



Kalenda

This week we started *masechet Avodah Zara* which deals with the prohibition of idol worship. The *masechet* opens by teaching that various business dealings are prohibited three days prior to the festival. In previous years we have addressed the reason behind this prohibition (10:37, 16:37). The *Mishnah* (1:3) lists a number of the festivals including *kalenda*, *setarnura* and *kerateisim*.

The *Gemara* (8a) explains that *kalenda* was eight days after *tekufat tevet* (the winter solstice) whereas *setarnura* was eight days prior. The *Gemara* continues by explaining that *Adam* noticed that the days were getting shorter. He assumed that the world was in a state of decline and regressing back to the state of mayhem because of his sin. The *Gemara* describes that he fasted for eight days. Once the winter solstice arrived and the length of the days began to increase, he understood that this was simply the cyclical pattern. He then celebrated for the next eight days. The next year, he marked these two days as *yom tovim*.

The *Yerushalmi* records that the even name *kalenda* originated from *Adam*, he exclaimed *kalan deo* as the daylight began to increase. The *Tosfot Yom Tov* suggest that the word *kalan* alludes to greatness. (He cites the *Bartenura* in *Sukah* who explains that *kalan* was one that was free from tax payments.) *Deo*, the *Tosfot Yom Tov* associate with the Greek (or perhaps Latin) word for G-d. The *Pnei Moshe* also associates the word *kalan* with freedom but suggest that the full meaning is "freedom granted from *Hashem*".

The *Pnei Moshe* provides another explanation citing the *Aruch* who explains that the words *kalun* means good whereas *dies* means day, together translated as *yom tov*. Importantly, despite evolving into a pagan festival, its origin was one that was focused on *Hashem*.

Interestingly the *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that *kalenda* was adopted as the new year, eight days after the solstice when the lengthening of days was noticeable.

Regarding *Satarnura* however, the *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that the real name was Saturnalia, a well-known pagan festival in honor of Saturn. He continues that the distortion of the name in the *Mishnah* was deliberate since it was still worshiped in the time of the *Mishnah*. That being the case, they did not want to violate the prohibition of the mentioning the names of gods. The name used instead is a combination of two words, *satar* (side) and *nura* (fire), alluding to the sun being lower and to the side during the winter month when that festival was celebrated. The word *kalenda* however was not associated with idol worship at all, but rather originated from a Latin word that is associated with a new year and/or *Rosh Chodesh*.

This explanation of the *Tifferet Yisrael* relates to another discussion. The *Rabbeinu Tam* (*Sefer HaYashar* 969) explains that despite the prohibition, when necessary and to teach *halacha*, the names may be mentioned. He cites our *Mishnah* as a proof.

The *Yireim* (245) however argues that the prohibition is specifically related to mentioning the names of the gods. The *Mishnah* however only mentions the names of the festivals, which would not constitute a violation of the prohibition (see also *Shulchan Aruch* 147:2 and *Gra* 147:3). The *Gra* adds that the prohibition does not apply to a regular names even if it was later misappropriated for idol worship purposes. One might suggest that it is for this reason that the *Yerushalmi* explains that *Adam* originally named these festivals with pure intent.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* however presents the strictest opinion since it appears he maintains that the names were changed to avoid the prohibition.

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Revision Questions

עדינות ז' ר' – ח' ז'

- Explain the debate regarding what is done with the offspring of a *shlamim* offering. (What case did *R' Papyas* bring as support?) (ז' ר')
- What did *R' Yehoshua* and *R' Papyas* testify regarding *Aruchot shel Nachtomim*? (ז' ר')
- What other case was debated in a similar manner? (ז' ר')
- How late did *R' Yehoshua* and *R' Papyas* maintain that *Beit Din* could declare a year a leap year and how did they differ from the *Chachamim*? (ז' ר')
- What other innovation did they present regarding the law in the previous question? (ז' ר')
- About what two items did *Menachem ben Signai* testify in opposition to the *Chachamim*, one of which *tameh* and the other *tahor*? (ח' ר')
- About which four things did *R' Nechunya ben Gudgedah* testify? (ט' ר')
- How does *R' Yehoshua ben Beteira* rule regarding the earlier debate (5:1) between *Beit Shammai* and *Beit Hillel* concerning the blood of a *neveilah*? (ח' ר')
- Regarding what does *R' Shimon ben Beteira* rule:
"נגע טמא בקצתו טמא כולו"
and how does *R' Akiva* expand this rule? (ח' ר')
- Which one of *R' Nechunya's* laws (7:9), do *R' Yehuda ben Beteira* and *R' Yehuda HaKohen* also bring and what do they add? (ב' ר')
- Regarding the case that *R' Yosi HaKohen* and *R' Zecharya ben haKatzav* presented, why did the family in *Ashkelon* distance themselves from one of their members and how did the *Chachamim* respond? (ח' ב')
- What is an *almanat issa*? (ג' ר')
- What did *R' Yehoshua* and *R' Yehuda ben Beteira* present regarding the previous case and how did *Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel* respond? (ג' ר')
- What three laws did *R' Yosi ben Yo'ezer ish Tzreida* present? (ד' ר')
- What was the ruling given after they found bones in the *dir eitzim*? (ה' ר')
- Explain the debate regarding how they constructed the *heichal* in the *Beit Ha'Mikdash*. (ו' ר')
- What are the various opinions regarding the task of *Eliyahu Ha'Navi*? (ז' ר')

עבודה זרה א' – א' ג'

- When is one prohibited from trading with *goi'im*? (א' ר')
- What else is prohibited at that time? (א' ר')
- What is *R' Yehuda's* opinion? (א' ר')
- On what point does *R' Yishmael* argue? (ב' ר')
- Which "festival" is debated between *R' Meir* and the *Chachamim*? (ג' ר')

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Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
20 April כ"ב ניסן	21 April כ"ג ניסן	22 April כ"ד ניסן	23 April כ"ה ניסן	24 April כ"ו ניסן	25 April כ"ז ניסן	26 April כ"ח ניסן
Avodah Zara 1:4-5	Avodah Zara 1:6-7	Avodah Zara 1:8-9	Avodah Zara 2:1-2	Avodah Zara 2:3-4	Avodah Zara 2:5-6	Avodah Zara 2:7-3:1

