

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Reading Megilla with a minyan

Although Rav and R' Assi agree that a minyan is required when reading the megilla in a time other than the proper time they disagree whether a minyan is needed when reading at the proper time.

Although Rav held the lenient position on the matter he nonetheless followed R' Assi's position.

Rav's position is unsuccessfully challenged.

2) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah begins by defining a large city and village and then notes that generally events are postponed rather than advanced. Additional halachos related to reading the Megilla earlier are presented.

3) Clarifying the Mishnah

A Beraisa clarifies the function of the ten unoccupied men.

R' Abba in the name of Shmuel explains why the reading of the Megilla is advanced rather than postponed.

Another teaching from R' Abba in the name of Shmuel is cited.

The Gemara explains why the other events mentioned in the Mishnah are postponed rather than advanced.

4) Postponing the Chagigah Korban

A Beraisa states that we postpone the Chagiga Korban and all the time of the Chagigah Korban.

Three explanations of the Beraisa are presented.

5) The practices of Rebbe

R' Elazar in the name of R' Chanina reported that Rebbe planted shoots on Purim, he bathed on the seventeenth of Tamuz and wished to abolish Tisha B'Av.

The issue related to Tisha B'Av is clarified.

Regarding the planting of the shoot on Purim, the Gemara concludes that Rebbe was a resident of Teveriya and he was certain it was a walled city from the time of Yehoshua and the planting occurred on the fourteenth.

An alternative explanation is presented that maintains that Rebbe planted on Purim and suggests an explanation why it is permitted. A third explanation why it was permitted for Rebbe to plant shoots on Purim is presented.

6) Tiberias

The practice of Chizkiyah to read the Megilla on the fourteenth and fifteenth in Teveriya is cited.

The nature of Chizkiyah's doubt is explained.

7) Hutzal

Two versions of R' Assi's practice of reading the Megilla in Hutzal are recorded. According to the first version he read on the fourteenth and the fifteenth whereas according to the second version he read only on the fifteenth.

8) Chamas, Rakas and Kinarets

R' Yochanan gives the origin of the names of the cities of Chamas, Rakas and Kinarets ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

When in doubt, on what day is Megilla read?

גופא חזקיה קרי בטבריה בארביסר ובחמיסר, מספקא ליה אי מוקפת חומה מימות יהושע בן נון אי לא וכו'

Chizkiya read the Megilla in Teveriya on the fourteenth and on the fifteenth of Adar. The Gemara first thought that he did not know whether or not the city of Teveriya had a wall at the time of Yehoshua. Therefore, due to the uncertainty of the historical facts, he read the Megilla on both days. This is also why Rav Assi read the Megilla in Hutzal on the 14th and on the 15th. The Gemara concludes that Teveriya definitely had a wall at the time of Yehoshua, but the question of Chizkiya was whether the configuration of its wall was adequate. It was walled on three sides, but the fourth side was fortified by the sea shore. Due to the halachic doubt whether this constitutes a "wall" in regard to the halachos of Purim, Chizkiya read on both days.

The Gemara maintains that when there is a doubt, the Megilla should be read on the 14th and the 15th. This is whether the doubt is due to **ספק במציאות**, unknown facts (did Teveriya have a wall at the time of Yehoshua), or whether it is due to **ספק בדין**, an unresolved halachic condition (is the sea shore a "wall").

Ramban writes in the name of the Teshuvos HaGeonim that if there is an age-old city that has a wall, and we do not know whether the wall existed from the time of Yehoshua or not, that city should read on the fourteenth only. The reason is that when we have a doubt, we follow the majority, and most cities today did not have a wall at the time of Yehoshua. He adds that this would actually be a case of a doubt in a case of a rabbinic mitzvah, and the rule is that we rule leniently. Technically, we could exempt them from reading either day, due to this doubt affecting each day, but this would result in the publicizing of the miracle being totally dismissed, which is absurd. Therefore, we have them read on the first day possible, the fourteenth. The fact that Chizkiya and Rav Assi read on both days due to a doubt was only a **"מדת חסידות"** – an act of piety." Rashba also writes that in a case of doubt we read on the fourteenth only. He writes that Chizkiya and Rav Assi read on two days because they knew for a fact that Teveriya and Hutzal were walled from the time of Yehoshua, and their doubt was whether the cities they knew with those names were, in fact, the original cities or not. Rambam and Shulchan Aruch write that when in doubt, we read on the 14th and 15th, but the **ברכה** is said on the 14th only. ■

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HALACHAH Highlight

The time for pidyon haben

מנין שאין מחשבין שעות לחדשים שנאמר "עד חדש ימים" ימים אתה מחשב לחדשים ואי אתה מחשב שעות לחדשים

From where do we know that we do not calculate hours to determine months? For it states, "until a month of days." Days are reckoned for months but hours are not calculated for months.

Regarding the time to perform the mitzvah of pidyon haben, the Torah states¹, "Those that are to be redeemed - from one month shall you redeem etc." The opinion of the Chachamim in the Mishna² is that after a month, meaning on the thirty-first day, the mitzvah of pidyon haben begins. This is also the ruling in Shulchan Aruch³. Rav Yoel Sirkis⁴, the Bach, writes that it is not necessary to wait for the entire thirtieth day to pass. Rather, once twenty-nine days, twelve hours and 793 chalokim, i.e. exactly one halachic month, have passed from the baby's birth the mitzvah may be performed.

Machaneh Ephraim⁵ challenges this ruling from our Gemara. Our Gemara states based upon the exposition from the pasuk, that months are not reckoned according to the number of hours in a month but rather based on the number of days. Seemingly, this principle applies to all matters of Torah law. Thus, the month mentioned in the Torah regarding pidyon haben is calculated by days, i.e. thirty days, rather than by hours. Machaneh Ephraim writes in defense of Bach that he must follow Rashi's⁶ explanation of our Gemara that indicates

REVIEW and Remember

1. When is a minyan necessary for Megilla reading?

2. Did Rebbi want to uproot Tisha B'Av altogether?

3. Why didn't Mordechai prohibit work on Purim?

4. Is Teveriya considered a city surrounded by a wall?

that this rule is limited to the case discussed in the Gemara rather than a general principle of the Torah.

Notwithstanding Machaneh Ephraim's defense of the Bach, Rav Avrohom Avli Gombiner⁷, the Magen Avrohom, cites the opinion of Bach and disagrees. He rules that even if twenty-nine days, twelve hours and 793 chalokim pass on Erev Shabbos the pidyon haben should not be performed until after Shabbos even though after Shabbos is the thirty-second day. This is also the ruling of Mishnah Berurah⁸. ■

1. במדבר יח: טו
2. משנה בכורות מט
3. שו"ע יו"ד סי' ש"ה סע' י"ג
4. ב"ח שם סע' י"ח
5. מחנה אפרים נדרים סע' ל"ח
6. רש"י ד"ה שעות
7. מג"א סי' של"ט סק"ח
8. מ"ב שם ס"ק כ"ז ■

STORIES Off the Daf

A planting of joy

רבי נטע נטיעה בפורים...נטיעה של שמחה

The Chiddushei HaRim, zt"l, said, "In Megillah 5a we find that Rebbi planted a seedling of joy on Purim. This hints that on Purim one has the ability to plant in his heart joy in Hashem. And just as a plant sprouts and flourishes, so too should one's joy take root and flourish. We should become happier people after each Purim!"

A chassid once asked Rav Aharon Aryeh of Premishlan, zt"l, "The Chessed L'Avraham, zt"l, writes that between Purim and Pesach, we are each taken out of our personal forty-nine

gates of impurity a little at a time. What can I do so that I will be able to feel this happening and change?"

The Rav responded, "The days between Purim and Pesach are powerful purifiers of the soul. It is only after we experience the holiness of Purim and the days between the two festivals that we are able to fulfill the wondrous duties of Pesach. You must think of yourself as a sick person whose convalescence progresses in stages. First, the doctor finds a way to strengthen the patient's constitution so that he can bear the medications and get treated. After treatment and as soon as the patient is already better, he must take care not to have a relapse. This is exactly how it is on a spiritual plane."

Rav Aharon Aryeh continued, "It is

well known that joy can heal a person of all ills, but this too comes in stages. First, one plants the seed of healing with his great joy on Purim. This germinates during the days of preparation for Pesach—a hectic period that provides ample opportunity for spiritual growth provided that we hold on to our joy. Finally, we make it to the Seder night, the culmination of this great time. With great joy, we fulfill all the lofty mitzvos of the Seder, and this way we conclude the process of healing that began on Purim. Afterward, we immediately start to count the omer to ensure that we don't have a relapse! Focus your mind on this, and you will surely see yourself emerging from your own forty-nine levels of impurity and entering into the gates of holiness!" ■

