

Shavuot Psahim 68B

By Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein, Talmud Instructor

The Conservative Yeshiva E-Shiurs are made possible by a generous grant from Temple Zion Israelite Center, Miami, Florida

Source 1

The foundation for this discussion is two verses from the Torah dealing with two different festivals:

דברים טז:ח

שֵׁשֶׁת יָמִים תֹּאכַל מִצֹּת וּבֵיּוֹם הַשְּׁבִיעִי עֲצַרְתָּ לֵה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא תַעֲשֶׂה מְלָאכָה:

Deuteronomy 16:8

After eating unleavened bread six days, you shall hold a solemn gathering for the Lord (לה) your God on the seventh day; you shall do no work.

במדבר כט:לה

בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁמִינִי עֲצַרְתָּ תְהִיָּה לָכֶם כָּל מְלָאכָתָּ עֲבֹדָה לֹא תַעֲשׂוּ:

Numbers 29:35

On the eighth day there shall be a solemn gathering for you (לכם); you shall not work at your occupation.

Questions

1. What festival does each of these verses deal with?
2. What do these festivals have in common?
3. On what point do they differ?

Source 2 (1-3 of Pesahim 68b)

א. בבלי פסחים סח:ב

1. דתניא, רבי אליעזר אומר: אין לו לאדם ביום טוב אלא או אוכל ושותה או יושב ושונה.
2. רבי יהושע אומר: חלקהו, חציו לאכילה ושתייה וחציו לבית המדרש.
3. ואמר רבי יוחנן: ושניהם מקרא אחד דרשו, כתוב אחד אומר (דברים טז:ח) עצרת לה' אלהיך, וכתוב אחד אומר (במדבר כט:לה) עצרת תהיה לכם.
4. רבי אליעזר סבר: או כולו לה' או כולו לכם.
5. רבי יהושע סבר: חלקהו, חציו לה' וחציו לכם.
6. אמר רבי אלעזר: הכל מודים בעצרת דבעינן נמי לכם.
7. מאי טעמא - יום שניתנה בו תורה הוא.

Pesahim 68b

1. For it was taught [in a baraita],
- R. Eliezer said: A man has nothing to do] on a Festival other than to eat and drink or to sit and study.
- R. Joshua said: Divide it: [devote] half of it [festive day] to eating and drinking, and half of it to [study] in the Beth Hamidrash.
2. Now R. Johanan said thereon: Both deduce it (their differing views) from the same verse[s]. One verse says, *a solemn assembly to the Lord thy God* (Deut. 16:8), whereas another verse says, *there shall be a solemn assembly unto you*. (Num. 29:35)
3. R. Eliezer holds: [That means] either entirely to God or entirely to you; while R. Joshua holds, Divide it: [Devote] half to God and half to yourselves.
4. R. Eleazar said: All [both Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Joshua] agree with respect to Shavuot [*'azereth*] that we require [it to be] both 'for you' [and for God].
5. What is the reason? It is the day on which the Torah was given.

Questions

How do Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehuda explain the relationship between these verses differently?

To answer this question, you will need to consider how they use the two Biblical verses cited above in Step 2 of the sugya.

Source 3 (4-5 in Pesahim 68b)

What explanation does the Talmud give for Shavuot (Atzeret) being different from the other holidays?

Is this explanation sufficient in your eyes? [Read the Rashi.]

ב. רש"י מסכת פסחים דף סח עמוד ב

דבעינן נמי לכם - שישמח בו במאכל ומשתה, להראות שנח ומקובל יום זה לישראל שנתנה תורה בו.

That we also require "for you" – that he should rejoice on it with food and drink, to demonstrate that this day on which the Torah was given to Israel is pleasant and acceptable [to us].

Questions

1. Can you offer a possible explanation for Rashi's interpretation?
2. Are you satisfied by Rashi's interpretation?

Source 4

Questions

3. What does the *Meshekh Hakhma's drasha* add to what Rashi said?
4. What does the *Sfat Emet* add?
5. What is the textual impetus in the Talmud for the *Sfat Emet's drashah*?