OVERVIEW of the Daf

1) The names of Yosef and Yehudah (cont.)

The Baraisa cites a second opinion regarding the events that transpired when the Jews stood at the edge of the sea.

2) Har Gerizim and Har Eival

A Baraisa cites the explanation of R' Eliezer ben Yaakov regarding the placement of the Leviim at Har Gerizim and Har Eival.

Rebbi asserts that everyone was on the ground between the mountains and they merely turned in the direction of the different mountains.

Another Baraisa is cited where the term על is understood to mean near.

A Baraisa enumerates the number of blessings and curses that were pronounced at this event and this was the same number of blessings and curses that were pronounced at Har Sinai and in the Plains of Moav for a total of forty-eight covenants for each commandment. R' Shimon asserts that Har Gerizim and Har Eival should be replaced with the Ohel Moed of the wilderness.

This dispute parallels a dispute between R' Yishmael and R' Akiva.

Another opinion maintains that the number of covenants must be multiplied by 603,550 corresponding to the number of men in the wilderness and Rebbi maintains that the number must be multiplied by another 603,550 corresponding to the guarantee each male made for the guarantee of all the other males.

The difference between these last two opinions is explained.

R' Yehuda ben Nachmani the spokesman for Reish Lakish explains that the entire section of curses refers to adulterers.

Another Baraisa gives an elaborate description of how the blessings and curses were pronounced.

3) MISHNAH: The Mishnah begins to describe how Birkas Kohanim is pronounced.■

Distictive INSIGHT

The reward for being a leader

לפיכך זכה יהודה לעשות ממשלה בישראל

In the Baraisa, Rabbi Meir explains that the tribe of Binyamin entered into the Yam Suf first, while Rabbi Yehuda disagrees and explains that it was the tribe of Yehuda which led the way, spearheaded by their heroic prince, Nachshon ben Aminadav. What is interesting is that either way, everyone agrees that the tribe which jumped into the sea first was rewarded for their trust in Hashem. Rabbi Meir states that Binyomin was rewarded for this gesture with their later being host to the Shechina and having the Beis Hamikdash built in their territory. Rabbi Yehuda points out that the tribe of Yehuda were rewarded with the monarchy for their pioneering efforts at the sea.

Ben Yehoyada notes that although the tribes of Binyomin and Yehuda are each credited with the same feat, the reward ascribed to each is not the same. One was given the privilege of hosteing the Beis Hamikdash, while the other was given the monarchy. Wouldn't it seem appropriate for the same reward to be given for the same merit?

Ben Yehoyada explains that, in fact, Binyomin had already been promised to host the Shechina, and Yehuda had earlier merited to provide the kings of the Jewish nation. The reward described in our Gemara is only that these rights and privileges were to be perpetual. As a result of this monumental leadership effort at the sea, every time the Beis Hamikdash would be built it would always be in the territory of Binyomin, and the monarchy would never leave the control of the tribe of Yehuda.

Therefore, the reward to each tribe was the same. Their particular honor was to be eternalized.■

REVIEW and Remember

1. Why did Shevet Binyamin merit having the Beis HaMikdash in its borders?
   _____
2. What are the two meanings of the word על?
   _____
3. How many different times were the mitzvos repeated?
   _____
4. How many berachos are contained in Birkas Kohanim?
   _____

HALACHAH Highlight

Wrapping a mezuzah in parchment

אתה אומר ״על״ בסמוך או אינו אלא על ממש

You assert that על means "near," perhaps it means literally "on"

Pischei Teshuvah[1] writes that the Vilna Gaon is cited as ruling that one is not permitted to wrap a mezuzah in parchment or something similar because wrapping the mezuzah would create an interposition between the mezuzah and the doorframe to which the mezuzah is supposed to be affixed. Aruch Hashulchan[2] expresses astonishment concerning this position. First of all, none of the Poskim mention this halacha and secondly, whatever is wrapped around the mezuzah becomes nullified to the wall and is considered non-existent so he assumes that someone misunderstood or did not accurately hear what the Vilna Gaon said. In his commentary to the post-Mishnaic Masseches Mezuzah, Rav Chaim Kanievsky[3] writes in the name of Chazon Ish that the Vilna Gaon never issued this ruling because the Gemara in Bava Metziah (102a) writes that they would insert the mezuzah into a hollow piece of wood. Sefer Emek Halacha[4] also expresses astonishment regarding this ruling and assumes that it is based in kabbalistic sources.

Sefer Segulos Yisroel[5] suggests that the issue revolves around the discussion in our Gemara whether the word על means "near" or "on top of." Vilna Gaon maintains that the word על in the phrase על מזוזות ביתך is understood to mean "on top of" thus it is not acceptable for there to be any interposition between the mezuzah and the doorpost. This would be consistent with Tosafos's opinion that על should be translated as "on top of." This suggestion, however, has been refuted by Maharam Shick[6] who noted that Tosafos wrote that the word על is understood to mean "on top of" unless there is a logical reason to interpret it to mean "near." Accordingly, it seems that wrapping the mezuzah in parchment or another material is a way of giving honor to the mitzvah and thus it is more logical to interpret the term על as "near" since this allows for the mezuzah to be wrapped. The reason it is logical to assume that wrapping the mezuzah gives greater honor to the mitzvah is that the parchments that are placed in the tefillin box are also wrapped before they are inserted into the tefillin indicating that this is an honorable way to protect the sacred scroll. ∎

1. פת״ש יו״ד סי׳ רפ״ט סק״ב
2. ערוה״ש שם סע׳ י״ט
3. מובא דבריו בספר מתיבתא בפניני הלכה לדף לו: (אבל נראה דהוא טעות כיון דהסוגיא איתא בדף לז) עמ׳ י״ח שם
4. ספר עמק ברכה הל׳ מזוזה אות י׳
5. ספר סגולות ישראל מערכת אות מ׳ ס״ק י״ד
6. שו״ת מהר״ם שי״ק יו״ד סי׳ רפ״ח ∎

STORIES Off the Daf

Plunging into the sea

קפץ נחשון בן עמינדב וירד לתוך הים תחילה

Many find that one of the hardest areas of life to navigate is shidduchim. It is very unusual for someone to be one hundred percent certain regarding who will make a good spouse. How often are people convinced that their first choice was exactly right only to later on be very thankful to a benevolent Providence that the other party terminated their relationship? Once a person finally finds his or her real match, he or she suddenly sees that the first choice was inferior in every way.

One of the most difficult aspects of shidduchim is that there are few clear guidelines. Although the Chofetz Chaim, zt"l, said that one shouldn't meet until the other party's references have been checked and it is clear that they are not unsuitable, this merely ensures that the person might be the right one. There simply is no way to determine with absolute certainty from the outset whether the prospective partner is the right one.

Once a certain bochur had several different shidduchim suggested to him. After checking all the excellent references on the shiduchim, the young man didn't know what to do. All the possibilities looked promising. How was he to tell who was the most suitable for him?

He consulted with the Rebbe of Strikov, zt"l. The young man said, "I have a very hard time making decisions about such a crucial issue."

The Rebbe replied, "Do you know what Chazal meant when they said that shidduchim are as difficult as the splitting of the sea? What was so difficult about the splitting of the sea?"

The bochur admitted that he had no idea what the precise difficulty was.

The Rebbe explained, "In Sotah 37 we find that Rabbi Yehudah said that each tribe asserted that they would not jump into the sea first. Finally, Nachshon ben Aminadav plunged into the sea. Decisions about a shidduch are just like this. Sometimes deciding a shidduch is just like plunging in...and that's exactly how one's zivug is supposed to be made!" ∎