

## OVERVIEW of the Daf

### 1) Writing Scripture in a foreign language (cont.)

After a number of failed attempts to resolve the contradiction as to whether Scripture written in a foreign language has sanctity, the Gemara finally distinguishes between Megillas Esther, which must be written in its original language and the rest of Scripture, which may be written in foreign languages.

R' Ashi presents an alternative resolution, namely, he distinguishes between a Sefer Torah, which may be translated into Greek and the rest of Scriptures, which may not be translated into a foreign language.

### 2) The Ptolemy translation

A Beraisa elaborates on the incident of the sages who translated the Torah into Greek for Ptolemy.

### 3) Clarifying R' Shimon ben Gamliel's position

R' Avahu in the name of R' Yochanan rules in accordance with R' Shimon ben Gamliel.

R' Yochanan identifies the source of R' Shimon ben Gamliel's opinion.

The source is unsuccessfully challenged.

**4) MISHNAH:** The Mishnah highlights the difference between the Kohen Gadol who was anointed with the anointing oil and the Kohen Gadol who wears the additional garments. The Mishnah also highlights the difference between an active Kohen Gadol and a retired Kohen Gadol.

### 5) Clarifying the Mishnah

The Gemara infers that regarding the bull offered on Yom Kippur and the tenth of an ephah offering there is no difference between the anointed Kohen Gadol and the one who wears the additional garments.

It is noted that the Mishnah does not follow the opinion of R' Meir who holds that the Kohen Gadol who wears additional

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## REVIEW and Remember

1. Why must the Megillah be read in Lashon HaKodesh?  
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2. Why did the rabbis translating the Torah for Ptolemy reverse the order of the first three words of the Torah?  
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3. What is the כהן מרובה בגדים?  
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4. What is the rule regarding the use of a private altar?  
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## Gemara GEM

### The miracle of the translation

צעשה בתלמי המלך שכינס שבעים ושתים זקנים

King Ptolemy gathered seventy Jewish sages and had them translate the Torah into Greek. He put them into seventy separate rooms, as he wished to compare the translations to verify that they would be consistent. A miracle occurred, and each of the sages chose to alter the literal or contextual translation of the Torah in the same ten places. Although this translation, known as the Septuagint, was a tragic moment in Jewish history (which is one of the reasons we fast on the Tenth of Teves), Hashem showed His kindness with this miracle.

One of the places where a change was made was in the verse (Vayikra 11:6), where, instead of listing one of the unkosher creatures as an "arneves - hare", each of these sages translated it as "the short-legged creature." The reason for this was that the name of Ptolemy's wife was the Greek word for "Arneves", and he would have thought that the sages were mocking him by having his wife's name appear in the Torah as one of the non-kosher animals.

We might wonder, though, that this seems to be a far-fetched suspicion. Why would they worry that Ptolemy might accuse them of such a thing, especially when it was well known that there was, in fact, an actual animal known as the arneves?

Rabbi Aharon Shaul Zelig explains that there are a total of three animals listed in the category of chewing their cud but not having split hooves. They are the gamal (camel), the shaffan (hyrax), and the arneves (hare). Apparently, Ptolemy would have thought that the Torah could have conveyed the law and adequately taught its lesson with listing the first two, and we would have known that the arneves is also not kosher, since it has these characteristics. For what reason did the Torah list the arneves if we could have derived this law even without listing it? Ptolemy would have felt that the only reason would have been in order to embarrass his wife. The truth is, however, that the Torah knows that within the animal kingdom, this category includes none other than these three species (see Gemara Chullin 59a). The Torah lists each of them as a testimony that no other ruminating animal exists without split hooves.

Another concern of the seventy sages is that of the four animals which have only one kosher sign, but not both (camel, hyrax, hare and pig), the only one mentioned in the feminine is the arneves. This was the point which Ptolemy might have noticed, and he might have assumed that it was in order to mock his wife. This claim, however, is actually baseless, because the commentators mention that the male of this species is not fit for eating, and the Torah does not have to specifically mention its not being kosher, when it is only the female that is generally consumed by humans. ■

# HALACHAH Highlight

## Translating Tanach

ר' שמעון בן גמליאל אומר אף בספרים לא התירו שיכתבו אלא יונית א"ר אבהו א"ר יוחנן הלכה כר' שמעון בן גמליאל

R' Shimon ben Gamliel says that even other books [of Tanach] may only be written in Greek. R' Avahu, in the name of R' Yochanan taught that halacha follows R' Shimon ben Gamliel.

Rambam<sup>1</sup> writes that although the conclusion of our Gemara is that Tanach may not be translated into any language other than Greek, nevertheless, since ancient Greek has been forgotten Tanach may only be written in Lashon HaKodesh. Rabbeinu Zerachyah Halevi<sup>2</sup>, the Ba'al Hama'or writes that due to the tendency of people to forget and their general weakness, Tanach may be translated into other languages. Rabbeinu Moshe ben Nachman<sup>3</sup>, Ramban, based on the writings of the Rif, disagrees and writes that the only translation that is permitted is the Aramaic translations of Onkelos and Yonason ben Uziel. Rabbeinu Nissim<sup>4</sup>, the Ran, challenges the distinction made by Ramban<sup>5</sup>. The reason Targum Onkelos and Targum Yonason are permitted is based on the pasuk, עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך - "It is time to act for Hashem, they have made void Your Torah" (Psalms 119:126), and there is no reason to say that the Aramaic translations are permitted to prevent the Torah from being forgotten more than translations into other languages. Therefore, concludes Ran, Tanach may be translated into any language.

Shulchan Aruch<sup>6</sup> rules leniently on this matter and permits translating Tanach into any language using any character and on any type of paper since not everyone knows how to write Ashuris, understands Lashon HaKodesh or has the capacity to obtain parchment. Rav Moshe Feinstein<sup>7</sup> warns against composing translations since it so easy to make a mistake and thereby mislead the

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garments does offer the bull offered for all the mitzvos.

R' Meir's opinion is explained.

The Gemara is troubled by the fact that the beginning of the Mishnah seemingly follows Rabanan and the end of the Mishnah follows R' Meir.

R' Chisda confirms that the different parts of the Mishnah represent different opinions.

R' Yosef maintains that the Mishnah represents Rebbi's opinion whose position is a composite of the two conflicting views.

6) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah highlights the difference between a communal bamah and a private bamah.

### 7) Clarifying the Mishnah

The Gemara clarifies that the difference between a communal bamah and a private bamah are those korbonos that are similar to the Korban Pesach and the Mishnah follows the view of R' Shimon as recorded in a Beraisa.

8) **MISHNAH:** The Mishnah highlights the differences between the sanctity of Shiloh and the sanctity of Yerushalayim. ■

reader. It is better to spend time teaching the language before beginning to study the text so that the original text could be studied without the need for translations. If, however, others who are not reliable will put out translations than it is permitted for one who knows he will do a more precise job to translate a sefer. ■

1. רמב"ם "א מהל' תילין ומזוזה וספר תורה הי"ט
2. בעל המאור שבת מב
3. מלחמות שם
4. ר"ן שם ד"ה גמ'
5. ובביאור דאת הרמב"ן ע' חזו"א או"ח סע' ס' ס"ק י"ג
6. שו"ע או"ח סע' של"ד סע' י"ב
7. שו"ת אג"מ יו"ד ח"ד סי' ל"ח ■

# STORIES Off the Daf

## The rabbit's legs

וכתבו לו את צעירת הרגלים ולא כתבו לו (ויקרא יא) את הארנבת מפני שאשתו של תלמי ארנבת שמה שלא יאמר שחקו בי היהודים והטילו שם אשתי בתורה

Someone once asked the Torah Temimah, zt"l, "In Megillah 9b we find that when King Ptolemy ordered the Sages to translate the Torah into Greek, they all introduced a number of changes to the text. One of the changes was in Parshas Shemini (Vayikra 11:6) Instead of writing arneves, the word for rabbit, they wrote tze'iras haraglayim, as if to say: the one

with the young legs. Our Gemara states that since Ptolemy's wife's name was Arneves, they were afraid to offend the king. Rashi explains that they used the term tze'iras haraglayim because the forelegs of the rabbit are shorter and smaller than the hindlegs. According to Rashi, one would think that they should have called it ket-siras haraglayim, the one whose feet are shortened, or perhaps tze'iras hayadayim, since it was the 'hands' and not the 'feet' that are shorter?"

The Torah Temimah explained, "I think that there is actually a mistake in the version of the text here. It should really say se'iras haraglayim, which would refer to the longer hair found on the legs of the rabbit rather than on its arms. We find

that rabbit hair was significant in the ancient world since they used to weave it like wool. (Menachos 39b)."

The Avnei Shoham, zt"l, answered differently, however. "The language of tze'iras haraglayim may refer to the tza'ar, the distress, that the hind legs feel because they tend to bear the majority of the rabbit's weight. Another possible explanation tze'iras is in the sense of youth—because the rabbit is light on its legs, it springs with youthful energy. Where does it derive its ability to hop so quickly and energetically? Unlike most four-legged creatures, the rabbit moves around almost exclusively with its hind legs, barely using the forelegs at all. ■

