



OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The incident of the spies (cont.)

The Gemara continues to elaborate on the verses related to the incident of the spies.

2) Crossing the Jordan River (cont.)

The citation of the Baraisa that describes the crossing of the Jordan River resumes.

3) Uzza's death

Tangentially, the Gemara discusses the death of Uzza that resulted from his touching the Aron Hakodesh.

Rava explains why Hashem caused Uzza to die through Dovid Hamelech.

Another incident in which people were punished for not treating the Aron Hakodesh with proper respect is recorded.

A discrepancy is noted between the way the verse in

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REVIEW and Remember

1. How did Kalev silence the people?

2. How did the spies die?

3. How many sets of stones were there and what was their significance?

4. What is the remedy for Kutheans?

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Distinctive INSIGHT

The miraculous nature of the holy Aron

נשא ארון את נושאי

Our Gemara reports that as the Jewish nation crossed the Jordan River, the holy Ark miraculously transported those who carried it upon their shoulders.

The verse (Shemos 40:20) describes the construction of the Ark. "And he took and placed the Testimony into the Aron and placed the poles on the Aron, and he placed the lid on the Aron from above." This suggests that placing the poles into the rings of the Aron happened only after the Tablets were in the Ark. However, in Parashas Teruma (ibid. 25:15-16) the Torah seems to tell us that the Tablets were placed into the Ark only after the poles were placed into the rings. How are we to understand this?

The Gemara in Yoma (72b) says that the poles were loose in the rings but could not slip out. Rashi explains that the ends of the poles were thick and had to be squeezed through the rings. However, the middle of the poles were narrow and loose in the rings, though they could not slip out.

The measurements for the Ark were such that in fact the poles should not have fit into the rings at all. The attributes of the Ark were more spiritual than physical. As our Gemara reports, even though the Ark was carried, it actually transported those who carried it. The rings are described in parashas teruma as being able to miraculously extend around the poles, even before the luchos were placed inside the aron. The rings would "stretch" momentarily to allow the poles to enter and then return to their normal size so that the poles would never slip out. This was before the incident of the Golden Calf.

Shem MiShmuel explains that after the incident of the Golden Calf, only the placing of the Tablets into the Ark would cause the rings to expand in an unnatural fashion to allow the poles to be put into place. Only in the merit of having the Tablets already placed into the Ark would the Ark then prepare itself for transportation. Therefore, when the Torah recounts in Parashas Pekudei how the poles were actually placed into the rings, it first mentions the Tablets being placed into the Ark and then the placing of the poles into the rings. ■

HALACHAH Highlight

Covering Hashem's name with plaster

ר' יהודה אומר על גבי אבנים כתבוה וכו' ואחר כך סדו אותן בסיד
R' Yehudah says that the Torah was written on stones ... and afterwards they covered it with plaster

There was once an old Beis Haknesses that needed a new paint job. The impediment to this project was that many tefilos and requests that included the name of Hashem were written on the wall. The painter suggested applying a layer of plaster to the wall and then painting onto that layer of plaster. The concern this raised was whether it is permitted to apply plaster onto the written name of Hashem that was not sanctified. Teshuvos Panim Meiros¹ demonstrated that it is prohibited to erase the name of Hashem even if it was not sanctified. A difficulty with this ruling, however, is that our Gemara seems to indicate that it is permitted to apply a layer of plaster onto Hashem's name. R' Yehudah maintains that the entire Torah was inscribed onto the stones and then a layer of plaster was applied over that inscription. Even though non-Jewish scribes were sent to peel the plaster off these stones in order to copy the text, nonetheless, why was it permitted to cover the inscription with plaster in the first place? Panim Meiros suggests that the layer of plaster did not erase the name of Hashem; rather it merely covered Hashem's name and this is evident from the fact that the scribes were able to peel off the plaster and the inscription remained legible. This is different from covering Hashem's name with gold where it will be

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Melachim describes how Dovid Hamelech transported the Aron Hakodesh and how the verse in Divrei Hayamim describes the same event.

R' Pappa bar Shmuel suggests a resolution to this contradiction.

R' Chisda rejects this explanation and offers an alternative explanation.

Another contradiction between verses describing the same event, i.e. Uzza's death, is presented.

4) Crossing the Jordan River (cont.)

The Gemara continues to cite the Baraisa that describes the crossing of the Jordan River.

The Baraisa also describes the inscription of the Torah at Har Eival.

The dispute between R' Yehudah and R' Shimon in the Baraisa about how the Torah was written is analyzed.

A Baraisa is cited that the Gemara identifies as consistent with the opinion of R' Shimon. ■

impossible to peel off the gold without damaging the inscription of Hashem's name that is beneath.

Accordingly, any time Hashem's name is written on plaster in a way that the plaster cannot be removed without erasing Hashem's name it is prohibited to remove that plaster. Panim Meiros, therefore advised plastering the entire wall except for the portion that contains Hashem's name and covering the area that contains Hashem's name with paper or some cloth and then decorating that paper or cloth. ■

1. שו"ת פנים מאירות ח"א סי' מ"ה ■

STORIES Off the Daf

"They went and they came..."

מה ביאה בעצה רעה אף הליכה בעצה רעה

On today's daf we find, "They went and they came"—just as when they came before Moshe it was with an evil counsel, so too when they left to tour the land it was with an evil counsel."

Rav Yisroel of Ruzhin, zt"l, was known to be as sharp as a blade. He was a very pious and brilliant young man who amazed everyone who met him, from academic to Torah gaon to

simple chassid.

Once, one of his Chasidim made the trip to Eretz Yisrael and visited with Rav Yisroel upon his return. When this chassid approached him, Rav Yisroel said, "Shalom Aleichem!" After the chasid responded as is customary, Rav Yisroel asked, "Nu, so how was it?"

The chassid, smart enough to realize that if he said one word against Eretz Yisrael, he would be in for a scathing rebuke, merely said, "Better I say nothing..."

"Do you know why we call 'the Promised Land' Eretz Yisrael?" asked

the Rebbe.

"No," replied the chassid.

"We call it Eretz Yisrael because every Jew who goes to this land sees the truth about himself. The land acts as a mirror reflecting his true spiritual status back at him. The reason you feel cold about Eretz Yisrael is not that it is the land's true identity, since nothing could be further than the truth. You feel cold because you are spiritually apathetic! If a Jew who goes to Eretz Yisrael can't find any good attribute which he can report, this bears a very telling witness about the true state of his spirituality!" ■