song shall be for Me a witness against Bnei Yisrael."

It is no coincidence that the verse to which the angel was alluding describes the Torah as a "shira" - a song. His message to Yehoshua was that the terrible difficulties of war would seemingly make the study of Torah impossible. Nevertheless, Torah is not meant to be a chore, but rather a song and an act of love which emanates from the depths of his soul as song. With this approach, the angel was informing Yehoshua that it would be possible to overcome the challenges of war and remain involved in the study of Torah whenever possible.

Tosafos (ד"ה אמש) questions where in the words of the angel was there an indication of criticism that the Jewish people had neglected to offer the Tamid and to study Torah? Tosafos answers that the hint is indicated when Yehoshua asked, "Are you among us (הלנו אתה) or are you an adversary (אם לצרינו)?" The word לנו refers to Torah, as we find (Devarim 33:4): "Torah was commanded to us (לנו) by Moshe." The question whether the angel was an adversary refers to the offerings, which protect us against our enemies (see Bava Kama 82b). ■

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
לע"נ הרב אברהם מרדכי בן ר' חנוך זאב ז"ל
Rabbi Dr. Milton Kanter
by his children, the Kanter family

HALACHAH Highlight

Making marks on a Sefer Torah to help the ba'al k'riah
 ויקראו בספר תורת האלקים זה מקרא מפורש זה תרגום ושום שכל
 אלו הפסוקין ויבינו במקרא אלו פסקי טעמים
 "They read the Sefer Torah of Hashem" this refers to the text;
 "explicit" refers to the translation; "with the application of wisdom"
 refers to the pesukim; "they clarified through reading" refers to the
 cantillation notes.

Rashba¹, based on a statement found in Masseches Sofrim², rules that adding vowels or cantillation marks to a Sefer Torah invalidates the Sefer Torah. The reason is that a Sefer Torah must be exactly the same as when the Torah was given on Har Sinai and we find many times that Chazal extracted lessons from the way the word is written as well as from the way it is read. Consequently, if one was to include the vowels into the Sefer Torah the word can only be read one way, thus precluding any additional expositions based on the way the word could have been read. As far as our Gemara is concerned, Rashba explains that the intent is to teach that the way the words and pesukim are read was given on Har Sinai but not that it should be written on the Sefer Torah similar to the exposition regarding the translation, where it is clear that it was not the intent that it should be recorded in writing.

Teshuvos Ravid haZahav³, suggests that if the markings are made without ink but by merely scratching into the parchment the Sefer Torah remains valid. He bases his opinion on a response of Rabbeinu Yitzchok bar Sheishes⁴, the Rivash.

STORIES Off the Daf

"He spent the night deep in learning..."
 מלמד שלן בעומקה של הלכה

On today's daf we find that an angel rebuked Yehoshua for not having learned enough. When people would offer various excuses to explain why they couldn't find more time to learn Torah, the Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, would often bring this Gemara as proof that there are no real excuses.

"Whenever you have a free moment you must learn, for Torah is more important than anything else. Even in the middle of a war, we are still obligated to devote any free time we have to Torah study!"

Rav Yissochor Dov of Belz, zt"l, was staying in Vienna with his father and he decided to go for a walk one Shabbos afternoon. He passed a small shul, and even from the street he could hear someone singing the words of the Gemara he was studying at the top of his voice. The Rebbe could not believe his ears, and moved closer to the shul so that he would be better able to hear the deep joy and yearning clearly audible in the stranger's voice. He stood by the door so as not to disturb the masmid, but eventually he couldn't hold himself back and decided to enter the shul. What he saw surprised him; the "masmid" was dressed in a simple soldier's fatigues.

The Rebbe said, "Tell me, what brought you here, learning with such

diligence?" The soldier explained, "When I was drafted into the army, I begged Hashem to save me from chillul Shabbos. Miraculously, I was attached to the private staff of a certain officer who was willing to give me Shabbos off. I took upon myself that Shabbos would be devoted to serving Hashem, and that I would waste as little time as possible in bittul Torah. This is my time off, and I must use it to come close to Hashem to the best of my ability!"

Afterward, the Belzer Rebbe said, "Who knows if this soldier isn't holding up the redemption since his sacrifice might be more pleasing to Hashem than the korban tamid! But this cannot be. Of course his dedication is only bringing the geulah that much closer!" ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why was Yonasan ben Uziel prevented from translating Kesuvim?
2. How did the members of Rabbi's school know that megilla overrides Torah study?
3. What is the source that Torah study is greater than offering the daily korbanos?
4. What is the profession of the עשירה בטלנין?

Rivash writes that if a sofer left empty space between one pasuk and the next the Sefer Torah is valid because the only disqualification is when ink was used to separate between pesukim. Rav Ovadiah Yosef⁵, disputes this conclusion. He maintains that Rivash only permits space because it does not alter the Sefer Torah in any way but scratching the parchment is conceptually no different than using ink since it changes the parchment from the way it was given on Har Sinai. ■

1. שו"ת הרשב"א המיוחסות סע' רל"ח
2. מסכת סופרים פ"ג ה"ז
3. שו"ת רביד הזהב (מהרה"ג דוד משרקי) ומובא דבריו בשו"ת יחו"ד דלקמן
4. שו"ת הריב"ש סי' רפ"ו
5. שו"ת יחווה דעת ח"ו סע' נ"ד ע"ש אריכות דברים על ענין זו

