

BACKGROUND

Requiring the mention of God's name... was abolished – בטילת אדברתא: Although the date of this event is not mentioned, from context it appears that this ordinance was made after the time of Yohanan Hyrcanus, who served as High Priest for eighty years. Perhaps it was instituted in the time of Alexander Jannaeus, and therefore the miraculous aspect is emphasized due to the tense relationship between him and the Sages. Alternatively, it may have occurred in the time of Queen Salome Alexandra, when the Sages were given more authority.

NOTES

And they made that day into a Festival – וְאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עָשְׂאוּהוּ יוֹם טוֹב: The Maharsha wrote that since this halakha to mention God's name on documents was originally instituted by the Hasmoneans in honor of their victory, the Sages were concerned that annulling the halakha would provoke opposition of the Hasmonean kings. When it passed without trouble they established that day as a Festival.

אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: שְׁאֵי חֲנוּכָּה דְאִיכָּא מְצוּהָ. אָמַר לִיה אַבְיֵי: וְתִיבְטִיל אִיהִי, וְתִיבְטִיל מִצְוֹתָהּ!

Rav Yosef said: Hanukkah is different, as there is the mitzva of lighting candles, and so, unlike the other days listed in Megillat Ta'anit, the festival of Hanukkah was not nullified. Abaye said to him: What is this argument? Let Hanukkah itself be nullified, and let its mitzva of lighting candles be nullified with it.

אֲלָא אָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף: שְׁאֵי חֲנוּכָּה דְמִיפְרָסִים נִסָּא.

Rather, Rav Yosef retracted his previous explanation and said: Hanukkah is different, as its miracle is well known, and it has become so widely accepted by all the Jewish people that it would be inappropriate to nullify it.

מוֹתִיב רַב אֲחָא בַר הוּנָא: בְּתַלְתָּא בְּתַשְׁרֵי בְּטִילַת אֲדִבְרֵתָא מִן שְׁטַרְיָא. שְׁגוּרָה מְלֻכּוֹת יוֹן גּוּרָה שְׁלֵא לְהִזְבִּיר שֵׁם שְׁמַיִם עַל פִּיהֶם, וּכְשֶׁגְּבַרְהָ מְלֻכּוֹת חֲשָׁמוֹנָאִי וּנְצַחִים הִתְקִינוּ שְׁיֵהוּ מְזִבְרִין שֵׁם שְׁמַיִם אֲפִילוּ בְּשְׁטָרוֹת. וְכֵן הָיוּ בּוֹתְבִים: בְּשָׁנַת כָּךְ וְכֵן לְיוֹחָנָן כֹּהֵן גָּדוֹל לְאֵל עֲלִיוֹן.

Rav Aha bar Huna raised an objection: It is stated in Megillat Ta'anit: On the third of Tishrei the ordinance requiring the mention of God's name in legal documents was abolished,⁸ and on that day fasting is forbidden. For the kingdom of Greece had issued a decree against the Jews forbidding them to mention the name of Heaven on their lips. When the Hasmonean kingdom became strong and defeated the Greeks, they instituted that people should mention the name of Heaven even in their legal documents. And therefore they would write: In year such and such of Yohanan the High Priest of the God Most High.

וּכְשֶׁשָּׁמְעוּ חֲכָמִים בְּדַבַּר אָמְרוּ: לְמַחֵר זֶה פּוֹרַע אֶת חוּבוֹ וְנִמְצָא שְׁטָר מוּטָל בְּאַשְׁפָּה, וּבִישְׁלוֹם. וְאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עָשְׂאוּהוּ יוֹם טוֹב. וְאִי סָלְקָא דַּעְתְּךָ בְּטִלַת מְגִילַת תַּעֲנִית – קַמְוִיתָא בְּטוֹל, אַחֲרֵנִייתָא מוֹסִיפִין?!

And when the Sages heard about this they said: Tomorrow this one, the borrower, will repay his debt, the lender will no longer need to save the loan document, the document will be cast on a dunghill, and the name of Heaven written there will come to disgrace. And so they annulled the ordinance to mention God's name in documents, and they made that day into a Festival.^N And if it enters your mind to say that Megillat Ta'anit has been nullified, can you say that the first prohibitions against fasting they annulled, and then later ones were added?

הֲכָא בְּמַאי עֲסָקִין – בְּזִמְן שְׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיָים.

The Gemara answers: With what are we dealing here? This is referring to a time when the Temple was standing and all the days listed in Megillat Ta'anit were in force. From time to time new days of commemoration were added. When the amora'im stated that Megillat Ta'anit was nullified they were referring to the time after the destruction of the Temple.

Perek I Daf 19 Amud a

NOTES

To prohibit fasting on the preceding day – לְאַסוֹר אֶת שְׁלִפְנֵי: The Gemara could have simply answered that it is necessary to mention the preceding day in order to prohibit the following day as well. However, the Gemara chose to discuss the halakha of the preceding day (Rid). Alternatively, the later authorities explain that the prohibition against fasting on a day following one listed in Megillat Ta'anit is not in accordance with the opinion of all tanna'im, and therefore the Gemara preferred to mention the preceding day, which is agreed upon by all (Arukh LaNer; see Turei Even).

The day after the New Moon – יוֹם שְׁלֵאֲחַר ראש חֹדֶשׁ: Why did the Gemara not mention that it is the day after Rosh HaShana, which is also a festive day when fasting is prohibited? It mentioned the New Moon in order to teach that the New Moon also has the status of a Festival by Torah law, on which it is prohibited to fast (Rav Ya'akov Emden; see Arukh LaNer and Sha'agat Arye).

וְתִפּוֹק לִיה דְּהוּה לִיה יוֹם שְׁנֵהֲרַג בּו גְּדֻלְיָהּ בֵּן אֲחִיקָם! אָמַר רַב: לֹא נִצְרְכָה אֲלָא לְאַסוֹר אֶת שְׁלִפְנֵי.

The Gemara raises a difficulty: But if this was at the time that the Temple was standing, derive the prohibition against fasting on the third of Tishrei from the fact that it is the day that Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, was killed. During the time of the Temple the biblical fast days were celebrated as days of joy. Rav said: It was only necessary to include the third of Tishrei in Megillat Ta'anit in order to prohibit fasting on the preceding day^N as well. Fasting was forbidden not only on the actual days listed in Megillat Ta'anit, but also on the preceding day and the following day.

שְׁלִפְנֵי נִמְי, תִּפּוֹק לִיה דְּהוּה לִיה יוֹם שְׁלֵאֲחַר ראש חֹדֶשׁ! ראש חֹדֶשׁ דְּאוֹרֵייתָא, דְּאוֹרֵייתָא לֹא בָּעֵי חִיּוּק.

The Gemara raises another difficulty: With regard to the prohibition against fasting on the preceding day, the second of Tishrei, also derive it because it is the day after the New Moon,^N and fasting is forbidden not only on festive days, but also on the preceding day and the following day. The Gemara rejects this argument: The New Moon is by Torah law, and festive days that are by Torah law do not require reinforcement. Therefore no decree was ever enacted prohibiting fasting on the days before and after.

בְּשׂוֹרְתָא טַבְתָּא – בְּשׂוֹרְתָא טַבְתָּא: The date and nature of this decree are not clearly known, and very little is known about Rabbi Yehuda ben Shammua. From the context it seems that this incident occurred after Hadrian's decrees, which he had instituted in response to the bar Kokheva revolt, were relaxed. It may have occurred in the time of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius, who reigned from 161–180 CE. Although he treated the Jews with disdain, he did not act overtly against them, and perhaps the protest of the Sages served to lessen the severity of the decrees.

נָטְלוּ עֵצָה מִמַּטְרוֹנִיתָא – נָטְלוּ עֵצָה מִמַּטְרוֹנִיתָא: In those days, and even many years earlier while the Temple still stood, Judaism had a great impact on the leaders of Rome. In particular there were many women, including even those from the highest classes of society, who had a positive attitude toward Judaism and who were willing to help Jews and Judaism in various ways.

LANGUAGE

Matron [matronita] – מַטְרוֹנִיתָא: From the Latin *matron*, meaning a gentlewoman.

Cry out [hafgginu] – הַפְּגִינוּ: Probably related to the Middle Persian verbal stem *ābkhōn-*, meaning to cry. The root *f-g-n* is also found in the Aramaic of Targum Yonatan with the meaning cry out.

HALAKHA

Glass vessels that had holes that were sealed – כְּלֵי זָכוּכִית שֶׁקִּבְּרוּ וְסָתְמָם: Glass vessels that were punctured and then sealed, whether with pitch or with lead, are ritually pure, in accordance with the opinion of the Sages (Rambam *Sefer Tahara, Hilkhot Kelim* 12:13).

דַּתְנֵיא: הַיָּמִים הָאֵלֶּה הַכְּתוּבִין בְּמִגִּילַת תַּעֲנִית – אֲסוּרִין בֵּין לְפָנֵיהֶם בֵּין לְאַחֲרֵיהֶם. שַׁבְּתוֹת וַיָּמִים טוֹבִים, הֵם – אֲסוּרִים, לְפָנֵיהֶן וְלְאַחֲרֵיהֶן – מוֹתֵרִין. מַה הִפְרֵשׁ בֵּין זֶה לְזֶה? הֲלֹלוּ דְבָרֵי תוֹרָה, וְאִין דְּבָרֵי תוֹרָה צְרִיכִין חִיּוּק. הֲלֹלוּ דְבָרֵי סוֹפְרִים, וְדְבָרֵי סוֹפְרִים צְרִיכִין חִיּוּק.

וַיִּתְּנוּ לֵיהּ דְּהוּה לֵיהּ יוֹם שְׁלֹפְנֵי יוֹם שְׁנַהֲרַג בּו גְּדוּלְיָהּ בֶּן אַחִיקָם! אָמַר רַב אֲשִׁי: גְּדוּלְיָהּ בֶּן אַחִיקָם דְּבָרֵי קַבְלָה הוּא, וְדְבָרֵי קַבְלָה כְּדְבָרֵי תוֹרָה דְּמוּ.

מַתִּיב רַב טוֹבֵי בַר מַתְנָה: בְּעֵשְׂרִים וְתַמְנֵיא בֵּיה אֶת שׂוֹרְתָא טַבְתָּא לִיהוּדָאֵי דְלָא יַעֲיִדוּן מְאוּרֵייתָא. שְׁגוּרָה מְלֻכּוֹת הִרְשָׁעָה גְזָרָה שְׁלָא יַעֲקוּוּ בְּתוֹרָה, וְשְׁלָא יִמְלוּ אֶת בְּנֵיהֶם, וְשְׁחִלְלוּ שַׁבְּתוֹת. מַה עָשָׂה יְהוּדָה בֶּן שְׁמוּעַ וְחַבִּירִיו? הֲלָכוּ וְנָטְלוּ עֵצָה מִמַּטְרוֹנִיתָא אַחַת שְׁכָל גְּדוּלְיָ רומי מְצוּיִן אֶצְלָה.

אָמְרָה לָהֶם: בּוֹאוּ וְהַפְּגִינוּ בְּלֵילָה. הֲלָכוּ וְהַפְּגִינוּ בְּלֵילָה, אָמְרוּ: אֵי שְׁמִים! לֹא אַחִיכֶם אֲנַחְנוּ, וְלֹא בְנֵי אָב אֶחָד אֲנַחְנוּ, וְלֹא בְנֵי אִם אֶחָת אֲנַחְנוּ? מַה נִּשְׁתַּנְּנוּ מִכָּל אוֹמָה וְלִשׁוֹן שְׂאֵתֶם גְּזוּרִין עָלֵינוּ גְּזוּרוֹת קָשׁוֹת! וְבִיטְלוּם. וְאוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עָשָׂאוּהוּ יוֹם טוֹב. וְאֵי סְלָקָא דְעַתְדָּ בְּטוֹלָה מְגִילַת תַּעֲנִית, קִמְיִיתָא בְּטוֹל, אַחֲרָנִיתָא מוֹסִיפִין!

וְכִי תִמָּא הָכָא נְמִי בּוֹמֵן שְׁבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיִים – וְהָא יְהוּדָה בֶּן שְׁמוּעַ תְּלַמִּידוֹ שֶׁל רַבִּי מֵאִיר, וְרַבִּי מֵאִיר בֶּתֵר הָכִי הוּא. דַּתְנֵן: כְּלֵי זָכוּכִית שֶׁנִּקְבְּוּ וְהִטִּיף לְתוֹכָן אֶבֶר, אָמַר רַבִּין שְׁמוּעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל: יְהוּדָה בֶּן שְׁמוּעַ מְטַמֵּא מִשׁוּם רַבִּי מֵאִיר,

As it is taught in a *baraita*: These days that are written in *Megillat Ta'anit* are days on which fasting is prohibited, as are both the day before them and the day after them. With regard to *Shabbatot* and Festivals, fasting on them is forbidden, but on the day before them and the day after them fasting is permitted. What is the difference between this class of days and that class of days? These days, *Shabbatot* and Festivals, are by Torah law, and Torah laws do not need reinforcement, and therefore even if a fast day were decreed on the day before or after them, the Festival itself would not be nullified; whereas those days mentioned in *Megillat Ta'anit* are by rabbinic law, and rabbinic laws need reinforcement, and therefore fasting is prohibited even on the day before and the day after.

The Gemara raises yet another difficulty: The prohibition against fasting on the second of Tishrei, derive it from the fact that it is the day before the day that Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, was killed, and since in Temple times the fast of Gedaliah was celebrated as a festive day, fasting should also be prohibited on the preceding day. Rav Ashi said: The fast of Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, is derived from the texts of the tradition, i.e., Prophets and Writings, and as the texts of the tradition are treated like Torah statements for this purpose, they too do not need reinforcement.

Rav Tovi bar Mattana raised an objection against the opinion that *Megillat Ta'anit* was nullified, from that which is written in it: On the twenty-eighth of Adar the good tidings came to the Jews^b that they should not turn away from the Torah, and on that day fasting is forbidden. And this is explained: For the wicked kingdom issued a decree against Israel that they should not occupy themselves with Torah study, and that they should not circumcise their sons, and that they should desecrate Shabbat. What did Yehuda ben Shammua and his colleagues do? They went and took advice from a certain matron [*matronita*]^{1b} whom all the prominent men of Rome would visit regularly, thinking that she would know how to annul the decree.

She said to them as follows: Come and cry out [*hafgginu*]¹ at nightⁿ in the streets and markets. They went and cried out at night, saying: O Heavens! Are we Jews not your brothers; are we not children of one father; are we not children of one mother? How are we different from every other nation and tongue that you issue such harsh decrees against us? And indeed the decrees were annulled, and the Sages made that day a festive day. And if it enters your mind to say that *Megillat Ta'anit* has been nullified, can you say that the first prohibitions against fasting they annulled, and then later ones were added?

And if you say that here too it is referring to the time when the Temple was standing, there is a difficulty, as Yehuda ben Shammua was a student of Rabbi Meir, and Rabbi Meir was after the destruction of the Temple. And proof that Rabbi Yehuda ben Shammua was a student of Rabbi Meir may be brought, as we learned in a mishna: With regard to glass vessels that had holes in them,ⁿ which afterward were filled in with lead, the Sages dispute whether the utensil is considered a whole utensil, which can become ritually impure, or whether it is considered a broken utensil, which does not. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel said: Yehuda ben Shammua declares that it becomes impure, in the name of Rabbi Meir;^h

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1b: Come and cry out at night – בּוֹאוּ וְהַפְּגִינוּ בְּלֵילָה: The Sages said that if one cries at night his voice is heard and awakens hearts better than during the day. Therefore the Roman woman advised them to protest specifically at night (Maharsha).

h: Glass vessels that had holes in them – כְּלֵי זָכוּכִית שֶׁנִּקְבְּוּ: There are several explanations of this Gemara. Rashi suggests that the Gemara is speaking here about the *halakhot* of existing impurity with regard to glass vessels. The question is whether they lose

their impurity due to these holes. Alternatively, he suggests that the question is whether the primary part of the vessel is the body, which is made of glass and not susceptible to impurity, or the metal which holds it, which is susceptible to impurity. *Tosafot* bring a proof from the *Tosefta* (*Keilim* 2:3) for this second explanation, but it is not clear that *Tosafot* had the correct text of this *Tosefta*. It seems that there is a tannaitic dispute about whether to consider such a vessel like a glass one or a metal one.

Rabbeinu Hananel and the Rashbam explain that the question was whether sealing with lead is considered a proper seal, such that the vessel is considered as a complete vessel. According to them, the Sages consider it to be completely pure, even by rabbinic law. The Rambam's explanation of this *halakha* is not clear; it appears that he inclines toward a fourth opinion, the opinion of Rabbi Yitzhak ben Asher, cited by *Tosafot*. He holds that glass vessels have the status of earthenware vessels, which become pure if they break.

NOTES

Because these days are a source of mourning for them – מפני שאבל הוא להם: The reason is that most of the Festivals listed in *Megillat Ta'anit* are related to matters of the Temple; after its destruction, these days have become mournful (see *Arukh LaNer*).

Here it is referring to Hanukkah and Purim – כאן בהנכה – פורים: This ruling, which seemingly establishes the authority of *Megillat Ta'anit* with regard to Hanukkah and Purim, led the early authorities to ask how it is permitted to fast on the Fast of Esther, which occurs on the thirteenth of Adar, the day before Purim. Some answer that since the day of Nikanor on the thirteenth of Adar was itself nullified, and fasting is permitted on it, the secondary prohibition as a day preceding a festive day should not be more stringent (see *Meiri*). Others hold in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yitzhak Albarceloni, that since *Megillat Ta'anit* was nullified, all *halakhot* related to it are lenient. Therefore, the *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Shmuel, who ruled that fasting is permitted on the days preceding Hanukkah and Purim (see *Ritva*).

From the days of Ezra and onward we have never found – מימות עזרא ואילך לא מצוינו: *Tosafot* ask if there was a thirty-day Elul in the time of Ezra. They answer that the book of Nehemiah (8:13) states that there were two days of Rosh HaShana at that time, implying a thirty-day Elul. This is also noted by several *ge'onim*. Rabbeinu Hananel writes that the Gemara simply had a tradition that in the time of Ezra there was an Elul with thirty days.

But if necessary they would have added an additional day – הוּא אֵינְטֵרֵךְ מֵעֲבֵרֵינָּה לֵיה: Rashi explains that this was done to avoid having Rosh HaShana occur on a Friday or a Sunday, which would cause Yom Kippur to fall either immediately before or after Shabbat. This is part of the general principle that Rosh HaShana can never fall on Sunday, Wednesday, or Friday. *Tosafot* ask: If this is the reason, there would be no need to send messengers, as everyone would know that Rosh HaShana had been pushed off by a day. Consequently, *Tosafot* explain that the words: It was not necessary to add, mean that there were no witnesses who saw the new moon, and the court would not be able to sanctify the New Moon until the thirty-first day. The *Penet Yehoshua* writes that in some years it was necessary to add an extra day because, according to the astronomical calculations of the new moon, the court knew that the new moon would not be visible on the thirtieth of Elul.

And all the Festivals not be ruined – וְלֹא יִתְקַלְקְלוּ בּוֹלְהוּ: Rabbeinu Yehonatan writes that there is an additional reason to institute definitively that Rosh HaShana is two days. The Jewish people must celebrate the Festivals wholeheartedly, and if there were doubt as to the correct day, they would not be able to celebrate the Festival properly.

HALAKHA

Megillat Ta'anit was nullified – בטלה מגילת תענית – The *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion that *Megillat Ta'anit* was nullified, and one may fast on any of the days listed in it and certainly on the days before and after them. The sole exceptions are Hanukkah and Purim, on which it is prohibited to fast, but on the days before and after them it is permitted to fast (*Shulhan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 573:1*). According to the Ra'avad, at the outset the Rabbis should not declare a public fast on these days. The Rosh, Rabbeinu Yeruham, the *Tur*, and the *Beit Yosef* cite his opinion and agree with it.

וְחֻכְמַיִם מִטְהָרִין.

whereas the Sages declare it pure. According to them, it is still considered a broken utensil. Rabbi Meir himself lived after the destruction of the Second Temple. The festive day commemorating the annulling of the decree of Rome was instituted as a result of an incident involving his student, Rabbi Yehuda ben Shammua. From this, it is clear that *Megillat Ta'anit* had not yet been nullified.

תנאי היא. דתנאי: הימים האלו הכתובים במגילת תענית, בין בזמן שבית המקדש קיים, בין בזמן שאין בית המקדש קיים – אסורין, דברי רבי מאיר. רבי יוסי אומר: בזמן שבית המקדש קיים – אסורין, מפני ששמחה היא להם. אין בית המקדש קיים – מותרין, מפני שאבל הוא להם.

The Gemara answers: The question whether or not *Megillat Ta'anit* has been nullified is the subject of a dispute between *tanna'im*, as it is taught in a *baraita*: **These days, which are written in *Megillat Ta'anit*, both when the Temple is standing and when the Temple is not standing, are days on which fasting is prohibited; this is the statement of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosei says: When the Temple is standing, these days are prohibited for fasting because these days are a source of joy for Israel. But when the Temple is not standing, these days are permitted for fasting because these days are a source of mourning for them.**^N

והלכתא: בטלו, והלכתא לא בטלו. קשיא – הלכתא אהלכתא! לא קשיא; כאן – בהנכה ופורים, כאן – בשאר יומי.

The Gemara concludes: **And the *halakha* is that these days were nullified, and the *halakha* is that they were not nullified.** The Gemara asks: This is difficult, as one *halakha* contradicts the other *halakha*. The Gemara answers: **It is not difficult. Here, it is referring to Hanukkah and Purim.**^N These Festival days were never nullified, and Hanukkah is listed among the Festivals of *Megillat Ta'anit*. **There, the *halakha* is referring to the rest of the days listed in *Megillat Ta'anit*, all of which were nullified.**^H

על אלו מפני ראש השנה ועל תשרי מפני תקנת המועדות. בין דנפקי להו אלו – אתשרי למה להו?

S The mishna taught: Messengers go out to inform about the sanctification of the New Moon in Elul, due to Rosh HaShana, and in Tishrei, due to the need to establish the correct dates on which to celebrate the Festivals of Tishrei. The Gemara asks: **Once the messengers have gone out in the month of Elul to inform the people when the New Moon was declared, why do they need to go out again in Tishrei, as the New Moon of Tishrei always falls on the thirtieth day after the New Moon of Elul?**

וכי תימא: דלמא עברוה לאלול – והאמר רבי חנינא בר כהנא אמר רב: מימות עזרא ואילך לא מצוינו אלו מעוברי!

And if you say that messengers must go out for Tishrei as well, as perhaps the court added another day to the month of Elul, so that Rosh HaShana occurs on the thirty-first day after the New Moon of Elul, there is a difficulty. Didn't Rabbi Hinnana bar Kahana say that Rav said: From the days of Ezra and onward, we have never found^N that the month of Elul had an additional day. Consequently, it is simple to calculate the days on which the Festivals of Tishrei occur, and there should be no need to send out messengers in Tishrei.

לא מצוינו – דלא איצטרך, הוּא אֵינְטֵרֵךְ – מעברין ליה.

The Gemara answers: When we say: **We have not found that the month of Elul ever had an additional day, this does not mean that Elul cannot have an additional day, but only that it never happened because it was not necessary to add a day.** **But if it had been necessary, they would have added an additional day.**^N Since it is possible that the month of Elul could have had another day added, there is reason to send out messengers for the month of Tishrei, so that all will know when to celebrate the Festivals.

הא מיקלקל ראש השנה! מוטב תיקלקל ראש השנה, ולא יתקלקלו בוליהו מועדות.

The Gemara asks: **But if Elul has an additional day Rosh HaShana will be ruined, because people will celebrate it thirty days after the New Moon of Elul, when its real date is on the thirty-first day.** The Gemara answers: **Better that Rosh HaShana be ruined, and all the Festivals, i.e., Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and the Eighth Day of Assembly, not be ruined.**^N

The language of the mishna is also precise... due to the need to establish the correct dates on which to celebrate the Festivals – **מִפְּנֵי תְקִנַּת הַמּוֹעֲדוֹת** – The wording is precise because it does not say: Due to the Festivals, but rather: Due to the need to establish the correct dates for the Festivals. This implies that the Sages wanted the dates of the Festivals to be accurate, although they would ruin Rosh HaShana (Ran).

HALAKHA

חודש העיבור – ה'חודש העיבור – The additional month of the leap year – When the court establishes a leap year, they add an extra month of Adar. This extra month can end up being either a short month, of twenty-nine days, or a full month, of thirty days, based on the testimony of witnesses, in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel (Rambam *Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhot Kiddush HaHodesh* 4:1).

ימי אדר ראשון – ימי אדר שני – Nowadays, when the calendar is fixed and not based on witnesses, the first month of Adar always has thirty days, and the second month of Adar always has twenty-nine (Rambam *Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhot Kiddush HaHodesh* 8:5).

דִּיקָא נְמִי... מִפְּנֵי תְקִנַּת הַמּוֹעֲדוֹת – על תְּשִׁירֵי מִפְּנֵי תְקִנַּת הַמּוֹעֲדוֹת. שְׁמַע מִינְהָ.

The language of the mishna is also precise, as it teaches: Messengers go out in the month of Tishrei due to the need to establish the correct dates on which to celebrate the Festivals^N of Tishrei. The Gemara summarizes: Indeed, **conclude from here** that this is the correct understanding.

“וְעַל כִּסְלֵי מִפְּנֵי חֲנוּכָה, וְעַל אֲדָר מִפְּנֵי הַפּוּרִים.” וְאִילוּ נִתְעַבְּרָה הַשָּׁנָה יוֹצֵאִין אֶף עַל אֲדָר שְׁנֵי מִפְּנֵי הַפּוּרִים – לֹא קִתְּנִי. מִתְּנִיתִין דְּלֹא כְּרַבִּי. דְּתַנְיָא, רַבִּי אֹמֵר: אִם נִתְעַבְּרָה הַשָּׁנָה – יוֹצֵאִין אֶף עַל אֲדָר הַשְּׁנִי, מִפְּנֵי הַפּוּרִים.

§ The mishna taught: Messengers go out in Kislev, due to Hanukkah, and in Adar, due to Purim. Whereas, it is not taught: **If the year was a leap year, with an additional month of Adar, the messengers go out also in the second Adar due to Purim, which is celebrated in the second Adar.** This indicates that **the mishna is not in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, as it is taught in a baraita: Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says: If the year was a leap year, the messengers go out also in the second Adar, due to Purim.**

לִמָּא בְּהָא קְמִיפְלָגִי, דְּמַר סַבְרִי: כָּל מִצְוֹת הַנּוֹהֲגוֹת בְּשָׁנִי – נוֹהֲגוֹת בְּרֵאשׁוֹן, וְמַר סַבְרִי: כָּל מִצְוֹת הַנּוֹהֲגוֹת בְּשָׁנִי אֵין נוֹהֲגוֹת בְּרֵאשׁוֹן?

The Gemara suggests: **Let us say that they disagree about this.** One Sage, the author of this mishna, holds that **all the mitzvot observed in the second Adar, i.e., the special Torah readings and the mitzvot of Purim, are also observed in the first Adar.** If they were observed in the first Adar and not in the second, the people have fulfilled their obligation. Therefore, there is no need to send messengers in the second Adar. **And one Sage, Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, holds that all the mitzvot observed in the second Adar are not observed in the first.** It is therefore necessary to send messengers in the second Adar, so that people will know when to keep the mitzvot of Adar.

לֹא, דְּכֹלֵי עֲלָמָא: מִצְוֹת הַנּוֹהֲגוֹת בְּשָׁנִי – אֵין נוֹהֲגוֹת בְּרֵאשׁוֹן. וְהִכָּא בְּעֵיבוֹר שָׁנָה קְמִיפְלָגִי. דְּתַנְיָא: כְּמָה עֵיבוֹר שָׁנָה? שְׁלִשִׁים יוֹם. רַבִּין שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אֹמֵר: חֲדָשׁ.

The Gemara rejects this argument: **No, everyone agrees that the mitzvot observed in the second Adar are not observed on the first, and here they disagree about the length of the additional month in the leap year, as it is taught in a baraita: How long is the additional month in a leap year? Thirty days. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: A month.**^H Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi holds in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, and since the additional month does not have a fixed number of days, it is necessary to send messengers also for the second Adar, so that people will know when to celebrate Purim. However, according to the first *tanna*, since the first Adar is always a fixed length, there is no need to send messengers.

מַאי שָׁנָא שְׁלִשִׁים? דִּידְעִי; חֲדָשׁ נְמִי יְדִיעִי! אָמַר רַב פַּפָּא: מַאן דְּאָמַר חֲדָשׁ, רָצָה – חֲדָשׁ, רָצָה – שְׁלִשִׁים.

The Gemara asks: **What is different about thirty days?** It is different because people can count thirty days and know when the month ends and when Purim occurs. **A month also, people know the length of it.** The term month implies that it is a month of twenty-nine days, and based on that they know when to celebrate Purim. **Rav Pappa said: The one who said that a month is added does not mean necessarily a month of twenty-nine days. Rather, if the judges of the court wish, they add a month of twenty-nine days; and if it wishes, they add thirty days.** Therefore, it is necessary to send messengers also for the second Adar.^H

הַעֲדִי רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי מִשּׁוֹם קְהֵלָא קְדִישָׁא דִּירוּשָׁלַיִם עַל שְׁנֵי אֲדָרִים, שְׁמַקְדִּישִׁין אוֹתָם בְּיוֹם עֵיבוֹרֵיהֶן.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi testified in the name of the holy community of Jerusalem^B about the two months of Adar, that they are sanctified on the day that could have been added to make them a full month, i.e., the thirtieth day after the previous New Moon. That is to say, the thirtieth day after the New Moon of the first Adar is always the New Moon of the second Adar, and thirty days after the New Moon of the second Adar is always the New Moon of Nisan.

BACKGROUND

קהל קדושא דירושלים – The holy community of Jerusalem – The *Arukh* and others identify the holy community of Jerusalem with the holy assembly mentioned in the Jerusalem Talmud (*Ma'aser Sheni* 2:4). If so, this term refers primarily to Rabbi Yosei ben Meshullam and Rabbi Shimon ben Menasya. They were so

called because they would divide their days into thirds: A third for prayer, a third for Torah, and a third for work. It is also possible that they received this title because they continued to reside in Jerusalem after the destruction of the Second Temple, when simply living in the ruined city constituted a sanctification of God's name.

NOTES

Witnesses may desecrate Shabbat for the fixing of two months – על שני חדשים מחללין את השבת – The early authorities ask: Why does the Gemara not raise this objection directly from the mishna, which states that messengers were sent in Nisan due to Passover? They answer that although most of the Jewish people may know that Adar is always short, they sent messengers for to the minority of people who did not know. However, if it is permitted for the witnesses to desecrate Shabbat and come, it is clear that sometimes the month was full and sometimes short (Rid; Rabbi Zerahya HaLevi).

The Meiri writes that proof cannot be brought from the month of Nisan, since the Torah writes the mitzva of sanctification of the month with regard to Nisan. Therefore, one may have thought that there is a special obligation to inform about Nisan directly and not make it secondary to the month of Adar.

למימרא: דחסרין עבדינן, מלאין לא עבדינן. לאפקי מדרש רב נחמן בר חסדא: העיד רבי סימאי משום חגי, זכריה ומלאכי על שני אדרים, שאם רצו לעשותן שניהן מלאין – עושין, שניהן חסרין – עושין, אחד מלא ואחד חסר – עושין, וכך היו נוהגין בגולה. ומשום רבינו אמרו: לעולם אחד מלא ואחד חסר, עד שיוודע לך שהוקבע ראש חדש בזמנו.

The Gemara comments: That is to say that they make the two months of Adar short months, of twenty-nine days, but they do not make them full months, of thirty days. This is to the exclusion of what Rav Nahman bar Hisda taught, as Rav Nahman bar Hisda taught: Rabbi Simai testified in the name of Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi about two months of Adar in a leap year, that if the members of the court wish to make them both full, they may do so; and if they wish to make them both short, they may do so; and if they wish to make one full and one short, they may do so. And this is what they would do in the Diaspora, when they did not know which day was established as the New Moon. And in the name of our teacher, Rav, they said: The two months of Adar are always observed, one full and one short, unless it is known to you that the New Moon was fixed in its proper time, i.e., the first Adar is also short.

שלחו ליה למר עוקבא: אדר הפמוד לניסן – לעולם חסר.

A ruling was sent from Eretz Yisrael to Mar Ukva, the Exilarch in Babylonia: The Adar that immediately precedes Nisan is always short, both in a regular year and in a leap year. But the first Adar in a leap year, which does not immediately precede Nisan, is sometimes full.

מתלב רב נחמן: על שני חדשים מחללין את השבת – על ניסן ועל תשרי. אי אמרת בשלמא זמנין מלא זמנין חסר – משום הכי מחללינן.

Rav Nahman raised an objection from what was taught in a mishna: Witnesses who saw the new moon may desecrate Shabbat for the fixing of the New Moon of two months,^N for the month of Nisan and for the month of Tishrei, due to the important Festivals that occur in them. Granted, if you say that the Adar immediately preceding Nisan is sometimes full and sometimes short, due to that reason the witnesses may desecrate Shabbat, as if the witnesses come on the thirtieth, the month will be made short and that day will be declared the New Moon; otherwise, the month will be made full and the next day will be declared the New Moon.

Perek I
Daf 20 Amud a

NOTES

Have the court add an extra day to the month now – נעבריה האידינא – The Rosh points out that this is a relatively weak challenge. The Gemara could have answered: According to your reasoning, Elul is also sometimes full and sometimes short, and nevertheless the witnesses are permitted to desecrate Shabbat in order to testify with regard to the new moon. Nevertheless, the Gemara chose to give another answer.

אלא אי אמרת לעולם חסר – אמאי מחללינן? משום דמצוה לקדש על הראייה.

But if you say that the Adar immediately preceding Nisan is always short, why should they desecrate Shabbat? The court can calculate the time of the New Moon without witnesses. The Gemara answers: Because it is a mitzva to sanctify the New Moon on the basis of the testimony of witnesses who actually saw the new moon and not rely on calculations or established practices.

איכא דאמרי, אמר רב נחמן: אף אנן נמי תנינא: על שני חדשים מחללין את השבת, על ניסן ועל תשרי. אי אמרת בשלמא לעולם חסר – משום הכי מחללינן, דמצוה לקדש על הראייה.

Some say that Rav Nahman said: We, too, learn in a mishna: Witnesses who saw the new moon may desecrate Shabbat to establish the New Moon for two months, for the month of Nisan and for the month of Tishrei. Granted, if you say that the Adar immediately preceding Nisan is always short, due to that reason the witnesses may desecrate Shabbat, because it is a mitzva to sanctify the month on the basis of the testimony of witnesses who actually saw the new moon.

אלא אי אמרת זמנין מלא זמנין חסר – אמאי מחללינן? נעבריה האידינא, ונקדשיה למחר!

But if you say that the Adar immediately preceding Nisan is sometimes full and sometimes short, and there is no regularity to it, why should the witnesses desecrate Shabbat? Have the court add an extra day to the month now,^N since it can decide whether the thirtieth day or the thirty-first day is the beginning of the new month, and let the members of the court sanctify the next day as the New Moon.