Having discussed wise speech and the wisdom of Jewish women, the Gemara cites the following story: Rabbi Yosef HaGelili was walking along the way, and met Berurya. He said to her: On which path shall we walk in order to get to Lod? She said to him: Foolish Galilean, didn’t the Sages say: Do not talk much with women? You should have said your question more succinctly: Which way to Lod?

The Gemara relates more of Berurya’s wisdom: Berurya came across a certain student who was whispering his studies rather than raising his voice.

She kicked him and said to him: Isn’t it written as follows: “Ordered in all things and secure” (II Samuel 3:5), which indicates that if the Torah is ordered in your 248 limbs, i.e., if you exert your entire body in studying it, it will be secure, and if not, it will not be secure. The Gemara relates that it was similarly taught in a baraita: Rabbi Eliezer had a student who would study quietly, and after three years he forgot his studies.

In incidental to the story cited above involving a student of Rabbi Eliezer, the Gemara cites the following episode: It was taught in a baraita: Rabbi Eliezer had a student who was liable for the punishment of death by burning, for his sins against God, but the Rabbis said: Let him alone and do not punish him as he deserves, because he served a great person.

The Gemara cites instructions issued by Shmuel that are similar to those of Berurya. Shmuel said to Rav Yehuda: Keen scholar [shinnana], open your mouth and study the Talmud, in order that your studies should endure in you and that you should live a long life, as it is stated: “For they are life to those who find them, and health to all their flesh” (Proverbs 4:22). Do not read: “To those who find them [lemotzei’hem],” but rather “to those who express them [lemotzi’tei’hem],” with their mouth.

The Gemara cites additional instructions issued by Shmuel: Shmuel said to Rav Yehuda, his beloved student: Keen scholar, grab and eat, grab and drink, as the world from which we are departing is like a wedding feast, whose joy is only temporary, and one who does not take pleasure in it now will not be able to do so in the future.

Similarly, Rav said to Rav Hamnuna: My son, if you have money, do well for yourself. There is no point waiting, as there is no pleasure in the netherworld, and death does not tardy. And if you say: I will save up in order to leave for my children, who told you the law of the netherworld, i.e., how do you know which of you will die first (Arakh)? People are similar to grass of the field, in that these blossom, i.e., grow, and their actions are blessed, and these wither and die.
Having expounded the verse “For they are life to those who find them” as referring to the Torah, the Gemara cites another teaching related to this verse that praises the Torah. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: One who is walking along the way without a companion and is afraid should engage in Torah study, as it is stated with regard to the words of Torah: “And chains about your neck” (Proverbs 1:9). The word livyat is understood here as a reference to livyat, accompaniment, so that the verse is interpreted to mean that Torah is a graceful accompaniment to one who is traveling.

One who feels pain in his head should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: “And chains about your neck.” One who feels pain in his throat should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: “And chains about your neck.” One who feels pain in his intestines should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: “It shall be health to your navel” (Proverbs 3:8). One who feels pain in his bones should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: “And marrow to your bones” (Proverbs 3:8). One who feels pain in his entire body should engage in Torah study, as it is stated: “And health to all their flesh” (Proverbs 4:22).

The Gemara continues with praise for Torah study and knowledge.

Rav Ami said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “For it is a pleasant thing if you keep them within you; let them be firmly attached together to your lips” (Proverbs 22:18)? When are words of Torah pleasant? When you keep them within you and know them. And when will you keep them within you? When they will be attached together to your lips, i.e., when you articulate them audibly and expound them.

Rabbi Zeira said that this idea is derived from here: “A man has joy in the answer of his mouth; and a word in due season, how good it is” (Proverbs 15:23). When does a man have joy? When an answer related to Torah study is in his mouth. Another version: When does a man have joy in the answer of his mouth? When he experiences the fulfillment of: A word in due season, how good it is, i.e., when he knows when and how to address each issue.

Rabbi Yitzḥak said that this idea is derived from here: “But the matter is very near to you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it” (Deuteronomy 30:14). When is it very near to you? When it is in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it, i.e., when you articulate your Torah study.

Rava said that this idea is actually derived from here: “You have given him his heart’s desire, and have not withheld the request of his lips, Selah” (Psalms 21:5). When have You given him his heart’s desire? When You have not withheld the request of his lips, Selah, i.e., when he converses in words of Torah.

Rava raised an internal contradiction in that very verse: In the beginning of the verse it is written: “You have given him his heart’s desire,” implying that it is enough for one to request in his heart, whereas in the end of the verse it is written: “And You have not withheld the request of his lips, Selah,” indicating that one must express his prayers verbally. Rava himself resolved the contradiction: If one is fortunate, “You have given him his heart’s desire,” even if he does not give verbal expression to his wants. But if he is not fortunate, at least “You have not withheld the request of his lips, Selah.”
Selah, as it is written: “As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of Hosts, in the city of our God; may God establish it forever, Selah” (Psalm 48:8), which demonstrates that Selah means forever. Vi’ed, as it is written: “The Lord shall reign forever and ever” (Exodus 15:18).

In light of the previous discussion, the Gemara cites several expositions of verses proposed by Rabbi Eliezer, while first providing them with a mnemonic: Chains, cheeks, tablets, engraved. Rabbi Eliezer said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “And chains about your neck” (Proverbs 1:9)? If a person makes himself like a chain that hangs loosely on the neck, i.e., if a scholar is not pushy and disruptive to others, and he is also seen but not seen, i.e., just as a chain is covered by clothes and hair, so too, the scholar does not let himself be seen, his Torah study will endure. But if not, if he acts in a rude and arrogant manner, his Torah study will not endure.

And Rabbi Eliezer also said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “His cheeks are like a bed of spices” (Song of Songs 5:13)? If a person makes himself humble like this garden bed upon which everyone treads, and like this spice with which everyone perfumes himself, i.e., which benefits not only the one who wears it, his Torah study will endure. But if not, i.e., if he is not diligent in his studies, his Torah study will not endure.

And Rabbi Eliezer further said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “Tables [luχot] of stone” (Exodus 31:18)? If a person makes his cheeks [leχayav] like this stone that does not wear away, his Torah study will endure. But if not, i.e., if he is not diligent in his studies, his Torah study will not endure.

And, lastly, Rabbi Eliezer said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “And the tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved upon the tablets” (Exodus 32:16)? This teaches that had the first tablets, the subject of this verse, not been broken, the Torah would never have been forgotten from the Jewish people, as the Torah would have been engraved upon their hearts.

Rav Aha bar Ya’akov said: Had the tablets not been broken, no nation or tongue would ever have ruled over them, as it is stated: “Engraved”; do not read it engraved [harut] but rather freedom [heirut].

Similarly, Rav Mattana said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “The well that the princes dug out, that the nobles of the people delved, with the sceptor, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah” (Numbers 21:18)? If a person makes himself humble like this wilderness, which is open to all and upon which everyone treads, his Torah study will endure and be given to him as a gift [mattana]. And if not, his Torah study will not endure.

The Gemara relates that Rav Yosef had a grievance against Rava, son of Rav Yosef bar Hama, who is usually referred to in the Gemara simply as Rava, and as a result of the grievance the two would never meet. When the eve of Yom Kippur arrived, Rava said: I will go and appease him. He went and found Rav Yosef’s attendant mixing him a cup of wine. He said to the attendant: Give it to me, and I will mix it. He gave it to Rava, and Rava mixed it. Rav Yosef was blind and could not see his visitor, but when he tasted the wine he said: This mixture is similar to the mixture of Rava, son of Rav Yosef bar Hama, who would add extra water to the wine. Rava said to him: It is I.
Rav Yosef had a grievance – so that you can return to Torah study, as the pleasures of this world are sent Rav Yosef a query with regard to a certain halakhic issue. Upon dispute between Rava and Rav Yosef is found in tractate Hilkhot Talmud Torah. Rava's wine mixture was one part wine and three parts water, whereas the usual ratio was one to two. The basis of the HALAKHA explains, based on old Aramaic vernacular, that shinnana: It appears that Rashi and the Shulchan Arukh comfort, including excessive eating or drinking (Yoreh Dea'ah 246:22). Rav Shniyos (De'a 54:21) explained, based on old Aramaic vernacular, that shinnana: Makes himself like an animal – to a breast, whenever a person searches it for figs to eat, he finds figs in it, as the figs on a tree do not ripen all at once, so that one can always find a recently ripened fig, so too, with matters of Torah. Whenever a person meditates upon them, he finds in them the meaning of that which is written. “A loving hind and a graceful roe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times, and be you ravished always with her love” (Proverbs 5:19)? Why were matters of Torah explained to him as a gift? “And from Mattanah to Nahaliel.” And once God has made it His inheritance, he rises to greatness, as it is stated: “And from Nahaliel to Bamoth,” which means heights. Rav Huna said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “Your flock found a dwelling in it; You, O God, prepare of Your goodness for the poor” (Psalms 68:11)? If a person makes himself like an animal that tramples its prey and eats it immediately, without being particular about its food, i.e., if a scholar immediately reviews what he has heard from his teacher; and some say, like an animal that soils and eats, i.e., if a scholar is not particular about maintaining his honor during his Torah study, just as an animal is not particular about the quality of its food, his Torah study will endure. And if not, his Torah study will not endure. And if he does so, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will Himself prepare him a feast, as it is stated: “You, O God, prepare of Your goodness for the poor,” indicating that God in His goodness will Himself prepare a feast for that pauper. Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “He who guards the fig tree shall eat its fruit” (Proverbs 27:18)? Why were matters of Torah compared to a fig tree? Just as this fig tree,
The Gemara continues with this topic: Rav Sheizvi said in the name of Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya: What is the meaning of that which is written: “You that ride on white donkeys, you that sit on rich cloths, and you that walk by the way, tell of it” (Proverbs 12:27)? The deceitful hunter — will not roast his catch (Proverbs 12:27)? The deceitful hunter will not roast his catch. This refers to one who deceives others by showing off the breadth of his knowledge. However, since he does not review his studies, he will forget them and thereby shorten his life, as the Torah states: “For it is your life and length of days” (Rashi).

When Rav Dimi came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said: This is comparable to a hunter who is hunting birds; if he breaks the wings of the birds one by one as he captures them so that they will be unable to fly off again, his prey will be secured, and if not, they will not be secured. According to this explanation, the word rammai is interpreted as cunning rather than deceitful. A cunning hunter secures his prey; similarly, a cunning student reviews each lesson and thereby retains that which he learns.

Rav Sheshet said: Will a deceitful hunter have something to roast? One who acts in this way is a fool, but it is hard to describe him as deceitful.

The slothful man will not roast his catch — This is a metaphor for one who does not review his studies properly, and whose continued study will therefore be ineffective.

The deceitful hunter — This refers to one who deceives others by showing off the breadth of his knowledge. However, since he does not review his studies, he will forget them and thereby shorten his life, as the Torah states: “For it is your life and length of days” (Rashi).

Will a deceitful hunter have something to roast — This refers to a student who tells his teacher that he cannot grasp any more, and then uses the remaining time to review what he has just learned. Such a student will retain his knowledge.

NOTES

You that walk by the way, tell of it — Some explain this in the following manner: The expression “that walk” refers to masters of Bible, who are not on the highest level and are therefore described as walking rather than riding. Those who have mastered Mishna are referred to as traveling “by the way” as they are closer to the highest level of study, but are not equal to Talmud scholars. “Tell it” alludes to Talmud scholars, who constantly focus on the most important course of study (Mahashia, Rav Yaakov Emden).

The slothful man will not roast his catch — This is a metaphor for one who does not review his studies properly, and whose continued study will therefore be ineffective.

The deceitful hunter — This refers to one who deceives others by showing off the breadth of his knowledge. However, since he does not review his studies, he will forget them and thereby shorten his life, as the Torah states: “For it is your life and length of days” (Rashi).

Will a deceitful hunter have something to roast — Rashi reads this statement as a question. The Arukh, however, explains that it refers to a student who tells his teacher that he cannot grasp any more, and then uses the remaining time to review what he has just learned. Such a student will retain his knowledge.
HALAKHA

Until he learns it – Shekelot

One who teaches Torah should not get angry with his students. Rather, he should review the lesson several times until the students understand (Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De‘a 246:10).

Similarly, Rabba said that Rav Sehora said that Rav Huna said:

What is the meaning of that which is written: “Wealth gotten through vanity [hevel] shall be diminished; but he that gathers little by little shall increase” (Proverbs 13:11)? If a person turns his Torah into bundles [ḥavilot, derived from the word hevel by replacing the heh with a lel], studying large amounts at the same time, his Torah will diminish. And if not, i.e., if he learns little by little and reviews what he has learned, he that gathers little by little shall increase.

Rabba said: The Sages know this, but nevertheless transgress it, i.e., they fail to heed this advice. Rav Naĥman bar Yitzĥak said: I did this, learning little by little and regularly reviewing what I had learned, and my learning has indeed endured.

The Gemara continues to discuss methods of Torah study. The Sages taught the following baraita: What was the order of teaching the Oral Law? How was the Oral Law first taught? Moses learned directly from the mouth of the Almighty. Aaron entered and sat before him, and Moses taught him his lesson as he had learned it from God. Aaron moved aside and sat to the left of Moses. Aaron’s sons entered, and Moses taught them their lesson while Aaron listened. Aaron’s sons moved aside; Elazar sat to the right of Moses and Tamar sat to the left of Aaron. Rabbi Yehuda disagreed with the first tanna with regard to the seating arrangements and said: Actually, Aaron would return to sit to the right of Moses. The elders entered and Moses taught them their lesson. The elders moved aside, and the entire nation entered and Moses taught them their lesson. Therefore, Aaron had heard the lesson four times, his sons heard it three times, the elders heard it twice, and the entire nation heard it once.

Moses then departed to his tent, and Aaron taught the others his lesson as he had learned it from Moses. Aaron then departed and his sons taught the others their lesson. His sons then departed and the elders taught the rest of the people their lesson. Hence everyone, Aaron, his sons, the elders and all the people, heard the lesson taught by God four times.

From here Rabbi Eliezer said: A person is obligated to teach his student his lesson four times. And it follows by way of an a fortiori inference: If Aaron, who learned from Moses himself, and Moses had received the Torah directly from the mouth of the Almighty, needed this regimen, an ordinary student learning from the mouth of an ordinary teacher, how much more so must he review his studies four times.

Rabbi Akiva says: From where do we derive that a person is obligated to teach his student until he learns the material and understands it? As it is stated: “Now therefore write this song for you, and teach it to the children of Israel; put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel” (Deuteronomy 31:19). This verse indicates that one must teach Torah to others. And from where do we derive that one must teach his students until the material is organized in their mouths? As it is stated: “Put it in their mouths,” so that they should be capable of teaching it to others.

And from where do we derive that a teacher must show his students the reasons for the teachings? As it is stated: “Now these are the judgments which you shall set before them” (Exodus 21:11), which indicates that the lesson must be set out in logical fashion for the students.

With regard to the manner in which the Oral Law was taught, the Gemara asks: ‘They should all have studied from Moses himself four times. The Gemara answers: The teaching was divided in this manner in order to give honor to Aaron and his sons, and also to give honor to the elders.'
The Gemara asks why a different method was not adopted, one which would have involved less trouble for Moses. Aaron should have entered and studied from Moses; his sons should then have entered and studied from Aaron; the elders should then have entered and studied from Aaron's sons; and then they should have gone out and taught all of the Jewish people. The Gemara answers: Since Moses had studied directly from the mouth of the Almighty, it would be more effective for everyone to hear the Torah at least once from Moses himself.

The Master said in the baraita that Rabbi Yehuda says: Actually, Aaron would return to sit to the right of Moses, i.e., no matter how many people were present Aaron always sat to Moses’ right. The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion was it taught in a baraita dealing with the rules of etiquette: If three people were walking along the way, the teacher should walk in the middle and the greater of the two students should be to his right and the lesser one should be to his left? Shall we say that it is the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda and not that of the Sages? According to the Sages, the greater of the two students should be positioned to the left of the teacher so that the student’s right side faces his teacher.

The Gemara answers: You can even say that this baraita was taught in accordance with the opinion of the Sages, and the reason they said that Aaron remained to Moses’ left even after the others entered is due to the trouble to Aaron if he would have to stand up and sit down again.

Having discussed the importance of reviewing one’s Torah study, the Gemara relates that Rabbi Perida had a certain student whom he would have to teach four hundred times, and only then would he learn the material, as he was incapable of understanding it otherwise. One day they requested Rabbi Perida’s presence for a mitzva matter after the lesson. Rabbi Perida taught his student four hundred times as usual, but this time the student did not successfully learn the material.

Rabbi Perida said to him: What is different now that you are unable to grasp the lesson? He said to him: From the time that they said to the Master that there is a mitzva matter for which he is needed, my mind was distracted from the lesson and every moment I said: Now the Master will get up, now the Master will get up to go and perform the mitzva and he will not complete the lesson. Rabbi Perida said to him: Pay attention this time and I will teach you, and know that I will not leave until you have fully mastered the lesson. He taught him again an additional four hundred times.

Due to the merit of Rabbi Perida’s great devotion to his students, a Divine Voice emerged and said to him: Is it preferable to you that four hundred years be added to your life, or that you and the rest of your generation will merit the World-to-Come? He said: I prefer that I and my generation merit the World-to-Come. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to the angels: Give him both; he shall live a very long life and he and the rest of his generation will merit the World-to-Come.

The Gemara continues its discussion with regard to methods of Torah study: Rav Hisda said: The Torah can be acquired only with mnemonic signs that aid the memory, as it is stated: “Put it in their mouths.” Do not read the phrase as: Put it [simanah], but rather as: Its sign [simanah], thus indicating that mnemonic signs aid in memorizing the material.

Rav Taĥalifa of the West, i.e., from Eretz Yisrael, heard this statement and went and said it before Rabbi Abbahu, who said: You learn this idea from there; we learn it from here, as the verse states: “Set up signs [tziqyunim] for yourself; establish you markers” (Jeremiah 31:20), which is understood to mean: Establish mnemonic signs for the Torah. And from where may it be inferred that this term tziqyun denotes a sign? As it is written in a different verse: ‘And when they that pass through shall pass through the land, and any sees a human bone, he shall set up a sign [tziqyun] by it’ (Ezekiel 39:15), i.e., a sign that there is a source of ritual impurity at that spot.
HALAKHA

Set appointed times for Torah study – אומדֵים לַתּוֹרָר. It is proper to go to a house of study and study Torah for a fixed amount of time every day after prayers (Shuĥan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 155).

NOTES

Someone who raises his mind and someone who expands his mind – הקמד דעה, מַגְבִּיר דַּעְתּוֹ. One who raises his mind is one who believes that his mind is so lofty that he no longer needs a teacher. One who expands his mind is one who has studied a topic and now thinks he no longer needs a teacher. One who expands his mind – לא יחרוך רמי רַמַּאי צַיָּיד. Who does not review his studies properly, and whose continued study mishna are referred to as traveling “by the way,” as they are closer to the masters of Bible, who are not on the highest level and are therefore plain this in the following manner: The expression “that walk” refers to a student who tells his teacher that he cannot grasp any more, that his right side should face the leading member of the group. If two people are walking or two people are standing, the teacher and a little to the side (Shulĥan Arukh, Orach Ĥayyim 155:1).

And this idea, that one must exert great effort to retain one’s Torah knowledge, is in accordance with what Avdimi bar Háma bar Dosa said: What is the meaning of that which is written: “It is not in heaven…nor is it beyond the sea” (Deuteronomy 30:12–13)? “It is not in heaven indicates that if it were in heaven, you would have to ascend after it, and if it were beyond the sea, you would have to cross after it, as one must expend whatever effort is necessary in order to study Torah. Expounding the verse differently, Rava said: "It is not in heaven" means that Torah is not to be found in someone who raises his mind over it, like the heavens, i.e., he thinks his mind is as above the Torah and he does not need a teacher; nor is it to be found in someone who expands his mind over it, like the sea, i.e., he thinks he knows everything there is to know about the topic he has learned.

Rabbi Yohanan said: “It is not in heaven” means that Torah is not to be found in the haughty, those who raise their self-image as though they were in heaven. “Nor is it beyond the sea” means that it is not to be found among merchants or traders who are constantly traveling and do not have the time to study Torah properly.

After the lengthy aggadic digression, the Gemara returns to the topic of the mishna, extending the outskirts of a city. The Sages taught in the Tosefta: How does one extend the boundaries of cities? If the city is long, in the shape of a rectangle, the Shabbat limit is measured from the boundary as it is. If the city is round, one creates simulated corners for it, rendering it square, and the Shabbat limit is measured from there. If it is square, one does not create additional corners for it. If the city was wide on one side and narrow on the other, it is viewed as though both sides are the length of the longer side, and the Shabbat boundaries are measured from there (Shuĥan Arukh, Orach Hayyim 398:2).

BACKGROUND

The boundaries of a round city – חקוקים ים ימיעל: מי צד הצהרי部主任. The city is wide.

A city that is narrow on one side – מי צד הצהרי部主任. The city is narrow.

While there are equal lengths, adding to the narrow side to form a square.