

NOTES

**Abundant [rov] thanksgivings – רוב ההודאות:** The term *rov* does not mean most, as it is generally used in other contexts. It appears here as an abstract noun meaning abundant, a usage that appears in several places in the Torah (see Genesis 27:28). Consequently, the Gemara's question should be understood as follows: In light of the word's more common meaning, of a majority, which indicates the presence of a contrary minority, perhaps this is not the preferred formulation (Ritva; *Nimmukei Yosef*).

Some commentaries suggest that the term *rov* indeed means a majority of thanksgiving, i.e., man is unable to thank God for all the kindness He bestows upon him, but only for most of His kindness (Rid).

**God [El] of thanksgivings – אל ההודאות:** In this context, the term *El* is referring not only to God but also bears the secondary meaning of strength and might. Consequently, the phrase can mean: He who is great and worthy of thanksgiving (*Nimmukei Yosef*).

מאי מברך? אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: מודים אנחנו לך, ה' אלהינו, על כל טפה וטפה שהורדת לנו. ורבי יוחנן מסיים בה הכי: אילו פינו מלא שירה פים, ולשוננו רנה כהמון גליו כו', עד: אל יעזבונו רחמיך, ה' אלהינו, ולא יעזבונו. ברוך רוב ההודאות.

The Gemara asks: What blessing does one recite over rain? Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: We thank you, O Lord our God, for each and every drop that You have made fall for us. And Rabbi Yohanan concludes the blessing as follows: If our mouth were as full of song as the sea, and our tongue with singing like the multitude of its waves, etc. And one continues with the formula of the *nishmat* prayer recited on Shabbat morning, until: May Your mercy not forsake us, O Lord our God, and You have not forsaken us. Blessed are You, O Lord, to Whom abundant thanksgivings are offered.

רוב ההודאות ולא כל ההודאות? אמר רבא: אימא: אל ההודאות. אמר רב פפא: הלךך.

The Gemara asks: Why does the blessing specify abundant thanksgivings<sup>N</sup> and not all thanksgivings? Rava said: Emend the formula of the blessing and say: God of thanksgivings.<sup>N</sup> Rav Pappa said: Therefore, as there are differences of opinion on this,

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NOTES

**We will recite them both – נימרינהו לתרויהו:** Some commentaries explain that this refers both to Rav Yehuda's addition and Rabbi Yohanan's concluding blessing (Rabbi Zerahya HaLevi; Rabbi Yehonatan of Lunel), whereas others reject this opinion and maintain that this is referring to the opinions of Rava and Rav Pappa (Ramban; Rabbi Aharon HaLevi). Although there are variant readings of the text of the blessing, both in the citation here and in *Berakhot*, the accepted version is based on a tradition of the *ge'onim*.

It has been noted that Rav Pappa generally prefers to combine two conflicting opinions rather than decide between them, provided that they are not contradictory (see *Eshel Avraham*).

**The resurrection of the dead benefits only the righteous – תחיית המתים לצדיקים:** Rav Ya'akov Emden explains that the resurrection of the dead will benefit the righteous alone, as the wicked will be revived only to be condemned in judgment.

**Equivalent to the resurrection of the dead – שקולה בתחיית המתים:** The commentaries write that this is because both events bring life to people and plants that are apparently dead and lifeless.

**Greater than the day on which the Torah was given – יותר מיום שניתנה בו תורה:** One explanation of this claim is that the Torah benefits only the righteous, whereas the rain provides benefit to the wicked, as well (*Keren Ora*). Alternatively, rainfall is greater than the revelation of the Torah because the Torah was given only to the Jewish people, whereas rain is God's gift to the entire world (*Sho'har Tov*).

**It snaps his neck [orfehu] like the rain – עורפהו כמטר:** Various explanations for this statement have been suggested (see Rashi). One interpretation is that one should teach a student repeatedly, like a persistent rain (*Shita Mekubbetzet*). Alternatively, *orfehu* means that one should turn one's nape [*oref*] to this person (Maharsha). Yet others maintain that this statement does not refer to a teacher but to how matters of Torah are perceived by its students, i.e., for a worthy student the Torah flows easily like the dew, but for an unworthy student it is as difficult as the rain (*Keren Ora*).

נימרינהו לתרויהו: אל ההודאות ורוב ההודאות.

we will recite them both:<sup>NH</sup> God of thanksgivings, and: Abundant thanksgivings.

אמר רבי אבהו: גדול יום הגשמים מתחיית המתים. דאילו תחיית המתים לצדיקים, ואילו גשמים בין לצדיקים בין לרשעים. ופליגא דרב יוסף. דאמר רב יוסף: מתוך שהיא שקולה בתחיית המתים, קבעיה בתחיית המתים.

§ The Gemara cites statements in praise of rainfall. Rabbi Abbahu said: The day of rain is greater than the resurrection of the dead. The reason is that while the resurrection of the dead benefits only the righteous,<sup>N</sup> rain benefits both the righteous and the wicked. The Gemara comments: And this statement disagrees with the opinion of Rav Yosef, as Rav Yosef said: Since rainfall is equivalent to the resurrection of the dead,<sup>N</sup> the Sages established its recitation in the second blessing of the *Amida*, the blessing of the resurrection of the dead. According to Rav Yosef, rainfall is the equivalent to, but not superior to, the resurrection of the dead.

אמר רב יהודה: גדול יום הגשמים ביום שניתנה בו תורה, שנאמר: "יערוך כמטר לקחי", ואין לקח אלא תורה, שנאמר: "כי לקח טוב נתתי לכם; תורת אל תעזבו". רבא אמר: יותר מיום שניתנה בו תורה, שנאמר: "יערוך כמטר לקחי". מי נתלה במי? הוי אומר: קטן נתלה בגדול.

Similarly, Rav Yehuda said: The day of the rains is as great as the day on which the Torah was given, as it is stated: "My doctrine [*likhi*] shall drop as the rain" (Deuteronomy 32:2), and *lekaḥ* means nothing other than Torah, as it is stated: "For I give you good doctrine [*lekaḥ*]; do not forsake My Torah" (Proverbs 4:2). Rava said: Rainfall is even greater than the day on which the Torah was given,<sup>N</sup> as it is stated: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain," and when one makes a comparison, which object is made dependent upon which? You must say that the lesser object is dependent upon the greater one. If Torah is compared to rain, it follows that rain is greater than Torah.

רבא רמי: בתיב: "יערוך כמטר לקחי", ובתיב: "תגל בטל אמרתי"! אם תלמיד חכם הגון הוא, כשל, ואם לאו, עורפהו כמטר.

The Gemara cites another interpretation of the verse from Deuteronomy. Rava raised a contradiction: At the beginning of the verse it is written: "My doctrine shall drop [*ya'arof*] as the rain," in a harsh manner, and yet later in the verse, it is written: "My speech shall distill as the dew," in a gentle tone. He resolves this apparent contradiction as follows: If he is a worthy Torah scholar,<sup>H</sup> the Torah flows through him like the dew, but if he is not worthy, it snaps his neck [*orfehu*] like the powerful rain.<sup>N</sup>

HALAKHA

**We will recite them both – נימרינהו לתרויהו:** The blessing recited over rain, as established by the *ge'onim* and by the Rambam, concludes with the formula: Blessed are you, O Lord, God of abundant thanksgivings. This is in accordance with the opinion of Rav Pappa (*Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 221:2).

**אם תלמיד חכם הגון הוא – If he is a worthy Torah scholar:** One should not teach Torah to an unworthy student. This student should be helped to mend his ways and only afterward brought into the study hall to begin his studies (*Shulḥan Arukh, Yoreh De'a* 246:7).

**Rabbi Bena'a** – רַבִּי בְנֵאָה: One of the last of the *tanna'im*, Rabbi Bena'a was not born in Eretz Yisrael, but came from abroad, although his exact place of origin is unknown. We do not know his profession, but in Eretz Yisrael, he marked graves so that priests could avoid ritually impurity. His permanent place of residence was Tiberias, where he founded a large academy. The great *amora* Rabbi Yohanan studied Torah from him and it was he who transmitted most of the surviving statements of Rabbi Bena'a. Rabbi Bena'a was famed for his wisdom. He also maintained important relations with the non-Jewish authorities.

**Rabbi Yirmeya** – רַבִּי יִרְמְיָה: Born in Babylonia, Rabbi Yirmeya was one of the leading *amora'im* of the third and fourth generations. He studied in Babylonia in his youth, but soon thereafter emigrated to Eretz Yisrael, where he became a disciple of some of the greatest Sages of the generation, the students of Rabbi Yohanan, Rabbi Zeira and Rabbi Abbahu. Rabbi Yirmeya had a special dialectical method of great acuity, and he would pose provocative questions to his teachers and colleagues. Since these questions gave the impression that Rabbi Yirmeya was seeking to undermine the accepted rules of halakhic dialectic, he was punished and even removed from the study hall for a brief period. Rabbi Yirmeya's statements are quoted extensively in both the Babylonian Talmud and the Jerusalem Talmud, so much so that in the Babylonian Talmud his sayings are often introduced by the expression: They say in the West, i.e., in Eretz Yisrael.

## NOTES

**וְכִי אָדָם עֵץ שָׂדֶה** – And is man a tree of the field – רַבִּי יוֹהָנָן: The connection suggested by Rabbi Yohanan between this phrase and a Torah scholar is based on a verse in Psalms (92:13): "The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."

תַּנְיָא: הִיא רַבִּי בְנֵאָה אָמַר: כָּל הָעוֹסֵק בְּתוֹרַה לְשִׂמְחָה, תּוֹרָתוֹ נִעְשִׂית לּוֹ סֵם חַיִּים, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ." וְאָמַר: "רַפְאוֹת תְּהִי לְשִׁרְךָ." וְאָמַר: "כִּי מִצְאֵי מִצְאֵי חַיִּים." וְכָל הָעוֹסֵק בְּתוֹרַה שְׂלֵא לְשִׂמְחָה, נִעְשִׂית לּוֹ סֵם הַמּוֹת, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "וְעַרְףְּ בְּמִטְרַת לְקַחֲנִי," וְאִין עַרְיָפָה אֶלְאָ הַרְיָגָה, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "וְעַרְפוּ שָׁם אֶת הָעֵגְלָה בְּנַחֲלִי."

אָמַר לִיה רַבִּי יִרְמְיָה לְרַבִּי זֵירָא: לִיתִי מִרְ לִיתִנְנִי אָמַר לִיה: חֲלֵשׁ לְבָבִי וְלֹא יִכְלִינָא. לִימָא מִרְ מִילְתָא דְאַגְדָּתָא. אָמַר לִיה: הָבִי אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: מֵאֵי דְכְתִיב: "כִּי אָדָם עֵץ הַשָּׂדֶה?" וְכִי אָדָם עֵץ שָׂדֶה הוּא?

אֶלְאָ מִשּׁוּם דְכְתִיב: "כִּי מִמְנוֹ תֹאכַל וְאֵתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת," וְכְתִיב: "אֵתוֹ תִשְׁחִית וְכָרְתָּ." הָאֵי כִי צִיָּד? אִם תְּלַמֵּד חֲכָם הֲגוֹן הוּא, "מִמְנוֹ תֹאכַל, וְאֵתוֹ לֹא תִכְרֹת," וְאִם לֹא, "אֵתוֹ תִשְׁחִית וְכָרְתָּ."

אָמַר רַבִּי חֲמָא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: מֵאֵי דְכְתִיב: "בְּרֹל בְּרֹל יִחַד?" לֹא מִרְ לֵךְ: מַה בְּרֹל זֶה, אֶחָד מִחֲדָד אֶת חֲבִירוֹ, אִף שְׁנֵי תְלַמֵּידי חֲכָמִים מִחֲדָדִין זֶה אֶת זֶה בְּהִלְכָה.

אָמַר רַבָּה בַר בַּר חֲנָה: לְמָה נִמְשְׁלוּ דְבָרֵי תוֹרָה כְּאֵשׁ, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "הֲלֹא כֹה דְבָרֵי כְּאֵשׁ? נָאֵם ה'?" לֹא מִרְ לֵךְ: מַה אֵשׁ אֵינוֹ דוֹלֵק יַחֲדֵי, אִף דְבָרֵי תוֹרָה אֵין מִתְקַיְמִין בְּיַחֲדֵי.

וְהֵינּוּ דְאָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסִי בַר חֲנִינָא: מֵאֵי דְכְתִיב: "חָרַב אֶל הַבְּדִים וְנֹאֲלוּ?" חָרַב עַל שׁוֹנְאֵייהוֹן שֶׁל תְּלַמֵּידי חֲכָמִים שְׁעוֹסְקִין בַּד בְּבַד בְּתוֹרָה, וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלְאָ שְׂמִשְׁפָּשׁוֹן, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "וְנֹאֲלוּ."

וְלֹא עוֹד אֶלְאָ שְׁחוֹטְאִין. כְּתִיב הָכָא: "וְנֹאֲלוּ," וְכְתִיב הָתָם: "אֲשֶׁר נֹאֲלָנוּ וְאֲשֶׁר חָטְאוּ." וְאֵיבְעִית אֵימָא מִהָכָא: "וְנֹאֲלוּ שְׂרֵי צִעוֹן, [וְגוֹי] הִתְעוּ אֶת מִצְרַיִם."

אָמַר רַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק: לְמָה נִמְשְׁלוּ דְבָרֵי תוֹרָה כְּעֵץ, שְׂנַאֲמַר: "עֵץ חַיִּים הִיא לְמַחְזִיקִים בָּהּ?" לֹא מִרְ לֵךְ: מַה עֵץ קָטָן מְדֻלֵּק אֶת הַגְּדוֹל, אִף תְּלַמֵּידי חֲכָמִים קְטַנִּים מִחֲדָדִים אֶת הַגְּדוֹלִים, וְהֵינּוּ דְאָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא: הַרְבֵּה לְמַדְתִּי מִרְבוֹתִי, וּמִחֲבִירֵי יוֹתֵר מִרְבוֹתִי, וּמִתְלַמֵּידי יוֹתֵר מִכּוֹלֵן.

It is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Bena'a<sup>p</sup> would say: Anyone who engages in Torah for its own sake, his Torah study will be an elixir of life for him, as it is stated: "It is a tree of life to them who lay hold upon it" (Proverbs 3:18), and it says: "It shall be health to your navel" (Proverbs 3:8), and it says: "For whoever finds Me finds life" (Proverbs 8:35). And anyone who engages in Torah not for its own sake, e.g., for self-aggrandizement, his Torah will be an elixir of death for him, as it is stated: "My doctrine shall drop [ya'arof] as the rain," and *arifa* means nothing other than killing, as it is stated: "And they shall break the heifer's neck [arefu] there in the valley" (Deuteronomy 21:4).

Rabbi Yirmeya<sup>p</sup> once said to Rabbi Zeira: Let the Master come and teach a halakhic discourse. Rabbi Zeira said to him: My heart is weak and I cannot strain myself over a halakhic discourse. Rabbi Yirmeya replied to him: In that case, let the Master tell us a matter of *aggada*, which does not require as much effort. Rabbi Zeira said to him that Rabbi Yohanan said as follows: What is the meaning of that which is written: "For man is a tree of the field" (Deuteronomy 20:19)? And is man actually a tree of the field?<sup>n</sup>

Rather, it is because it is written earlier in the same verse: "You may eat of them but you may not cut them down," and it is written in the next verse: "Them you may destroy and cut down" (Deuteronomy 20:20). This indicates that there are certain trees which may be cut down, while others may not be destroyed. How so? If a Torah scholar is worthy: "You may eat of them but you may not cut them down," but if he is not worthy: "He you may destroy and cut down."

The Gemara cites other expositions that deal with Torah study. Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "Iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17)? This verse comes to tell you that just as with these iron implements, one sharpens the other when they are rubbed against each other, so too, when Torah scholars study together, they sharpen one another in *halakha*.

Rabba bar bar Hana said: Why are matters of Torah compared to fire, as it is stated: "Is not My word like fire, says the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:29)? To tell you: Just as fire does not ignite in a lone stick of wood but in a pile of kindling, so too, matters of Torah are not retained and understood properly by a lone scholar who studies by himself, but by a group of Sages.

And this is what Rabbi Yosei bar Hanina said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "A sword is upon the boasters [*habaddim*], and they shall become fools [*noalu*]" (Jeremiah 50:36)? This verse can be interpreted homiletically: There is a sword upon the enemies of Torah scholars, a euphemism for Torah scholars themselves, who sit alone [*bad bevad*] and study Torah. And not only that, but those who study by themselves grow foolish from their solitary Torah study, as it is stated: "And they shall become fools."

And not only that, but they sin, as it is written here: "And they shall become fools," and it is written there: "For that we have done foolishly [*noalnu*] and for that we have sinned" (Numbers 12:11). And if you wish, say instead that it is derived from here: "The princes of Zoan have become fools [*noalu*]... they have caused Egypt to go astray" (Isaiah 19:13).

Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: Why are Torah matters likened to a tree, as it is stated: "It is a tree of life to them who lay hold upon it" (Proverbs 3:18)? This verse comes to tell you that just as a small piece of wood can ignite a large piece, so too, minor Torah scholars can sharpen great Torah scholars and enable them to advance in their studies. And this is what Rabbi Hanina said: I have learned much from my teachers and even more from my friends, but from my students I have learned more than from all of them.

PERSONALITIES

Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa – רבי חנינא בר פפא: A third-generation amora of Eretz Yisrael, Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa was a colleague of the students of Rabbi Yohanan. It is frequently related in the Talmud that Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa and his colleagues would sit together and discuss innovative Torah teachings. He was, apparently, a judge in his city, as several halakhic decisions of his are recorded as judgments in civil suits. He was also proficient in aggada, and has more aggadic statements than exclusively halakhic statements. He transmitted many aggadic statements in the name of Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani.

Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa's was famous for his both his great righteousness in interpersonal matters and his religious piety. It is related that, upon his death, a pillar of fire stood behind his bier.

HALAKHA

Only by one whose spirit is lowly – אלא במי שדעתו שפלה – Matters of Torah are retained only by people who are humble in spirit, who have no concern for their own honor, and who sit in the dust of the feet of Sages, as stated by Rabbi Hanina (Rambam Sefer HaMadda, Hilkhos Talmud Torah 3:9).

NOTES

To water, wine, and milk – במים, וביין, ובחלב – The midrash explains that these three drinks correspond to the Bible, the Mishna, and the Talmud (see Iyyun Ya'akov).

רבי חנינא בר פפא רמי: כתיב: "לקראת צמא התיו מים", וכתיב: "הוי, כל צמא, לכו למים!" אם תלמיד הגון הוא, "לקראת צמא התיו מים", ואי לא, "הוי, כל צמא, לכו למים".

רבי חנינא בר חמא רמי: כתיב: "יפוצו מעינותיך חוצה", וכתיב: "יהיו לך לבדך!" אם תלמיד הגון הוא, "יפוצו מעינותיך חוצה", ואם לאו, "יהיו לך לבדך".

ואמר רבי חנינא בר אידי: למה נמשלו דברי תורה למים, דכתיב: "הוי, כל צמא, לכו למים"? לומר לך: מה מים מניחין מקום גבוה והולכין למקום נמוך, אף דברי תורה אין מתקיימין אלא במי שדעתו שפלה.

ואמר רבי אושעיא: למה נמשלו דברי תורה לשלשה משקין הללו, במים, וביין, ובחלב, דכתיב: "הוי, כל צמא, לכו למים", וכתיב: "לכו, שברו, ואכלו; ולכו, שברו בלוא כסף ובלוא מחיר יין וחלב"? לומר לך: מה שלשה משקין הללו אין מתקיימין אלא בפחות שבכלים, אף דברי תורה אין מתקיימין אלא במי שדעתו שפלה.

בדאמרה ליה ברתיה דקיסר לרבי יהושע בן חנניה: אי חכמה מפוארה בכלי מכוּעַר! אַמר לה: אביך רמי חמרא במני דפחרא? אַמרה ליה: אלא במאי גירמי? אַמר לה: אתון דחשביתו רמו במאי דהבא וכספא.

אזלה ואמרה ליה לאבוי. רמיא לחמרא במני דהבא וכספא, ותקיף. אתו ואמרו ליה. אַמר לה לברתיה: מאן אַמר לך הכי? אַמרה ליה: רבי יהושע בן חנניה. קרויהו. אַמר ליה: אמאי אַמרת לה הכי? אַמר ליה: כי היכי דאמרה לי, אַמרי לה. והא איבא שפירי דגמירי!

Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa<sup>p</sup> raised a contradiction. In one verse it is written: "To him who is thirsty bring water" (Isaiah 21:14), which indicates that the one who has water must bring it to the thirsty person, and it is written elsewhere: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come for water" (Isaiah 55:1), from which it may be inferred that the thirsty person must seek out water himself. Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa resolves this apparent contradiction by explaining that if he is a worthy student the teacher must seek him out, as in "to him who is thirsty bring water," but if the student is not worthy, then "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come for water," i.e., this student must seek out a teacher himself.

Rabbi Hanina bar Hama raised another contradiction. In one verse it is written: "Let your springs be dispersed abroad" (Proverbs 5:16), whereas in the next verse it is written: "Let them be your own" (Proverbs 5:17). Rabbi Hanina bar Hama explains: If the student sitting before you is worthy, then "Let your springs be dispersed abroad," as you should teach him, but if he is not worthy, then "Let them be your own."

And Rabbi Hanina bar Idi said: Why are matters of Torah likened to water, as it is written: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come for water" (Isaiah 55:1)? This verse comes to tell you: Just as water leaves a high place and flows to a low place, so too, Torah matters are retained only by one whose spirit is lowly,<sup>h</sup> i.e., a humble person.

And Rabbi Oshaya said: Why are matters of Torah likened to these three liquids: To water, wine and milk?<sup>n</sup> As it is written with regard to water: "Ho, everyone who thirsts, come for water," and it is written in the same verse: "Come, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." This verse comes to tell you: Just as these three liquids can be retained only in the least of vessels, e.g., clay pots, but not vessels of silver and gold, as they will spoil, so too, matters of Torah are retained only by one whose spirit is lowly.

The Gemara cites a related incident: This is as the daughter of the Roman emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya, who was an ugly man: Woe to glorious wisdom such as yours, which is contained in an ugly vessel. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya said to her, in a seemingly unrelated response: Does your father keep his wine in simple clay vessels? The emperor's daughter said to him: Rather, in what, then, should he keep it? Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya said to her: You, who are so important, should put it in vessels of gold and silver.

The emperor's daughter went and said this to her father. He put the wine in vessels of gold and silver and it turned sour. When his advisors came and told the emperor that the wine had turned sour,<sup>b</sup> he said to his daughter: Who told you to do this? His daughter responded: Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya. The emperor summoned him and said to him: Why did you say this to her? Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya said to him: Just as she said to me, so I said say to her, to demonstrate to her that fine material is best preserved in the least of vessels. The emperor said to him: But there are handsome people who are learned.

BACKGROUND

Storing wine in metal vessels – יין בכלי מתכת – Wine cannot be stored in metal vessels because the acid contained in the wine has a somewhat corrosive effect on most metals, including copper and silver. Furthermore, many compounds of these metals are poisonous, which not only spoils the taste of the wine but also places the drinker's health at risk.



אי הוּו סנו, טפי הוּו גמירי. דְּבַר אַחַר: מַה שְׁלֹשָׁה מִשְׁקִין הִלְלוּ אֵין נִפְסְלוּ אֶלָּא בְּהִיפּוּחַ הַדַּעַת, אַף דְּבַר תּוֹרָה אֵין מִשְׁתַּבְּחִין אֶלָּא בְּהִיפּוּחַ הַדַּעַת.

אָמַר רַבִּי חֲמָא בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: גְּדוּל יוֹם הַגְּשָׁמִים כִּיּוֹם שֶׁנִּבְרְאוּ שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ, שְׁנֵאמַר: "הַרְעִיפוּ שָׁמַיִם מִמַּעַל, וַיִּפְרוּ וַיִּפְרוּ יוֹשְׁקִים יוֹלוּ צֶדֶק; תִּפְתַּח אָרֶץ וַיִּפְרוּ יִשְׁעֵי, וַצִּדְקָה תִצְמַיֵחַ יחד; אֲנִי ה' בְּרֵאתִיו". בְּרֵאתִים לֹא נֵאמַר, אֶלָּא "בְּרֵאתִיו".

אָמַר רַב אִישְׁעִיא: גְּדוּל יוֹם הַגְּשָׁמִים, שְׁאֵפִילוּ יְשׁוּעָה פָּרָה וְרַבָּה בּו, שְׁנֵאמַר: "תִּפְתַּח אָרֶץ וַיִּפְרוּ יִשְׁעֵי". אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחֻם בַּר חַנִּילָאִי: אֵין הַגְּשָׁמִים יוֹרְדִים אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִמְחְלוּ עֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל, שְׁנֵאמַר: "רְצִיחַת ה' אֶרְצְךָ; שְׁבַת שְׁבִית יַעֲקֹב. נְשֵׂאתָ עֵין עַמְּךָ; כַּסִּיתָ כָּל חַטָּאתָם. סְלַח".

אָמַר לִיָּה זְעִירִי מִדִּיְהוּבָת לְרַבִּינָא: אֲתוֹן מִהֲכָא מִתְנִיתוּ לָהּ. אֲנִן מִהֲכָא מִתְנִינִן לָהּ: "וְאֲתָה, תִּשְׁמַע הַשָּׁמַיִם, וְסָלַחְתָּ לְחַטָּאתָם" וְגו'.

אָמַר רַבִּי תַנְחֻם בְּרֵיהּ דְּרַבִּי חֲמִיא אִישׁ כְּפַר עַבּוֹ: אֵין הַגְּשָׁמִים נִעְצָרִין אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִתְחַיְבוּ שׁוֹנְאֵיהֶן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּלִיָּה, שְׁנֵאמַר: "צִיָּה גַם חֵם יִגְזְלוּ מִיְמֵי שְׁלֹג; שְׂאוֹל חֲטָאוֹ". אָמַר לִיָּה זְעִירִי מִדִּיְהוּבָת לְרַבִּינָא: אֲתוֹן מִהֲכָא מִתְנִיתוּ לָהּ. אֲנִן מִהֲכָא מִתְנִינִן לָהּ: "וְעַצַּר אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם... וְאַבְדְּתֶם מִהֲרָה".

אָמַר רַב חֲסִדָּא: אֵין הַגְּשָׁמִים נִעְצָרִין אֶלָּא בְּשִׁבִיל בִּיטוּל תְּרוּמוֹת וּמַעֲשֵׂרוֹת, שְׁנֵאמַר: "צִיָּה גַם חֵם יִגְזְלוּ מִיְמֵי שְׁלֹג". מֵאֵי מִשְׁמַע? תַּנָּא דְּבִי רַבִּי יִשְׁמַעֵאל: בְּשִׁבִיל דְּבָרִים שְׂצוּיִתֵי אֲתַכֶּם בִּימּוֹת הַחֲמָה וְלֹא עֲשִׂיתֶם, יִגְזְלוּ מִכֶּם מִיְמֵי שְׁלֹג בִּימּוֹת הַגְּשָׁמִים.

Rabbi Yehoshua replied: **Had they been ugly, they would have been even more learned.** Alternatively, the Torah is likened to water, wine, and milk because **just as these three liquids are spoiled only by diversion of attention, so too, are Torah matters forgotten only through diversion of attention.** If water, wine and milk are guarded, they will not spoil or have dirty objects fall into them.

§ The Gemara returns to the issue of rain. **Rabbi Ḥama, son of Rabbi Ḥanina, said: The day of the rains is as great<sup>n</sup> as the day on which the heavens and earth were created, as it is stated: "Drop down, heavens, from above, let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open that they may bring forth salvation, and let it cause righteousness to spring up together; I, the Lord, have created it" (Isaiah 45:8).** The Gemara explains that the verse **does not say: I have created them, in the plural, but: I have created it.** In other words, the verse is referring to rain, rather than to the heavens and the earth, which indicates that rainfall is as important as the creation of the world.

Rabbi Oshaya likewise said: **The day of rain is great, as rain even facilitates salvation, which is fruitful and multiplies on that day.** It is a time of God's favor, when salvation is brought forth into the world, as it is stated: **"Let the earth open that they may bring forth salvation" (Isaiah 45:8).** Rabbi Tanḥum bar Ḥanilai said: **Rain falls only if the Jewish people's transgressions have been forgiven,<sup>n</sup> as it is stated: "Lord, You have been favorable to Your land; You have turned the captivity of Jacob; You have forgiven the iniquity of Your people; You have pardoned all their sin. Selah" (Psalms 85:2-3).** This chapter proceeds to discuss rainfall: **"And righteousness has looked down from Heaven" (Psalms 85:12),** in the form of rain.

The Sage Ze'iri from the town of Dihavat said to Ravina: **You learned this idea from here, whereas we learned it from here, a different verse: "When heaven is closed up, and there is no rain, when they sin against You, if they pray toward this place and confess Your name and turn from their sin, when You afflict them, then You, hear in heaven and forgive the sin of Your servants and of Your people Israel, when You teach them the good way in which they should walk, and send rain upon Your land, which You have given to Your people as an inheritance" (1 Kings 8:35-36).**

Rabbi Tanḥum, son of Rabbi Ḥiyya of village of Akko, said: **The rains are withheld only if the enemies of the Jewish people, a euphemism for the Jewish people, have been sentenced to destruction<sup>n</sup> for their sins, as it is stated: "Drought and heat will steal the snow waters; to the grave those who have sinned" (Job 24:19).** According to this interpretation, snow water will be stolen by drought, i.e., there will be none available, when people have sinned to the point that they deserve the grave. **Ze'iri from Dihavat said to Ravina: You learned this idea from here; we learned it from here: "And the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you, and He will close up the heavens, and there will be no rain, and the earth will not give its fruit, and you will perish quickly" (Deuteronomy 11:17).**

Rav Ḥisda said: **The rains are withheld only due to the sin of the nullification of teruma and tithes, as it is stated: "Drought and heat will steal the snow waters" (Job 24:19).** The Gemara asks: **From where in the verse may this idea be inferred from the verse? The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: Due to matters that I have commanded you to do in the summer, e.g., take teruma and tithes from the summer produce, and that you did not do, the snow waters will be stolen from you in the rainy season.**

NOTES

The day of the rains is great – גְּדוּל יוֹם הַגְּשָׁמִים – Rav Ya'akov Emden points out that these statements about the greatness of rain refer to rainfall after an extended period of drought.

Only if their transgressions have been forgiven – אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִמְחְלוּ עֲוֹנוֹתֵיהֶן: Some commentaries suggest that this is the reason why one does not begin to pray for rain until *Sukkot*, as it is celebrated a few days after Yom Kippur, the day of atonement and forgiveness for all of the sins of Israel (*Sefat Emet*).

Only if the enemies of the Jewish people have been sentenced to destruction – אֶלָּא אִם כֵּן נִתְחַיְבוּ שׁוֹנְאֵיהֶן שֶׁל יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּלִיָּה: When the Jewish people are condemned to be destroyed, God doesn't carry out the sentence immediately, but first withholds rain in the hope that the people will understand that if they do not repent and forsake their evil ways, they will be destroyed (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

But a backbiting tongue an angry countenance – ופנים נעצרים: According to Rashi and *Tosafot*, Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi interprets the angry countenance mentioned in this verse as referring to God. The lack of rain is not a chance occurrence but a sign that God is angry with His people on account of their slanderous language. Others suggest that, even according to the explanation of Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi, the angry countenance can be understood as a reference to the faces of those who are distressed by the slander spoken against them. God halts the rain when He sees that relations between people are strained on account of the slander that is being circulated (Maharsha).

The enemy of the Holy One, Blessed be He, has sunk – נעשה: Rashi explains that when the Jewish people are lazy and fail to study the Torah properly, it is as if God Himself becomes weak, and He is unable to make the rain fall. Others state that when the Jews do not pay sufficient attention to Torah study, God becomes poor in the sense that He is unable to find among the people any merits that would justify bestowing His bounty upon them (Rabbi Elyakim).

אמר רבי שמעון בן פזי: אין הגשמים נעצרים אלא בשביל מספרי לשון הרע. שנאמר: "רוח צפון תחולל גשם, ופנים נועמים לשון סתר".

אמר רב סלא אמר רב המנונא: אין הגשמים נעצרים אלא בשביל עוי פנים, שנאמר: "וימנעו רבבים, ומלקוש לוא היה, ומצח אשה זונה היה לך" וגו'. ואמר רב סלא אמר רב המנונא: כל אדם שישי לו עזות פנים סוף נכשל בעבירה, שנאמר: "ומצח אשה זונה היה לך". רב נחמן אמר: בידוע שנכשל בעבירה שנאמר: "היה לך" ולא נאמר "יהיה לך".

אמר רבה בר רב הונא: כל אדם שישי לו עזות פנים מותר לקרותו רשע, שנאמר: "העו איש רשע בפניו". רב נחמן בר יצחק אמר: מותר לשנאותו שנאמר: "ועו פניו ישנא". אל תקרי ישנא אלא ישנא.

אמר רב קטינא: אין הגשמים נעצרים אלא בשביל ביטול תורה, שנאמר: "בעצלתם ימך המקרה" בשביל עצלות שהיה בישראל שלא עסקו בתורה נעשה שונאו של הקדוש ברוך הוא מך. ואין "מך" אלא עני, שנאמר: "ואם מך הוא מערבך". ואין "מקרה" אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא, שנאמר: "המקרה במים עליותיו".

רב יוסף אמר מהכא: "ועתה לא ראו אור, בהיר הוא בשחקים, ורוח עברה ותטהרם". ואין "אור" אלא תורה, שנאמר: "כי נר מצוה ותורה אור". "בהיר הוא בשחקים". תנא דבי רבי ישמעאל: אפילו בשעה שרקיע נעשה בהרין בהרין להוריד טל ומטר, רוח עברה ותטהרם.

אמר רבי אמי: אין הגשמים נעצרים אלא בעון גזל, שנאמר: "על כפיים כסה אור". בעון כפיים כסה אור. ואין "כפיים" אלא חמס, שנאמר: "ומן החמס אשר בכפיהם". ואין "אור" אלא מטר, שנאמר: "יפיץ ענן אורו".

Rabbi Shimon ben Pazi said: The rains are withheld only due to the sin of those who speak slander, as it is stated: "The north wind brings forth rain, but a backbiting tongue, an angry countenance"<sup>n</sup> (Proverbs 25:23). This verse indicates that if the countenance of the heavens is angry, with neither clouds nor rain, it is due to slanderous speech.

Rav Salla said that Rav Hamnuna said: The rains are withheld only due to impudent people, as it is stated: "Therefore the showers have been withheld, and there has been no last rain, yet you had a harlot's forehead, you refused to be ashamed" (Jeremiah 3:3). And Rav Salla said that Rav Hamnuna said, with regard to the same verse: Any man who is insolent will ultimately stumble over the transgression of prostitution, as it is stated: "Yet you had a prostitute's forehead." Rav Nahman said: The verse does not mean that he will commit a sexual transgression in the future; rather, it is known that he has already stumbled over this transgression, as it is stated: "You had," in the past tense, and it is not stated: You will.

Rabba bar Rav Huna said: With regard to any man who is insolent, it is permitted to call him wicked to his face, as it is stated: "A wicked man makes his face insolent" (Proverbs 21:29). Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: It is permitted to hate him, as it is stated: "And the insolence of his face is changed" (Ecclesiastes 8:1). Do not read it as: "Is changed [yeshunne]"; rather, read it as: Is hated [yissane], as the two words are spelled the same way in Hebrew, albeit with different vocalization and pronunciation.

Rav Ketina said: The rains are withheld only due to the sin of dereliction in the study of Torah, as it is stated: "By slothfulness the rafters [hamekare] will sink in [yimakh], and through idleness of the hands the house leaks" (Ecclesiastes 10:18). Due to slothfulness that was present amongst the Jewish people, that they did not occupy themselves with Torah, the enemy of the Holy One, Blessed be He, a euphemism for God Himself, has sunk.<sup>n</sup> And sunk [makh] means nothing other than poor, as it is stated: "But if he is too poor [makh] for your valuation" (Leviticus 27:8). And "rafters [mekare]" means nothing other than a reference to the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is stated: "Who lays the beams [hamekare] of Your upper chambers in the water" (Psalms 104:3).

Rav Yosef said that this idea is derived from here: "And now that men do not see the light, it is bright in the skies, but the wind passes and cleanses them" (Job 37:21). And "light" means nothing other than Torah, as it is stated: "For a mitzva is a lamp and Torah is a light" (Proverbs 6:23). According to this interpretation, the verse means that when "men do not see the light," i.e., when they are not occupied with Torah, "it is bright in the skies," as there are no rainclouds. With regard to this verse, the school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: Even when the sky is comprised of bright clouds that serve to bring down dew and rain, no rain will fall, as "the wind passes and cleanses them."

Rabbi Ami said: The rains are withheld only due to the sin of robbery, as it is stated: "He covers His hands with the light, and He has commanded it due to imploring" (Job 36:32). This means that due to the sin of stealing hands, God has covered the light and no rain will fall. And Rabbi Ami adds that the term "hand" means nothing other than a sin of violence, as it is stated: "And from the violence that is in their hands" (Jonah 3:8). And "light" means nothing other than rain, as it is stated: "He spreads abroad the cloud of His light" (Job 37:11).

What is the remedy, he should increase prayers – מאי תקנתיה ירבה בתפלה: That is, the robber must pray for forgiveness after returning the object that he took by violence. However, if he does not first restore what he took, all of his repentance and prayers are of no avail. As the Gemara states elsewhere (16a), one who confesses to a robbery while the article he has taken is still in his possession is likened to someone undergoing ritual immersion while holding an unclean reptile in his hand. This person remains ritually impure (*Gevurat Ari*).

מאי תקנתיה? ירבה בתפלה, שנאמר: "ויצו עליה במפגיע." ואין "פגיעה" אלא "תפלה", שנאמר: "ואתה, אל תתפלל בעד העם הזה, וגו', ואל תפגע בי".

What is the remedy of one who has caused the rain to be withheld? He should increase his prayers,<sup>n</sup> as it is stated in the same chapter: "And He has commanded it due to imploring" (Job 37:12), and "imploring" means nothing other than prayer, as it is stated: "Therefore, do not pray you for this nation, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither implore Me" (Jeremiah 7:16).

ואמר רבי אמי: מאי דכתיב: "אם קהה הברזל, והוא לא פנים קלקל?" אם ראית רקיע שקיחה כברזל מלהוריד טל ומטר, בשביל מעשה הדור שהן מקולקליו, שנאמר: "והוא לא פנים קלקל".

And Rabbi Ami said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "If the iron is blunt, and does not whet the edge" (Ecclesiastes 10:10)? If you see a sky that is blunt as iron, in that it does not bring down dew and rain, this is due to the deeds of the generation, which are corrupt, as it is stated: "And does not whet [kilkal] the edge [panim]." *Panim*, which also means face, is often used in reference to the leaders of a generation, while the term *kilkal* is similar to the word for corrupt, *mekulkalin*.

מה תקנתן? יתגברו ברחמים, שנאמר: "וחילים יגבר, ויתרון הכשיר חכמה." כל שכן, אם הוכשרו מעשיהן מעיקרא.

What is their remedy? They must increase their prayers for mercy, as it is stated in the same verse: "Then must he increase his strength, but wisdom is profitable to direct" (Ecclesiastes 10:10). This verse hints that rain will fall if one increases his strength, i.e., his prayers for mercy. The last part of the verse means that, all the more so, if their deeds had been righteous and direct from the beginning, the rains would not have been withheld.

ריש לקיש אמר: אם ראית תלמיד

The Gemara cites a different interpretation of the same verse. Reish Lakish said: If you see a student

## Perek I

## Daf 8 Amud a

שלמודו קשה עליו כברזל, בשביל משנתו שאינה סדורה עליו, שנאמר: "והוא לא פנים קלקל".

whose studies are hard as iron for him, i.e., difficult to understand, this is due to his lack of familiarity with the Mishna, which is not organized for him. If the Mishna is unclear, any further study of Gemara is rendered all the more difficult, as it is stated: "And does not whet [kilkal] the edge [panim]" (Ecclesiastes 10:10). As *panim* can also mean surface, this indicates that the surface, i.e., the basic statements of the Mishna, is corrupted. As stated previously, *kilkal* can also mean corrupted.

מאי תקנתיה? ירבה בישיבה, שנאמר: "וחילים יגבר, ויתרון הכשיר חכמה." כל שכן, אם משנתו סדורה לו מעיקרא.

What is his remedy? He must increase the time he sits<sup>n</sup> and studies, as it is stated: "Then must he increase his strength" (Ecclesiastes 10:10). The last part of the verse: "But wisdom is profitable to direct," means that all the more so, if his study of the Mishna is organized for him from the beginning, he will avoid this trouble.

כי הא דריש לקיש הוה מסדר מתניתיה ארבעין זמנין כנגד ארבעים יום שניתנה תורה, ועייל לקמיה דרבי יוחנן. רב אדא בר אהבה מסדר מתניתיה עשרין וארבע זמנין כנגד תורה נביאים וכתובים, ועייל לקמיה דרביא.

That is like this practice of Reish Lakish, who would review his studies forty times, corresponding to the forty days in which the Torah was given to Moses at Sinai, and only afterward would he go before Rabbi Yoḥanan to study from his teacher. Similarly, Rav Adda bar Ahava would review his learning twenty-four times, corresponding to the twenty-four books in the Torah, Prophets, and Writings, i.e., the Bible, and only afterward go before Rava to study with him.

רבא אמר: אם ראית תלמיד שלמודו קשה עליו כברזל, בשביל רבו, שאינו מסביר לו פנים, שנאמר: "והוא לא פנים קלקל".

With regard to the aforementioned verse from Ecclesiastes, Rava said: If you see a student whose studies are as difficult for him as iron, this is due to his teacher, who does not show him a friendly countenance, but is overly strict with him. This practice inhibits the student's learning, as it is stated: "And it has not whetted the surface [panim]" (Ecclesiastes 10:10). As explained previously, *panim* can also mean countenance.

ירבה בישיבה – He must increase the time he sits – Rashi explains that a student who finds his studies hard should spend a great deal of time with other students and review with them the material that he has not fully mastered on his own. Others suggest that the student who is struggling with his studies should sit by himself and review the difficult material in an organized manner until he is confident that he knows it thoroughly (Meiri).