

OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The gezairah shava זה הדבר (cont.)

R' Yosi bar Nosson studied the previous Baraisa and searched for R' Sheishes to explain it to him.

R' Sheishes explained both parts of the Baraisa.

2) The fifteenth of Av

A Mishnah is cited that mentions that Yom Kippur and the fifteenth of Av were days of great joy.

The Gemara wonders why the fifteenth of Av was a joyous day.

R' Yehudah in the name of Shmuel explains that it was the day the tribes were permitted to intermarry.

The related exposition is cited.

Rabba bar bar Chana in the name of R' Yochanan suggests that it was the day Binyomin was permitted to intermarry with the other tribes.

The related exposition is cited.

R' Dimi bar Yosef in the name of R' Nachman says that it was the day men stopped dying in the wilderness.

The related exposition is cited.

Ulla asserts that it corresponds to the day Hoshea removed the soldiers from the road to Yerushalayim.

R' Masna suggests that it was the day the deceased of Beitar could be buried.

Rabbah and R' Yosef say that it was the day they stopped chopping down trees for the Beis Hamikdash.

3) The seven people who span the course of history

A Baraisa teaches that the lives of seven people span the course of history.

The assertion that Achiya Hashiloni saw Amram is un-

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Distinctive INSIGHT

The prayers of Moshe to enter Eretz Yisroel

עד שכלו מתי מדבר לא היה דיבור עם משה שנאמר ויהי כאשר כלו כל אנשי המלחמה למות מקרב המחנה... וידבר ה' אלי לאמר

Our Gemara tells us that Moshe did not receive prophetic vision while the 40 year decree of death for the generation of the desert was in effect. It wasn't until the fifteenth of Av that the quota of yearly deaths among the Jews had ended.

Apparently, before the defeat of Sichon and Og Moshe had no thought of praying that he should be granted the privilege of entering the land. Hashem had vowed that he would not go into Eretz Yisrael (BaMidbar 20:12), and Moshe did not consider that this solemn promise could be revoked. However, when he thought that it had been cancelled, once the land of Sichon and Og was conquered, he asked that he be able to cross the Jordan and join the Jews in the land.

Let us analyze this for a moment. The total defeat of Sichon and Og culminated with Hashem proclaiming to Moshe (Devarim 2:25): "This day I shall begin to place dread and fear of you on the faces of the nations under the entire heaven, etc." Rashi (ibid.) comments that the event which so completely affected the nations of the entire world was that the sun literally stood still for Moshe and the Jews during the battle with Sichon. This communication of Hashem to Moshe must have occurred on the 15th of Av, at the earliest.

Therefore, we see that Moshe began to pray to Hashem beginning on the 15th of Av, and he ostensibly continued every day until the day of his own demise, when he spoke the words of Devarim on the 7th of Adar the next year.

If we count every month from Av until Adar, calculating every other month as 29 and 30 days respectively, we tally a total of 200 days. Three prayers daily would result in 600 prayers. 28 of these days were Shabbos. If we multiply the remaining 172 days (200 minus the 28 days of Shabbos) by three prayers daily, we find that Moshe would have prayed 516 times. We must still subtract one, however, because on that very first day, the 15th of Av, Moshe did not pray to enter the Land until Shacharis, when Hashem appeared to him with the news of the capitulation of Sichon. Moshe did pray two prayers to enter Eretz Yisrael that day, and three prayers every weekday until he died, for an astounding total of 515 prayers, precisely indicated in the numerical value (gematria) of the word "ואתחנן". (See Da'as Zekeynim MiBaalei HaTosafos to Devarim 3:23). ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why would one think that Shabbos requires the sanctification of Beis Din?

2. What were the two happiest days on the calendar?

3. When should one begin to add time to his nightly learning schedule?

4. Who are the seven people whose lives span all of recorded history?

HALACHAH Highlight

Celebrating a siyum

רבה ור' יוסף דאמרי תרוייהו יום שפוסקין מלכרות עצים למערכה
Rabbah and R' Yosef explained together that it was the day they ceased chopping wood for the pyre

Rema¹ writes that upon finishing a messechta one should rejoice by hosting a festive meal and that festive meal is considered a seudas mitzvah. This is similar to what is mentioned in our Gemara where Rabbah and R' Yosef suggest that the reason the fifteenth of Av was such a joyous day was that it was the day that they finished cutting wood for the Beis Hamikdash. Nimukei Yosef² comments that from this Gemara we see that one should feel so joyous when performing a mitzvah that he would be inspired to celebrate upon completing that mitzvah. Poskim also point to a Midrash³ that supports the practice of making a festive meal to celebrate the completion of a mitzvah. While discussing Shlomo's celebration upon the completion of the Beis Hamikdash, R' Yitzchok comments, "From here we see that one should make a celebratory meal upon the completion of the Torah."

Yam Shel Shlomo⁴ remarks that in his opinion it is appropriate to include in the Birkas Hamazon of the festive meal celebrating the completion of a massechta the phrase *שהשמחה במעונו* –the joy is found in His abode. The rationale is that there is no greater joy and celebration for Hashem than

successfully challenged.

The Gemara proves that the decree against the generation of the spies did not apply to the tribe of Levi.

The implication that people from other tribes did not enter Eretz Yisroel is challenged.

R' Acha bar Yaakov answers that the decree of the spies did not apply to those less than twenty or more than sixty.

4) The division of Eretz Yisroel

The Gemara inquires whether the land was divided by tribes or whether it was divided by individuals. ■

the joy associated with Torah. Yam Shel Shlomo goes on to relate that he once issued a ruling that the phrase *שהשמחה במעונו* should be included in the Birkas Hamazon of a meal celebrating the completion of a massechta but something happened that disrupted the celebration and he decided that it was due to his intent to violate the words of his teachers who never instituted such a practice. The lesson he took from this experience is that the practices of earlier generations should be followed meticulously for each of their words is measured and there are specific, although sometimes hidden, reasons why practices were set up in the particular manner in which they were enacted. ■

1. רמ"א יו"ד סי' רמ"ו סי' כ"ו.
2. נמוקי יוסף נ"ג: בדפי הר"ף ד"ה מאן דלא.
3. ריש שיר השירין רבה.
4. ישיש ב"ק פ"ז סי' ל"ז. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

Cause for celebration

כיון שהגיע חמשה עשר באב תשש כחה של
 חמה

Sadly, the feeling of so many non-religious Zionist pioneers that returning to and working the holy land absolves one from mitzvah observance or the like, rubbed off on many religious farmers. The first thing to erode was their commitment to learn Torah. Was it not enough that they were building the land with sweat and tears, and keeping mitzvos? Surely such sophisticated and busy people like themselves did not need to learn archaic texts, which their neighbors and friends looked down on. Didn't they have a position to uphold?

It is therefore not surprising that the

great rabbanim of that time worked assiduously to encourage working men to do mitzvos and set aside time to learn Torah.

Once, Rav Tzvi Pesach Frank, zt"l, the famed Rav of Yerushalayim, was invited to a ceremony dedicated to setting the cornerstone of a shul in a new moshav on the fifteenth of Av. When he was asked to speak, he quoted today's daf. "In Bava Basra 121 we find that Rabbi Eliezer Hagadol said, 'From the fifteenth of Av, the sun does not shine as strong, so they ceased cutting wood to be used on the altar.' Rabbeinu Gershom notes there that while they were required to cut wood, they were forced to diminish the time they spent learning Torah. The day they were no longer preoccupied with this mitzvah and could dedicate themselves to learning as is fit-

ting they declared a yom tov."

Rav Frank explained the relevance of this to building the shul. "Farming the holy land is undoubtedly a mitzvah. Yet we must recall this is not a dispensation for making time to learn Torah. As the verse states, 'והגית בו יומם ולילה' — And you shall meditate upon it day and night.' And even though the wood chopped for the altar was a mitzvah, they still made a yom tov when they stopped doing this mitzvah so they could get back to learning Torah as is fitting."

Rav Frank concluded, "We can only hope that this wonderful beginning of the construction of this shul will bring in its wake other spiritual beginnings and draw all those who live on this moshav back to a lifestyle in keeping with the spirit of our ancient tradition!"² ■

1. שיח שרפי קודש
2. משואה לדוד, ע' ס"א ■