

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Exposition of the megilla (cont.)

The Gemara continues to discuss Mordechai's family background.

2) Exposition of Divrei Hayamim

R' Shimon ben Pazi teaches that different names that appear in Divrei Hayamim often refer to the same person. He cites a verse that serves as an example of this principle that makes references to Moshe Rabbeinu.

3) Exposition of the Megilla (cont.)

The exposition of the Megilla resumes.

A disagreement is recorded about whether Esther's real name was Esther or Hadassah.

The exposition continues with discussions of Esther's family background and the events related to Esther's being chosen as queen.

4) Measure for measure

R' Elazar presents a teaching about the way Hashem rewards tzadikim, sometimes through their descendants, measure for measure.

R' Elazar continues to explain the end of the verse he cited in his first exposition.

5) Exposition of the Megilla (cont.)

The incident of Bigsan and Seresh is retold.

The initial steps in Haman's attempt to exterminate the Jews are recorded and explained. ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why does the verse in Divrei HaYamim state the Pharaoh's daughter gave birth to Moshe?

2. How did Esther find favor in the eyes of those who saw her?

3. What is the example of Rochel's modesty mentioned by R' Elazar?

4. What did Hashem do to protect the Jewish People from Haman's silver Shekalim?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The daughter of Pharaoh and the Nile

ואמר ר' יוחנן שירדה לרחוץ מגילולי בית אביה

Chazal tell us (Megilla 13a) that when the Torah says that Pharaoh's daughter went down to wash in the Nile (Shemos 2:5), it means that she intended to wash herself of the idolatry of her father's house. Why did she choose this time to remove the influence of idolatry from herself, and why is the idolatry referred to as "the idolatry of her father's house"?

Chasam Sofer points out that perhaps these questions can be answered by analyzing another question. In the beginning of Parashas Shemos the Torah says (Shemos 1:8), "And there arose a new king over Egypt who did not know Yosef. He said to his people, 'Let us deal wisely with them.'" Why does it mention that this new king did not know Yosef? It was known to the Egyptians that the famine ended after only two years only through the blessing Yaakov gave to Pharaoh that the Nile would rise up for him. As long as the Egyptians were cognizant that the new abundance in their land was a direct result of the family head of Bnei Yisrael, they would not be able to bring themselves to do evil against Bnei Yisrael, especially not to throw their children into the Nile. Knowing this, Pharaoh set himself up as a deity and claimed that the Nile rose through his powers and not because of the blessing of Yaakov, as Yosef had told the Egyptians. Therefore, it was only through convincing the Egyptian people that they know nothing of Yosef that Pharaoh could promulgate his evil decrees. This fits in with the explanation of Rabbenu Bachya at the beginning of Parashas Mikketz, that when Pharaoh told his dreams to Yosef he described himself as standing over the Nile.

Now we can understand why the daughter of Pharaoh is described as washing herself from "the idolatry of her father." She was washing herself from any belief in her father's claim that he was the source of the prosperity of Egypt, and she recognized that the blessing for the country came through the blessing of Yaakov. It was at that point that she was in the position to contradict her father's decree and to rescue a Jewish child put out to float in a basket on the Nile River, as it seemed unjust to her that a descendant of Yaakov should be killed in that same Nile River which was blessed by Yaakov to bring prosperity to the land of Egypt. ■

HALACHAH Highlight**Using deception to claim one's property**

אמר לה אחיו אנא ברמאות אמרה ליה ומי שרי לצדיקי לסגויי ברמיותא אמר לה אין עם נבר תתבר ועם עקש תתפל

He said to her, "I am his brother in deceit." She said to him, "Is it permitted for righteous people to use deceit?" He answered, "Yes [as the verse says,] "With a pure person you act purely and with a crooked person you act crookedly."

In the Gemara in Bava Kama¹ Ben Bag Bag states that one may not enter into another's field to recover his property without permission from the owner lest he appear like a thief. Sha'ar Mishpat² cites authorities who write that Ben Bag Bag is not merely offering good advice; rather he is expressing the halacha that it is prohibited to recover one's property if it must be done through theft. Sha'ar Mishpat further wonders why Rambam and Shulchan Aruch do not codify this statement. Minchas Chinuch³ suggests that since the ruling is cited in the name of a single authority, Rambam and Shulchan Aruch must maintain that the other authorities dispute this ruling and they follow the majority opinion against Ben Bag Bag.

Rav Yosef Chaim of Baghdad⁴, the Ben Ish Chai, qualifies the dispute and writes that the dispute does not apply in a case where the thief is powerful and uses deception to unlawfully claim ownership of another's property. In such a circumstance all opinions would agree that one could employ deception to recover his property. Ben Ish Chai cites as proof to this assertion the conversation between Yaakov and Rochel as recounted in our Gemara. Although Rochel challenged Yaakov as to whether it is permitted to employ deception against her father, he assured her that it is permitted. This incident clearly indicates that one may lie or use deception to save one's property from a swindler who is trying to unlawfully take his property. Rav Baruch Schneerson⁵ offers an example of this principle. If a swindler falsifies a document that indicates that one owes him money it is permitted to falsify a receipt that indicates the money was repaid, but only in a circumstance where it is clear that the other party is acting deceitfully. ■

1. גמ' ב"ק כז

2. שער משפט סע' שמ"ח סק"א

3. מנחת חינוך מצוה רכ"ד

4. שו"ת רב פעלים ח"ג חו"מ סע' ה'

5. מובא דבריו בפניני הלכה לדף יג. (עמ' כ"ה) המובא בספר

מתיבתא ■

STORIES Off the Daf**Moshe Rabbeinu's Yahrtzeit**

והוא לא ידע שבו' אדר נולד

A chossid once asked Rav Pinchas of Koritz, zt"l, "In Megillah 13 we find that although Haman knew that Moshe Rabbeinu had died during Adar, he was completely unaware that he had also been born then. Why did Haman only know about the yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu and not his birthday?"

The tzaddik explained, "One can easily deduce the day of Moshe Rabbeinu's death from scripture itself. The verse says that the Jewish people went up to the Yarden on the tenth

of the first month, Nisan. (Yehoshua 4) If one subtracts the thirty days of mourning during which they did not travel and the three days during which they were told to prepare food for the journey, we see clearly that the day of death must have been the seventh of Adar. Regarding Moshe Rabbeinu's birthday, we must rely on the oral Torah. Chazal learned from the word היום in Devarim 31:2 that Moshe Rabbeinu was exactly one hundred and twenty years old on the day he died. (Devarim 4:7, Sotah 13b). Apparently, although Haman knew 'the Bible,' he was ignorant of the derashos of Chazal!"

Rav Leible Eiger, zt"l, answered the question differently. "Haman did not understand that the reason

Moshe Rabbeinu died at this point was that he had reached his completion. This is why he died on the day that he was born—to demonstrate that, for him, death was really only a birth into the life of the next world, and none of his greatness was diminished in any way. This is especially true of a tzaddik who dies on the day that he was actually born. Haman was completely ignorant of this. He foolishly thought that Moshe Rabbeinu's birthday was irrelevant because, in his eyes, his death meant that his influence was ended. Quite the contrary—when a tzaddik dies, he is greater than he was when he was alive!" (Chulin 7b) ■