

“וַיִּשְׁמַע הַכְּנַעֲנִי מֶלֶךְ עָרָד. מִה שְׁמוּעָה שָׁמַע? שָׁמַע שְׁמַת אֶהְרֹן, וְנִסְתַּלְקוּ עֲנָנֵי כְבוֹד, וְכִסְבוֹר נִתְּנָה רִשּׁוֹת לְהִלָּחֵם בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל. וְהֵינּוּ דְכַתִּיב: “וַיִּרְאוּ כָּל הָעֵדָה כִּי גָוַע אֶהְרֹן”

וַאֲמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ: אֵל תִּקְרִי “וַיִּרְאוּ” אֶלָּא “וַיִּרְאוּ”, כְּדִרִישׁ לְקִישׁ, דְּאָמַר רִישׁ לְקִישׁ: “כִּי” מְשֻׁמַּשׁ בְּאַרְבַּע לְשׁוֹנוֹת: אִי, דִּילְמָא, אֶלָּא, דְּהָא.

מִי דְמִי? הֵתָם כְּנַעַן הֶכָּא סִיחֹן! תְּנָא: הוּא סִיחֹן, הוּא עָרָד, הוּא כְּנַעַן. סִיחֹן – שְׂדוּמָה לְסִינָה בְּמִדְבָּר; כְּנַעַן – עַל שֵׁם מַלְכוּתוֹ; וּמָה שְׂמוֹ? עָרָד שְׂמוֹ. אִיבָא דְאָמְרִי: עָרָד – שְׂדוּמָה לְעָרוֹד בְּמִדְבָּר; כְּנַעַן – עַל שֵׁם מַלְכוּתוֹ; וּמָה שְׂמוֹ? סִיחֹן שְׂמוֹ.

וַאֲמָא: רֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה אֵינִי!

“And when the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who dwelt in the South, heardⁿ tell that Israel came by the way of Atharim; and he fought against Israel” (Numbers 21:1). **What report did he hear? He heard that Aaron had died, and that the clouds of glory had withdrawn from the Jewish people, and he thought that he had been granted permission to wage war against the Jewish people. And this is as it is written: “And all the congregation saw that [ki] Aaron was dead, and they wept for Aaron thirty days, all the house of Israel”** (Numbers 20:29).

About this, Rabbi Abbahu said: **Do not read the verse as: “And they saw [vayiru]”; rather, read it as: “And they were seen [vayeira’u]”** by others, because the cover of the clouds of glory had been removed from them. **And the next word, “that [ki],” should be understood as meaning because, in accordance with the statement of Reish Lakish,ⁿ as Reish Lakish said: The word ki is used in the Bible in four senses:ⁿ If, perhaps, but, and because.** Therefore, the verse should be understood as follows: **And all the congregation was seen, i.e., revealed, because Aaron had died.** This shows that at the time of Aaron’s death Sihon was still alive; perforce, Moses’ oration, which was delivered after he had slain Sihon, must have occurred later.

The Gemara raises an objection against this proof: **Is it comparable? There, the verse is speaking of Canaan, king of Arad, whereas here, the verse is speaking of Sihon.** What proof, then, can be brought from the one with regard to the other? The Gemara explains: A Sage taught in a *baraita*: All three names are referring to the same person: **He is Sihon, and he is Arad,ⁿ and he is also Canaan.** He was called Sihon because he was similar in his wildness to a foal [*seyyah*] in the desert; and he was called Canaan after his kingdom, as he ruled over the Canaanite people; and what was his real name? **Arad was his name. Some say an alternative explanation: He was called Arad because he was similar to a wild ass [arod]^b in the desert; and he was called Canaan after his kingdom; and what was his real name? Sihon was his name.**

The Gemara raises another question: Granted, when counting the years from the exodus from Egypt, Av and the following Shevat are both part of the same year, but it has not been established that the counting of years from the Exodus is specifically from Nisan. **Say that the New Year for this purpose is in the following month, the month of Iyyar.**

NOTES

And when the Canaanite...heard – וַיִּשְׁמַע הַכְּנַעֲנִי: The explanation of *Tosafot*, which is elaborated upon in *Tosafot Yeshanim*, is that the reference here is not to the verse: “And when the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who dwelt in the South, heard tell that Israel came by way of Atharim; and he fought Israel” (Numbers 21:1), but to the verse: “And the Canaanite king of Arad, who dwelt in the South in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel” (Numbers 33:40). This second verse gives no explanation as to what the king heard or why he came, and it also follows a verse that mentions Aaron’s death (Numbers 33:39). According to this explanation, the Gemara’s question: What report did he hear, is better understood.

In accordance with Reish Lakish – כְּדִרִישׁ לְקִישׁ – *Tosafot* point out that the word *ki* in the verse does not seem to fit with any of Reish Lakish’s four explanations. If so, it is not clear how this connects to Rabbi Abbahu’s statement. Some explain that Rabbi Abbahu’s exposition, which has its own source, can be explained in light of the statement of Reish Lakish, but Reish Lakish’s statement does not serve as its source (Rosh; see *Tosafot Yeshanim*). Some add that the words “and all the congregation saw” are difficult to explain, both because presumably not all of the nation witnessed Aaron’s death, and also because the entire phrase “and all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead” adds nothing, as it would have sufficed to write only the end of the verse: “And they mourned for Aaron...all the house of Israel” (see *Turei Even* and *Maharsha*).

Ki is used in four senses – כִּי מְשֻׁמַּשׁ בְּאַרְבַּע לְשׁוֹנוֹת – Onkelos translates all instances of *ki* with the Aramaic term *ari*. The Aramaic word is parallel to the Hebrew in that both of them have multiple meanings (*Arukh*; Responsa of Rashi).

He is Sihon and he is Arad – הוּא סִיחֹן הוּא עָרָד – The Maharsha writes that this exposition, which maintains that Arad is the name of a person rather than the name of a place, also comes to clarify the plain meaning of Numbers 20:29, which contradicts what is written in the book of Joshua. There it states that Arad was conquered in the days of Joshua, referring to the city of Arad (see 12:14). Accordingly, the word “Arad” here cannot mean the city of Arad.

BACKGROUND



Wild ass [arod] – עָרוֹד – The *arod* is commonly identified with the wild ass. The Gemara might be referring generally to two separate species: the Onager, *Equus hemionus*, and the African wild ass, *Equus africanus*. Some hold that the *arod* is identified specifically with the African species, which was found in *Eretz Yisrael* in ancient times. The *arod* is similar in build and behavior to a horse, and dwells in the plains and deserts of Asia. The animal is mentioned several times in the Bible as a symbol of freedom and wildness.

Left: Onager
Right: African wild ass

But say Tammuz or say Av – ואימא תמוז ואימא אב: The Gemara does not suggest saying that the New Year could be in the months between Av and Shevat, the month preceding Adar, because it has already been shown that Shevat belongs to the same year as the previous Av. Therefore, the Gemara raises a question only with regard to the remaining months (Rabbeinu Hananel).

We have not found the second day of the week – ואימא תמוז, ואימא אב, ואימא אדר! *Tosafot* cite the Jerusalem Talmud, in which it is pointed out that the second day is mentioned in the account of Creation. They explain that there, the reference is not to the second day of the week but to the second day of Creation. The author of the *Sefat Emet* raises a difficulty from the story of the manna in the wilderness, where mention is made of the second day; he answers that the second day mentioned there is not necessarily the second day of the week.

לא סלקא דעתך, דכתיב: "ויהי בחדש הראשון בשנה השנית באחד לחדש היום המשכון", וכתיב: "ויהי בשנה השנית בחדש השני...נעלה הענן מעל משכון העדות". מדקאי בניסן וקרי לה שנה שנית, וקאי באייר וקרי לה שנה שנית – מבבל דראש השנה לאו אייר הוא.

ואימא ראש השנה סיון! לא סלקא דעתך, דכתיב: "בחדש השלישי לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים. ואם איתא – בחדש השלישי בשנה השנית לצאת וגו' מיבעי ליה!

ואימא תמוז, ואימא אב, ואימא אדר!

אלא אמר רבי אלעזר, מהכא: "ויחל לבנות בחדש השני בשני בשנת ארבע למלכותו". מאי שני? לאו שני לירח שמוזין בו למלכותו?

מתקיף לה רבנא: ואימא שני בחדש! אם כן, שני בחדש בהדיה הוה כתיב ביה.

ואימא בשני בשבת! חדא: דלא אשכחן שני בשבת דכתיב. ועוד: מקיש "שני" בתרא ל"שני" קמא, מה "שני" קמא – חדש, אף שני בתרא – חדש.

תניא כוותיה דרבי יוחנן: מניין שאין מוזין להם למלכים אלא מניסן? שנאמר: "ויהי בשמונים שנה וארבע מאות שנה לצאת בני ישראל מארץ מצרים" וגו', וכתיב: "וישל אהרן הכהן אל הר הזה על פי ה' וגו', וכתיב: "ויהי בארבעים שנה בעשתי עשר חדש",

The Gemara rejects this proposal: It should not enter your mind to say this, as it is written: "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the Tabernacle was established" (Exodus 40:17), and it is written: "And it came to pass in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was taken up from over the Tabernacle of the testimony" (Numbers 10:11). It may be argued as follows: From the fact that when the Bible speaks of Nisan, which is the first month, it calls it "the second year," and when it speaks of the following Iyyar, which is the second month, it also calls it "the second year," by inference, Rosh HaShana is not at the beginning of Iyyar. Were it the case that the New Year begins in Iyyar, Nisan and the following Iyyar would not occur in the same year, as the year would have changed in Iyyar.

The Gemara asks further: And say that the New Year for this purpose is in the third month, the month of Sivan. The Gemara rejects this suggestion: It should not enter your mind to say this, as it is written: "In the third month, after the children of Israel were gone out of the land of Egypt, the same day they came into the wilderness of Sinai" (Exodus 19:1). And if it is so that the New Year is the beginning of Sivan, the verse should have said: In the third month, in the second year after the children of Israel were gone out of the land of Egypt, as a new year had started.

The Gemara continues: But perhaps one could say that the New Year for counting the Exodus is in the fourth month, the month of Tammuz; or say that it is in the fifth month, the month of Av;^N or say that it is in the twelfth month, the month of Adar. There is no clear refutation that these months are not the New Year.

Rather, Rabbi Elazar said: It is from here that it is derived that the years of a king's rule are counted from Nisan, as it is stated: "And he began to build in the second month, in the second, in the fourth year of his reign" (II Chronicles 3:2). What is the meaning of the words "the second"? Doesn't it mean second to the month from which Solomon's reign is counted? This is clear proof that the years of a king's rule are counted from the first month, i.e., the month of Nisan.

Ravina strongly objects to this: Why not say that the words "the second" are referring to the second day of the month? The Gemara answers: If so, it should have explicitly stated: "On the second of the month," as that is the formulation usually used in the Bible to refer to a specific day of the month.

The Gemara raises another objection: Why not say that the words "the second" are referring to the second day of the week? This argument is rejected for two reasons: First, we have not found the second day of the week^N ever being written; nowhere does the Bible give the day of the week on which a particular event transpired. And further, the verse juxtaposes the second instance of the word "second" to the first instance of the word "second": Just as the first "second" is referring to a month, so too, the latter "second" is referring to a month.

It is taught in a *baraita* in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yohanan: From where is it derived that one counts the years of kings' reigns only from the month of Nisan? As it is stated: "And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord" (1 Kings 6:1). And it is written: "And Aaron the priest went up to Mount Hor at the commandment of the Lord, and died there, in the fortieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first day of the month" (Numbers 33:38). And it is later written: "And it came to pass in the fortieth year, in the eleventh month, on the first of the month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel" (Deuteronomy 1:3).

They taught only with regard to the Jewish kings of Israel – לא שנו אלא למלכי ישראל. This is the only opinion brought in the Babylonian Talmud. However, in the Jerusalem Talmud another opinion is recorded. It maintains that the years of the gentile kings are also counted from Nisan. This opinion resolves certain difficulties but does not account for all of the verses, unless one explains them using the principle that the Bible was not written in chronological order.

The Ritva explains that since the years of Jewish kings are counted from Nisan in commemoration of the liberation of the Jewish people at the time of the exodus from Egypt, it would not make sense to also count the years of the gentile kings from this date.

From the fact that when the Bible speaks of Kislev – מִדְּקַי בְּכֶסֶלֹ: Tosafot explains that once it has been established that the New Year for gentile kings is not in Nisan, it is assumed to be in Tishrei and not in one of the intervening months because it is already known that Tishrei is the New Year for several other purposes. Tosafot Yeshanim elaborated on this explanation.

וּכְתִיב: "אַחֲרֵי הַכּוֹתוֹ אֶת סִיחוֹן" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיִּשְׁמַע הַכְּנַעֲנִי" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיִּרְאוּ כָּל הָעַדָּה כִּי גֹעַ אֶהְרֵן" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיְהִי בַחֹדֶשׁ הָרִאשׁוֹן בַּשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיתָ" וְגו',

And it is written: "After he had slain Sihon, the king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon" (Deuteronomy 1:4). And it says: "And when the Canaanite, the king of Arad, who dwelt in the South, heard" (Numbers 33:40). And it says: "And all the congregation saw that Aaron was dead, and they wept for Aaron thirty days" (Numbers 20:29). And it says: "And it came to pass in the first month in the second year, on the first day of the month, that the Tabernacle was established" (Exodus 40:17).

וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיְהִי בַשָּׁנָה הַשְּׁנִיתָ בַחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁנִי" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁלִישִׁי לְצֵאת בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיַּחֲלֵל לְבַנּוֹת" וְגו'.

And it says: "And it came to pass in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was taken up from off the Tabernacle of the testimony" (Numbers 10:11). And it says: "In the third month, after the children of Israel were gone out of the land of Egypt, the same day they came into the wilderness of Sinai" (Exodus 19:1). And it says: "And he began to build in the second month, in the second, in the fourth year of his reign" (II Chronicles 3:2). This list of verses summarizes Rabbi Yoḥanan's explanation.

אָמַר רַב חֲסֵדָא: לֹא שָׁנוּ אֶלָּא לְמַלְכֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲבָל לְמַלְכֵי אוֹמוֹת הָעוֹלָם מִתְּשָׁרֵי מִנְּנֵן. שְׁנָאֵמַר: "דְּבַרֵי נַחֲמִיָּה בֶן חַכְלִיָּה וַיְהִי בַחֹדֶשׁ כְּסִלְיֹו שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים" וְגו', וְכִתְיָב: "וַיְהִי בַחֹדֶשׁ נִסָּן שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים לְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא" וְגו'.

§ Rav Ḥisda said: They taught that the years of a king's rule are counted from the first of Nisan only with regard to the Jewish kings of Israel,ⁿ but the years of the kings of the gentile nations of the world are counted from Tishrei, as it is stated: "The words of Nehemiah, son of Hachaliah. And it came to pass in the month Kislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the capital" (Nehemiah 1:1). And it is written: "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, that wine was before him, and I took up the wine, and gave it to the king" (Nehemiah 2:1).

מִדְּקַי בְּכֶסֶלֹ וְקָרִי לִיָּה שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים, וְקָרִי בְּנִסָּן וְקָרִי לִיָּה שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים – מִכְּלָל דְּרֵאשׁ הַשָּׁנָה לֹא נִסָּן הוּא.

From the fact that when the Bible speaks of the month of Kislevⁿ it calls it the twentieth year, and when it speaks of the following Nisan it also calls it the twentieth year, by inference, the New Year for gentile kings does not begin in Nisan. Were it the case that the New Year did begin in Nisan, Kislev and the following Nisan would not occur in the same year.

בְּשִׁלְמָא הֵיאֵךְ – מִפְּרֵשׁ דְּלְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא, אֶלָּא הָיִ – מִמַּאי דְּלְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא? דִּילְמָא

The Gemara raises an objection: Granted, in this second verse it is explicitly stated that the count relates to the years of Artaxerxes. But as for that first verse, from where is it known that the count relates to the years of Artaxerxes? Perhaps

Perek I

Daf 3 Amud b

לְמַנְנָא אַחֲרֵינָא הוּא? אָמַר רַב פָּפָא: "שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים" "שְׁנַת עֶשְׂרִים" לְגִיּוּרָה שְׁוֵה, מַה הָתָם לְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא אִף הֵכָּא לְאַרְתַּחְשֶׁשְׁתָּא.

it follows some other count. Rav Pappa said: The meaning of the first instance of the expression "the twentieth year" may be inferred from the second instance of the expression "the twentieth year" by way of a verbal analogy: Just as there the reference is to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, so too, here the reference is to the twentieth year of Artaxerxes.

וּמִמַּאי דְּמַעֲשָׂה דְּכֶסֶלֹ קָדִים, דִּילְמָא מַעֲשָׂה דְּנִסָּן קָדִים?

The Gemara raises another question: Even though those two events took place in the same year, from where is it known that the incident that occurred in Kislev took place first? Perhaps the incident that occurred in Nisan took place first, in which case it is possible that even the years of gentile kings are counted from Nisan.

לֹא סָלְקָא דְעֵתְךָ: דְּתַנָּא: דְּבָרִים שְׂאֵמַר חֲנַנִי לְנַחֲמִיָּה בְּכֶסֶלֹ, אָמְרֵן נַחֲמִיָּה לְמִלְךְ בְּנִסָּן.

The Gemara answers: It should not enter your mind to say this, as it is taught in a baraita: The words that Hanani told Nehemiah in the month of Kislev, Nehemiah told the king in the month of Nisan.

BACKGROUND

Artaxerxes – ארתחשסתא: This refers to the Persian king Artaxerxes I, who ruled from 464–425 BCE. This king was one of the sons of Ahasuerus I, who appears in the book of Esther. Artaxerxes I ruled the Persian Empire for many years. In Persian history, he is not considered a particularly strong ruler, but he seems to have succeeded in his attempts to strengthen his kingdom through a combination of craftiness and diplomacy. The help that he extended to the Jewish people was also likely part of this policy.



Tomb of Artaxerxes I in Naqsh-e Rostam, Iran

דברים שאמר חנני לנחמיה בבסליו, שנאמר: "דברי נחמיה בן חכליה ויהי בחדש כסליו שנת עשרים ואני הייתי בשושן הבירה. ויבא חנני אחר מאחי הוא ואנשים מיהודה ואשאלם על היהודים הפליטה אשר נשארו מן השבי ועל ירושלים. ויאמרו לי הנשארים אשר נשארו מן השבי שם במדינה ברעה גדולה ובחרפה וחומת ירושלים מפורצת ושעריה נצתו באש."

The *baraita* explains: The words that Hanani said to Nehemiah in Kislev are as it is stated: "The words of Nehemiah, son of Hachaliah: And it came to pass in the month Kislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the capital, that Hanani, one of my brothers, came out of Judah, he and certain men; and I asked them concerning the Jews who had escaped, who were left of the captivity, and concerning Jerusalem. And they said to me: The remnant who are left of the captivity there in the province suffer much hardship and insult; and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates are burned with fire" (Nehemiah 1:1–3).

ואמר נחמיה למלך בניסן, שנאמר: "ויהי בחדש ניסן שנת עשרים לארתחשסתא המלך. ויז לפני ואשא את היין ואתנה למלך ולא הייתי רע לפניו. ויאמר לי המלך מדוע פניך רעים ואתה אינך חולה אין זה כי אם רע לב. ואירא הרבה מאד ואומר למלך המלך לעולם יחיה מדוע לא ירעו פני אשר העיר בית קברות אבותי חרבה ושעריה אוכלו באש."

Nehemiah told these words to the king in Nisan, as it is stated: "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes^b the king, that wine was before him, and I took up the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had not been before sad in his presence. And the king said to me: Why is your face sad, seeing that you are not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of the heart. Then I was very much afraid, and I said to the king: Let the king live forever: Why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of the tombs of my ancestors, lies waste, and its gates are consumed with fire?" (Nehemiah 2:1–3).

ויאמר לי המלך על מה זה אתה מבקש. ואתפלל אל אלהי השמים ואומר למלך אם על המלך טוב ואם יישב עבדך לפניך אשר תשלחני אל יהודה אל עיר קברות אבותי ואבננה. ויאמר לי המלך והשגל יושבת אצלו עד מתי יהיה מהלכך ומתי תשוב. וייתב לפני המלך וישלחני ואתנה לו זמן."

"Then the king said to me: For what do you ask? So I prayed to the God of heaven. And I said to the king: If it please the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, that you would send me to Judea, to the city of the graves of my ancestors, that I may rebuild it. And the king said to me, the consort also sitting by him: For how long shall your journey be? And when will you return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time" (Nehemiah 2:4–6).

מתניב רב יוסף: "ביום עשרים וארבעה לחדש בששי בשנת שתים לדריוש". וכתניב: "בשביעי בשנת שתים בעשרים ואחד לחדש". ואם איתא בשביעי בשנת שלש מיבעי ליה!

Rav Yosef raised an objection against the rule established by Rav H̄isda that the years of gentile kings are counted from Tishrei from the verse that states: "On the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month, in the second year of Darius the king" (Haggai 1:15), and it is written immediately afterward: "In the seventh month, in the second year,ⁿ on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the prophet Haggai, saying" (Haggai 2:1). And if it were so that the years of gentile kings are counted from Tishrei, what the verse needed to state is: In the seventh month in the third year, as a new year had already started for him.

NOTES

And it is written: In the seventh month in the second year – month," is referring to the day on which the construction of the Temple began. The second date, which is "in the seventh month on the twenty-first day of the month," is referring to a prophecy that describes the people's reaction to the commencement of the construction. Therefore, it is clear that the events are recorded in chronological order (*Tosefot Yom Tov; Tosefot HaRosh*).

אמר רבי אבהו: בורש מלך כשר היה, לפיכך מנו לו במלכי ישראל.

Rabbi Abbahu said in answer to this objection: Cyrus was a virtuous king, and consequently Haggai counted the years of his reign like those of the kings of Israel, i.e., from Nisan.

מתקיף לה רב יוסף: חדא דאם בן קשו קראי אהדדי, דכתיב: "ושיציא ביתא דנא עד יום תלתא לירח אדר די היא שנת שית למלכות דריוש מלכא", ותניא: באותו זמן לשנה הבאה עלה עזרא מבבל וגלותו עמו. וכתיב: "ויבא ירושלם בחדש החמישי היא שנת השביעית למלך." ואם איתא שנת השמינית מיבעי ליה!

Rav Yosef strongly objects to this^N explanation for two reasons: One objection is that if this is so, the verses contradict each other, as it is written: "And this house was finished on the third of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king" (Ezra 6:15), and it is taught in a *baraita*: At that same time in the following year Ezra went up from Babylonia together with his company of exiles. And it is written in the Bible: "And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which was in the seventh year of the king" (Ezra 7:8). And if it were so that this king's years were counted like those of the kings of Israel, what the verse needed to state is: Which was in the eighth year of the king.

ועוד: מי דמי? התם בורש, הכא דריוש! תנא: הוא בורש הוא דריוש, הוא ארתחשסתא. בורש שפולך כשר היה. ארתחשסתא על שם מלכותו. ומה שמו? דריוש שמו.

And further, a second objection: Are Rav Yosef's objection and Rabbi Abbahu's resolution comparable? There, Rabbi Abbahu speaks of Cyrus, whereas here, the verses speak of Darius, and it was never said about Darius that he was a virtuous king. The Gemara explains: This is not difficult, as the Sages taught in a *baraita*: All three names are referring to the same person: He is Cyrus; he is Darius; and he is also Artaxerxes.^{NB} He was called Cyrus [*Koresh*] because he was a virtuous [*kasher*] king; he was called Artaxerxes after his kingdom, i.e., this was his royal title; and what was his real name? Darius was his name.

מבלי מקום קשיא! אמר רבי יצחק: לא קשיא; כאן קודם שהחמיץ, כאן לאחר שהחמיץ.

The Gemara notes: In any case, it is difficult, as in one place his years are counted from Nisan, whereas in another place they are counted from Tishrei. Rabbi Yitzhak said: This is not difficult, as it can be explained as follows: Here, where his years are counted from Nisan like the kings of Israel, it speaks of him before he became corrupt, whereas there, where his years are counted from Tishrei, it speaks of him after he became corrupt.

מתקיף לה רב כהנא: ומי החמיץ? והכתיב:

Rav Kahana strongly objects to this explanation: Did he really become corrupt after Ezra went to Eretz Yisrael? But isn't it written:

NOTES

Rav Yosef strongly objects to this – מתקיף לה רב יוסף: Some understand that Rav Yosef himself holds that there is no fixed date from which to count the years of gentile kings; rather, the years of each king's reign are counted from the time of his ascent to the throne. If this is the case, there are no difficulties from any of the verses (Rosh; Rabbi Zerahya HaLevi).

wording of the verse: "And according to the commandment of Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes, the king of Persia" (Ezra 6:14). Since the verse does not state: The kings of Persia, but: "The king of Persia," it indicates that it is speaking of a single king (see *Tosafot*). According to both Rabbi Abbahu and Rav Yosef, the names Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes were used by more than one king. The *baraita* teaches that the king in whose reign permission was granted to rebuild the Temple was called by all three names.

הוא בורש הוא – He is Cyrus, he is Darius, he is Artaxerxes – דריוש הוא ארתחשסתא: This opinion seems to be based on the

BACKGROUND

Cyrus, Darius, Artaxerxes – בורש, דריוש, ארתחשסתא: There is a contradiction between the list of names of Persian kings as they are recorded in gentile sources and the names as they appear in the Bible and in rabbinic writings. Both the early and later authorities have discussed this problem (see Rashi and Ibn Ezra on Daniel, chapter 11). It would appear that the same king is called by more than one name in the Bible, and furthermore, the same event or story is attributed to more than one king. This is because there were several kings who

shared the same name and also because crown princes had a recognized status and were sometimes referred to as king. The question of how to understand Daniel's prophecies about the four kings of Persia seems to be one of the roots of the problem (see commentaries on Daniel, chapter 11, and *Seder Olam Rabba*, chapter 28) The Gemara's conclusion that the same king was called by various names, and also that several different kings apparently had the same name, is one way of reconciling the verses with the historical reality.