



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) Moshiach (cont.)

R' Yitzchok describes the generation when Moshiach will come.

A Beraisa describes what will be happening in the seven years before the arrival of Moshiach.

R' Yosef unsuccessfully challenges the Beraisa.

Another Beraisa describes how the world will appear before the coming of Moshiach.

The Gemara further elaborates on the verse cited by the Beraisa.

A story is recounted about people who were very careful to speak the truth.

Two more Beraisos are presented that describe the period before the arrival of Moshiach.

A Beraisa cites a verse related to redemption and offers different interpretations of that verse.

A related incident is recounted.

R' Katina and Abaye disagree how long the world will be destroyed.

A Beraisa is cited that supports R' Katina's position.

Another Beraisa discusses the earliest possible time Moshiach could arrive.

Different opinions offer predictions when Moshiach will arrive.

R' Nosson cites a verse that indicates that the time of the arrival of Moshiach is hidden.

The Gemara further elaborates on the verse cited by R' Nosson.

Abaye offers another teaching from this verse.

This teaching is unsuccessfully challenged.

Rav and Shmuel disagree whether Moshiach will come at a preordained time.

It is noted that this dispute parallels a dispute between R'

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REVIEW and Remember

1. What is the meaning of the verse ותהי האמת נאדרת?
2. What is the point of dispute between R' Katina and Abaye?
3. What does R' Nosson have to say about predicting when Moshiach will come?
4. What is the point of dispute between Rav and Shmuel related to when Moshiach will come?

Distinctive INSIGHT

The face of the generation will be like dogs

ופני הדור כפני כלב

In the Beraisa, R' Yehuda describes the generation of when the Moshiach, a descendant of Dovid HaMelech, will come. Among the depictions mentioned is that the face of the generation will be like that of a dog. Rashi provides two explanations for this. First, Rashi comments "שיהיו דומים לכלב ממש," that the people will be literally similar to dogs. This comment of Rashi, itself, needs to be explained. Furthermore, Rashi explains that people of that generation will not be ashamed of one another.

Maharsha explains that a dog is named a כלב because it is "like its heart—קלב." The unique nature of a dog is to be totally loyal to its master. The message of the Beraisa is that people at the time of Moshiach will appear outwardly as if they are fully considerate and caring for their fellow man, but their true inner feelings will not be sincere to their actions.

Eitz Yosef explains that the leaders of the generation will be lowly as dogs. He also says that פני הדור, the "face of the generation" refers to the wealthy people of the generation (see Rashi to Bereshis 41:56). The Beraisa is teaching that the financially capable people will be stingy and tight-fisted. This element of insensitivity is similar to the conduct of a dog which is only concerned for itself, and it does not care to let its fellow dog have any of its food.

Chid"א writes (in פתח עינים) that a dog is described in the Gemara in Shabbos (155b) as the "poorest of all animals." Nevertheless, the Gemara in Beitza (25b) also tells us that a dog is stubborn and insolent. The Beraisa is teaching that people of the generation of the Moshiach's arrival will possess a combination of being needy and deficient, yet also shameless and audacious.

R' Yisroel Salanter explains that a dog always runs in front of its master, almost to the point where it appears as if the dog is leading and its master is following after it and obeying its directions. The truth is, however, that the master is going where he wants to go, and the dog is constantly looking behind to see where its master is headed. If he notices that his master is turning, the dog quickly adjusts and turns to run in front of where the master is going. This scenario will describe the people of the generation of the Moshiach. In previous generations the leaders determined where and what the people would do, and the community followed behind faithfully. At the time of Moshiach, however, the people will run ahead and appear to direct their own leaders, who will be following behind.

Chofetz Chaim explains that when a dog is hit with a stick, he attacks the stick to stop it, not realizing that someone is holding the stick. The generation of the Moshiach's arrival will be lacking in understanding and reluctant to do teshuva, unwilling to attribute their difficulties to Hashem's hand. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Defining אונס

אלא הקב"ה מעמיד עליהן מלך שגזרותיו קשות כהמן

Rather HaKadosh Baruch Hu appoints a king whose decrees are as harsh as Haman's

The Gemara relates that HaKadosh Baruch Hu will put in power a king whose decrees are as harsh as Haman's in order to inspire the Jewish People to repent. This principle puts into question the inquiry recorded in the Gemara Megilla (12a). The Gemara relates that the students of R' Shimon ben Yochai asked their rebbi why the Jews of the generation of the Purim story were liable to be eradicated. Based on the principle in our Gemara there was no reason for them to think that the Jews of the Purim story would actually be killed; it was just a ruse to get them to repent.

Rav Yehonason Eibshutz¹ in his work Yaaros Dvash answers this question. The Gemara Shabbos (88a) teaches that since the Jews were forced to accept the Torah at Har Sinai they could reject the Torah with a claim of coercion. Eventually, they accepted the Torah willingly during the time of Achashverosh. This seems difficult to understand for two reasons. The אונס that was present during the Purim story was tangible and thus stronger than the אונס that was present when the Torah was given at Har Sinai since at Har Sinai it was a threat that was not tangible. Secondly, Hashem threat-

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Eliezer and R' Yehoshua.

Another Beraisa presents a longer discussion between R' Eliezer and R' Yehoshua. ■

ened them with death in the hands of heaven whereas Haman threatened them with death in the hands of man and we are taught (Shmuel II 24:14) that death in the hands of man is worse. Why then was their acceptance of the Torah during the Purim story a stronger commitment? He answers these questions with a halachic principle as articulated by Maharik. Maharik² draws a distinction between different types of coercion. If someone said, "Give me one hundred gold coins or do a particular act," and the person did the act he is considered an אונס. If, however, someone owed one hundred gold coins and the creditor said if you do such and such an act I will forgo your obligation he would not be considered an אונס since he is willingly choosing to do the act to free himself of his financial obligation. Had the Jewish People not been under a real threat of annihilation and they had accepted the Torah out of fear of Haman their acceptance would not be an acceptance out of love. Being that there was a decree for their annihilation and they exchanged that decree with the acceptance of the Torah that acceptance is not considered an אונס and was considered a willing acceptance of Torah out of love. ■

1. מובא דבריו שש"ס לובלין בפניני הדך לסוגיין.

2. שו"ת מהרי"ק שורש קס"ו אות א'. ■

STORIES Off the Daf

The meaning of inattention

"אלא בהיסח הדעת..."

Rav Yosef Chaim Sonnenfeld, zt"l, would deliver a daily shiur in the shul in Batei Machseh between Mincha and Maariv. Once one of the regular attendees of the shiur asked him a question regarding today's daf. "On Sanhedrin 97 we find that Moshiach will only arrive when we aren't paying attention. But how can that possibly be? After all, Moshiach's coming is a core belief mentioned in ani ma'amin which we recite daily. In addition, we daven for the advent of Moshiach in every shemonah esrei; how could we possibly forget him?"

The Rav replied with a question of his own. "What is 'hesech hada'as'? If some-

one were to tell us sitting here in shul discussing Moshiach that he has actually arrived and is standing on our street, we would be astounded and would all instinctively cry out in our shock: 'Can it be true?'

"This is the state of distraction to which our sages referred."¹

The Shem MiShmuel, zt"l, asked a similar question about a similar statement on today's daf, but offered a very different answer. "On Sanhedrin 97 we find that Moshiach will only come when we have given up on the redemption. Of course this cannot be literal. It can be understood in the context of a revealing statement once made by the Maggid of Mezritch, zt"l, 'Even if I were to fall and violate a terrible sin, chas v'shalom, I would never fall away from my avodas Hashem. The reason why is that I do not serve Hashem to avoid ge-

hinom or to attain the world to come. I serve him as a slave serves his master with no thought of reward for doing his duty.'"

The Shem MiShmuel continued, "This attitude is laid down by the Mishnah in Avos: 'Be like slaves who serve their master with no thought of reward.' Of course serving Hashem brings one vitality and eternal life, one should not serve Hashem only on condition of receiving reward. As our sages say in the Sifrei: 'One should not learn only to be a ben olam haba. Instead, he should act from love and the honor due to him will come.'²

"This is what it means to 'give up' on the redemption: people will focus on serving Hashem out of love, not the reward they will receive after Moshiach arrives!"³ ■

1. חכמת חיים, ע' תמ"ג

2. ספרי, פרשת עקב

3. שם משמואל, פרשת וישב תרע"ד, ע' פ"ה ■