



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The day the Torah was given (cont.)

After concluding Rava's clarification of the dispute regarding the day of the month the Torah was given the Gemara attempts to determine which opinion is correct.

As a tangent to the first attempt, a Beraisa is recorded that lists three times Moshe Rabbeinu did something based on his own understanding and in each instance Hashem agreed with his decision.

Further attempts are made to prove one side of the dispute between Rabanan and R' Yosi. In the process many issues related to the chronology of the events leading up to receiving the Torah are discussed. ■

Distinctive INSIGHT

Great Job!

יישר כחך ששברת

Hashem congratulated Moshe for realizing that the tablets should be broken, and for actually smashing them. Rashi explains that the inference in the verse is from the word "אשר", which suggests the approval phrase "יישר כחך". Ramban asks that the word "אשר" appears many times in the Torah, and it does not consistently indicate any element of approval. For example, Moshe was told to take and grind up the Golden Calf "אשר עשו". This was certainly not an expression of approval!

Rather, Ramban says that the approval was from the very fact that the broken pieces were to be gathered and stored in the ark next to the second tablets. If Moshe's actions been considered sinful, these pieces would never be allowed to be in the ark. "אין קטיגור נעשה סניגור—An accuser does not become an advocate." ■

REVIEW and Remember

1. What are the three things Moshe Rabbeinu did based on his own understanding?

2. What was Moshe Rabbeinu's reasoning for breaking the luchos?

3. When were the Jewish people given the mitzvah of Shabbos?

4. What ten things began on the first of Nissan?

STORIES off the Daf

The emotional attachment to Sin

שבר את הלוחות

The verse clearly reveals that the reason that Moshe Rabbeinu smashed the tablets was due to his seeing the Golden Calf and the dancing which accompanied its being worshipped. It is obvious from the verse that the Torah is not just casually mentioning that there was some merry making which surrounded the idol worship, but that the dancing in and of itself was an integral part of the tragedy.

Had the Jews just been misguided in their desire to have a physical intermediary between themselves and G-d, they could have been forgiven. It was a major error on their part, and a terrible delusion for them to accede to the Yetzer Hara, but there was still some excuse that could have been proposed in order for leniency and forgiveness to be considered. What was beyond any shred of merit was the corruptive sinful celebration and immoral festive partying which was conducted together with the ritual of idol worship. Moshe Rabbeinu immediately cast the tablets down and dashed them to bits at the foot of the mountain. As the Sforno comments, "when Moshe saw the dancing, he despaired of their eventual penitence and therefore broke the tablets, for they were not worthy to receive them."

There is a famous story about an unfortunate Jewish man who was drafted into the Russian army. He was forced to eat the rations which were supplied for all of the soldiers and had no choice other than to eat non-kosher food in order to survive. He came to Reb Yisrael from Rizhin for guidance. The sainted Rabbi advised him, "At least do not suck the marrow out of the bones!"

His message was that although he was forced to violate the laws of kashrus, he was not being compelled to savor and relish every bite along the way. If he would take advantage of the situation and eat with delight, it would reflect upon the entire circumstance that it was not one of coercion. The attitude which a person has when involved in otherwise undesirable conditions indicates his true feelings towards the situation. ■

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
In memory of my mother,
Mrs. Dorothy Lane, Devorah Bas Yitzchok
by her son Jerry Lane, Oak Park, MI

Today's Daf Digest is dedicated
In memory of Harav Dov ben Baruch
by the Aronson/Schwimmer/Herman families families

HALACHAH Highlight

The miracle of Shabbos HaGadol

תוספות ד"ה ואותו יום חמישי בשבת היה כו' - ועל כן קורין אותו שבת הגדול לפי שנעשה בו נס גדול

It is therefore called Shabbos HaGadol, for there occurred upon it a great miracle.

Tosafos cites the Midrash which states that when they acquired their Pesach offerings on that Shabbos, the firstborn sons of the nations of the world came to the Jews and asked them what they were doing. [The Jews] responded and told them that it was a Pesach offering for Hashem, Who was going to kill the firstborn sons of the Egyptians. [Each Egyptian firstborn son] went to his father and to Pharaoh to request that he let the Jews go, but they did not agree. So the firstborn sons waged war [with their fathers] and killed many of them, as it says: To he who smote Egypt through their firstborn sons.¹

Many later authorities ask why this specific miracle is celebrated annually on the Shabbos before Pesach, and not on the tenth of the month of Nisan.

Bach² answers that the tenth of Nisan is the anniversary of two other major events: The death of Miriam in the last year before the Jews entered the Land of Israel, and the crossing of the Jordan River, as the Jews finally entered the Land of Israel. We therefore do not celebrate the miracle on the tenth day of the month, as doing so would remind us of Miriam's death, and diminish our happiness on the one hand, and, on the other hand, doing so would diminish the emphasis placed on celebrating the Exodus, as it would remind us of our crossing of the Jordan.³

Perishah⁴ suggests that Shabbos was the catalyst of the events that followed, in that the Egyptians knew that the Jews

kept Shabbos, and therefore asked why they were acquiring the sheep, and especially wanted to know how the Jews could desecrate the Sabbath by tying the sheep and goats so that they would not run away. The Jews responded that this was a unique commandment from Hashem. This was how the Egyptian firstborn sons became aware of the problem, from which time the miraculous events began to unfold.

Taz⁵ cites R' Moshe Charif as having given the answer that the tenth of the month commemorates the crossing of the Jordan as well, and that therefore a celebration the miracle of the acquisition of the offerings on the tenth might be diluted by the memory of the miracle of the crossing. Taz states that he related this answer to his father-in-law (Bach) who praised the answer.

R' Yaakov Kamenetsky⁶ notes that Bach, in turn, states concerning this answer, that he "received" it.⁷ Reb Yaakov takes it for granted that Bach "received" this answer from his son-in-law, Taz. He therefore concluded that when authorities describe some statement as a "Kabbalah," it does not necessarily mean that they received the idea they are stating as a tradition from earlier generations, but rather that they heard the idea and accepted it because it found favor in their eyes!

Because of the significance of the appellation "Shabbos HaGadol - The Great Shabbos", Chida⁸ writes that although it is said in the name of Arizal that the proper form of blessing another person on Shabbos is "Shabbos Shalom U'Mevorach", on this special Shabbos the custom is to say: "Shabbos HaGadol U'Mevorach." ■

- 1 תהלים פרק קל"ו פס' י'
- 2 או"ח סי' ת"ל.
- 3 עיין ערוך השלחן, או"ח סי' ת"ל סעיף ב'.
- 4 או"ח שם.
- 5 או"ח סי' ת"ל ס"ק א'.
- 6 אמת ליעקב לאו"ח סי' ת"ל סעיף א'.
- 7 "ואני קבלתי דהטעם הוא וכו', עי"ש.
- 8 בסי' מחזיק ברכה, הובא בסי' מנהג ישראל תורה, או"ח סי' ת"ל ס"ק א'.

Gemara GEM

To Be a Treasure for Hashem

בתלתא אמר להו ואתם תהיו לי

The Jewish People were charged with the mission to be an עם סגולה, a jewel and a treasure for Hashem.

Rebbe Simcha Bunim, zt"l, was visited by one of his Chasidim, a wealthy merchant who dealt with precious stones and pearls. The conversation turned to some necessary arrangements regarding some of the "simpler" people of the community, whom the Rebbe

praised highly for their various abilities. The businessman could not contain himself and inquired, "What does the Rebbe find so commendable about these people?" The Rebbe explained how he felt that they possessed certain impressive qualities. Yet, the visitor persisted and complained, "I don't think that they are so deserving of your compliments." The Rebbe did not pursue the point and brought the conversation to a halt.

After a few minutes, the Rebbe turned to the merchant and asked to see some of his wares which he had in his bags. The man proudly opened a few pouches and displayed several rows of

shiny gems. "This one," he announced with delight as he singled one out, "is simply magnificent!" The Rebbe frowned and turned away. "I don't think it is anything worth looking at!" he said.

"I am sorry," excused the man, "but one has to be an expert in order to appreciate the true beauty of these stones. That is perhaps why you don't think it is special!"

The Rebbe then looked him in the eye and explained, "The Jewish people are all jewels. One just has to be trained in how to look at all people in order to properly evaluate and be aware of the true strengths and virtues of each one." ■

