

שנאמר: "עשה גדלות ואין חקר".
וכתיב: "הנתן מטר על פני ארץ".
וכתיב: "הלווא ידעת? אם לא שמעת?
אלהי עולם, ה'... אין חקר לתבונתו".
וכתיב: "מכין הרים בכחו" וגו'.

As it is stated, with regard to the creation of the world: "Who does great things past finding out" (Job 9:10), and as an example of this it is written: "Who gives rain upon the earth" (Job 5:9-10). And it is written below: "Have you not known? Have you not heard that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, does not faint and is not weary; His discernment is past finding out" (Isaiah 40:28). The repetition of "past finding out" indicates that rainfall is as wondrous as the creation of the world. The Gemara adds: And it is written in a psalm that deals with rainfall: "Who by Your strength sets fast the mountains; Who is girded about with might" (Psalms 65:7).

כמאן אולא הא דכתיב: "משקה הרים
מעליותיו"? ואמר רבי יוחנן: מעליותיו
של הקדוש ברוך הוא. כמאן? כרבי
יהושע.

The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion is that verse which is written: "Who waters the mountains from His upper chambers" (Psalms 104:13)? And Rabbi Yohanan said: This phrase indicates that the water comes from the upper chambers of the Holy One, Blessed be He. In accordance with whose opinion is this statement? It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua, who maintains that rain falls from above the sky.

ורבי אליעזר? בין דסלקי להתם
"משקה מעליותיו" קרי להו. דאי לא
תימא הכי, "אבק ועפר מן השמים"
היכי משכחת לה? אלא, בין דמדלי
להתם, "מן השמים" קרי ליה. הכי נמי
דסלקי להתם, "מעליותיו" קרי ליה.

The Gemara asks: And Rabbi Eliezer, how does he explain this verse? The Gemara answers: According to Rabbi Eliezer, since the clouds ascend there, to the heavens, the verse "who waters the mountains from His upper chambers" calls and describes rainfall as descending from the heavens. As, if you do not say so, with regard to the verse: "Powder and dust from the heavens" (Deuteronomy 28:24), where do you find this phenomenon? Is there powder and dust in Heaven? Rather, you must say that since dust rises up there, they are called dust: "From the heavens." So too, as the clouds ascend there, they are called and described: "Who waters the mountains from His upper chambers."

כמאן אולא הא דאמר רבי חנינא: "בנים
כנד מי הים; נתן באוצרות תהומות". מי
גרם לאוצרות שיתמלאו בר? תהומות.
כרבי אליעזר. ורבי יהושע? ההוא

The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion is that which Rabbi Hanina said, concerning the verse: "He gathers the waters of the sea together as a heap; he lays up the deep in storerooms" (Psalms 33:7): What caused the storerooms to be filled with produce? It was the deep, which is the source of the water that nourishes the produce. The Gemara answers: This explanation is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Eliezer. And Rabbi Yehoshua, how does he explain this verse? Rabbi Yehoshua would say: That

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verse deals with the creation of the world, when all the water was contained in the deep.

תנו רבנן: ארץ ישראל נבראת תחילה
וכל העולם כולו נברא לבסוף, שנאמר:
"עד לא עשה ארץ וחוצות". ארץ
ישראל משקה אותה הקדוש ברוך הוא
בעצמו, וכל העולם כולו על ידי שליח,
שנאמר: "הנתן מטר על פני ארץ, ושלח
מים על פני חוצות".

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: Eretz Yisrael was created first and the rest of the entire world was created afterward, as it is stated: "While as yet He had not made the land, nor the fields" (Proverbs 8:26). Here, and in the following statements, the term "land" is understood as a reference to the Land of Israel, while "the fields" means all the fields in other lands. Furthermore, Eretz Yisrael is watered by the Holy One, Blessed be He, Himself, and the rest of the entire world is watered through an intermediary, as it is stated: "Who gives rain upon the land, and sends water upon the fields" (Job 5:10).

ארץ ישראל שותה מי גשמים, וכל
העולם כולו מתמצית, שנאמר: "הנתן
מטר על פני ארץ" וגו'. ארץ ישראל
שותה תחילה, וכל העולם כולו לבסוף.
שנאמר: "הנתן מטר על פני ארץ" וגו'.
משל לאדם שמגביל את הגבינה. נוטל
את האוכל ומניח את הפסולת.

Additionally, Eretz Yisrael drinks rainwater and the rest of the entire world drinks from the remaining residue of rainwater left in the clouds, as it is stated that God is He "who gives rain upon the land" and only afterward takes what is left "and sends water upon the fields." Eretz Yisrael drinks first, and the rest of the entire world afterward, as it is stated: "Who gives rain upon the land and sends water upon the fields." There is a parable that illustrates this: A person who kneads his cheese after it has curdled takes the food and leaves the refuse.^N

NOTES

ארץ ישראל וכל – Eretz Yisrael and the entire world – העולם: Some commentaries write that the comparisons and distinctions drawn here between Eretz Yisrael and the rest of the world are expressions of the idea that the entire world was created for the sake of Eretz Yisrael. Consequently, the most significant events take place in Eretz Yisrael, while the rest of the world plays a secondary role, as the other lands benefit from the divine bounty that is intended primarily for Eretz Yisrael (Rashba).

NOTES

Rendering fit [*hakhsharat*] – חֲשֵׁרֶת: According to this interpretation, the initial letter *het* is considered the equivalent of the letter *heh*, and therefore this term is similar to *hakhshara*, preparation. This change in letters is accepted without argument, as they are similar both in form and in pronunciation, and in talmudic times there were already a great many people who found it difficult to distinguish between the two. The Sages explicitly say that it is permitted to expound verses by substituting one of these letters for the other (see Jerusalem Talmud, *Shabbat* 7:2).

With regard to the handiwork of the Holy One, Blessed be He – בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו שֶׁל הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: In other words, the psalm is referring to the original creation of rain, through which the earth is watered (Rabbi Elyakim).

PERSONALITIES

Rav Dimi – רַב דִּימִי: An *amora* of the third and fourth generations, Rav Dimi lived at various times both in Babylonia and in Eretz Yisrael. He was apparently a Babylonian who moved to Eretz Yisrael in his youth. He returned to Babylonia several times and transmitted the statements of Sages living in Eretz Yisrael. In the Jerusalem Talmud Rav Dimi is called Rav Avdimi Naḥota, or Rav Avduma Naḥota. He was one of the Sages who were given the title *Rabbanan Naḥotei*, the Sages who descend, as they carried the rulings of Eretz Yisrael, primarily the statements of Rabbi Yoḥanan, Reish Lakish, and Rabbi Elazar, to Babylonia. The list of Sages who participated in this task includes Rabba bar bar Ḥana, Ulla, and later, Ravin, Rav Shmuel bar Yehuda, and others. The Talmud reports dozens of halakhic decisions that Rav Dimi transmitted from one Torah center to the other, concerning which he engaged in debates with the greatest Sages of his generation. Toward the end of his life he apparently returned to Babylonia, where he died.

BACKGROUND

Clouds are bright – נְהוּרֵי עָנָנִי: The fact that a cloud is dark is a sign that it is vertically thick and rain-bearing. The darker the cloud, the more drops of water and ice particles it contains. Generally speaking, light-colored clouds either do not produce rain or produce very little rain.

Egypt and Cush – מִצְרַיִם וְכוּשׁ: This map displays the relative sizes of Egypt and Cush, which covered a large proportion of the continent of Africa, and enables a comparison between the two countries and the rest of the world.



Egypt and Cush, as sketched by Ptolemy of Alexandria

אָמַר מֶר: מִמִּתְקִין הֵן בְּעֵבָיִם. מְנַלִּיהָ? דְּאָמַר רַב יוֹסֵף בְּרַי יוֹסֵף אָמַר רַב יוֹחָנָן: כְּתִיב: "חֲשֵׁרֶת מַיִם, עֵבָי שְׁחָקִים", וְכִתִּיב: "חֲשֵׁרֶת מַיִם, עֵבָי שְׁחָקִים".

שְׁקוּל כִּף וּשְׂדֵי אֲרִישׁ, וְקָרִי בֵּיה חֲשֵׁרֶת.

וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, בְּהֵנִי קְרָאִי מַאי דְרִישׁ בְּהוּ? סִבֵּר לָהּ כִּי הָא: דְּכִי אֶתְאֵר רַב דִּימִי, אָמַר: אָמְרִי בְּמַעֲרָבָא: נְהוּרֵי עָנָנִי, זְעִירִין מוֹדֵי; חֲשׁוּךְ עָנָנִי, סְגִיִין מוֹדֵי.

כִּמְאֵן אֹלָא הָא דְתַנָּיָא: מִיָּם הַעֲלִיּוּמִים בְּמֵאמְרָא הֵם תְּלוּיִם, וּפִירוּתֵיהֶן מִי גְשָׁמִים, שְׁנֵאמַר: "מִפְרֵי מַעֲשֵׂיךָ תִּשָּׁבַע הָאָרֶץ". כִּמְאֵן? כִּרְבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. וְרַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר? הֲהוּא בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יָדָיו שֶׁל הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא דְכָתִיב.

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֵוִי: כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלֵל מִתְמַצִּית גֵּן עֵדֶן הוּא שׂוֹתָה, שְׁנֵאמַר: "וְנֹהַר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֶן" וְגו'. תַּנָּא: מִתְמַצִּית בֵּית כּוֹר שׂוֹתָה תִּרְקַב.

תַּנּוּ רַבָּנָן: אֶרֶץ מִצְרַיִם הִיא אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת פָּרְסָה עַל אַרְבַּע מֵאוֹת פָּרְסָה. וְהוּא אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים בְּכוּשׁ. וְכוּשׁ אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים בְּעוֹלָם. וְעוֹלָם אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים בְּגֵן. וְגֵן אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים לְעֵדֶן. וְעֵדֶן אֶחָד מִשְׁשִׁים לְגֵיהֶנֶם. נִמְצָא כָּל הָעוֹלָם כּוֹלֵל כְּכִיסוּי קְדָרָה לְגֵיהֶנֶם. וְיֵשׁ אֹמְרִים: גֵּיהֶנֶם אֵין לָהּ שִׁיעוּר. וְיֵשׁ אֹמְרִים: עֵדֶן אֵין לָהּ שִׁיעוּר.

The Master said above: The ocean waters are sweetened in the clouds. The Gemara asks: From where does Rabbi Eliezer derive this? The Gemara answers that Rav Yitzḥak bar Yosef said that Rabbi Yoḥanan said that it is written: “Darkness [*heshkhat*] of waters, thick clouds of the skies” (Psalms 18:12). And it is written, in a similar verse: “Gathering of [*hashrat*] waters, thick clouds of the skies” (11 Samuel 22:12).

The Gemara explains the significance of this minor variation. These two phrases vary in only one word, which themselves differ by only one letter, a *kaf* for a *reish*. If you join the two versions together, and take the letter *kaf* from the first version and place it with the second version of the word, which has a *reish*, you can read into the verse a new word meaning rendering fit [*hakhsharat*].^N Accordingly, the verse can be interpreted as: The rendering fit of water is performed in the clouds of the sky.

The Gemara asks: And Rabbi Yehoshua, with regard to these verses, what does he learn from them? The Gemara answers that Rabbi Yehoshua holds in accordance with the opinion of this Sage, Rav Dimi. As when Rav Dimi^P came from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia, he said that they say in the West, Eretz Yisrael: When clouds are bright,⁸ they have little water; when clouds are dark, they have much water. Accordingly, Rabbi Yehoshua explains that when there is “a darkness of waters” in the clouds, there is also “a gathering of waters,” as rain will fall from them.

The Gemara asks: In accordance with whose opinion is that which is taught in a *baraita*: The upper waters do not stand in any defined place; rather, they are suspended by the word of God, and their fruit is rainwater, as it is stated: “Who waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is full of the fruit of Your works” (Psalms 104:13). In accordance with whose opinion is this statement? It is in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehoshua. And Rabbi Eliezer, how does he explain this verse? Rabbi Eliezer could say: That verse from Psalms is written with regard to the handiwork of the Holy One, Blessed be He,^N not the upper waters.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: The entire world drinks from the runoff of the Garden of Eden, as it is stated: “And a river went out of Eden to water the garden” (Genesis 2:10). It was taught in a *baraita*: From the runoff of a *beit kor*, a field in which a *kor* of seed can be planted, which is approximately seventy-five thousand square cubits, a field in which a half-*se’a* [*tarkav*],^L of seed can be sown, i.e. one-sixtieth the size of a *beit kor*, can be watered. If the runoff from a *beit kor* is sufficient for a field one-sixtieth its size, it can be inferred that the rest of the world is one-sixtieth the size of the Garden of Eden.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: The area of the land of Egypt is four hundred parasangs [*parsa*] by four hundred parasangs. And this is one sixtieth the size of Cush,^B and Cush itself is one sixtieth the size of the rest of the world. And the world is one sixtieth the size of the Garden of Eden, and the Garden of Eden is one sixtieth of Eden itself, and Eden is one sixtieth of Gehenna. You find that the entire world is like a pot cover for Gehenna, as Eden, which is far larger than the rest of the world, is only one sixtieth the size of Gehenna. And some say: Gehenna has no measure. And some say that Eden has no measure.

LANGUAGE

A half-*se’a* [*tarkav*] – תִּרְקַב: Of unclear origin. Some authorities maintain that it is from the Greek *τρίκαβος*, *trikabos*, meaning three *kav*, which are units of volume. However, this etymology is difficult to accept, as generally the Greek letter *tau* becomes the Hebrew letter *tet*. Others claim that it is an

abbreviation of *tereī ukav*, i.e., two *kav* and another *kav*. Yet others maintain that it was originally a unit of two *kav*, *tereī kav*, but the size of the units changed over time. In any event, the Gemara invariably uses the term *tarkav* for a measure of three *kav*, the equivalent of half a *se’a*.

Babylonia is wealthy [atira] – עֵתִידָה בְּבָל – According to a variant reading, Rav is stating that in the future [atida] Babylonia will be desolate, as its sources of water will dry up and any rainfall will be insufficient to meet its needs (see *Arukh*).

And in the Diaspora – וּבִגְלוּתָהּ: When this term is used in the Bible with reference to a specific place, it means the Babylonian exile. See Ezekiel 1:1, and many other instances in that book. Not only was Babylonia the place where the majority of Jews were exiled at the time, but it also became a national spiritual center in its own right. In discussion concerning relations between Eretz Yisrael and the Diaspora, the latter terms refers mainly to the large and important Jewish community in Babylonia.

Sometimes the word has an even more restricted meaning, as it can refer to the city of Pumbedita and its surroundings, the places where Jews apparently first settled upon their exile to Babylonia.

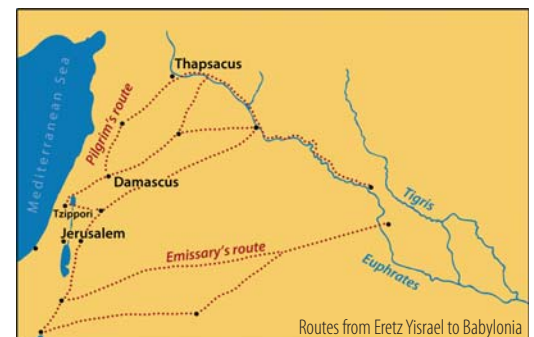
Until sixty days into the season – עַד שְׁשִׁים בְּתַקּוּפָה: The early authorities dispute the meaning of Ḥananya's statement that in the Diaspora one does not insert the request for rain until sixty days after the autumnal equinox. Was he referring only to Babylonia, the principal Diaspora community in the talmudic period, where the land is watered by rivers and rain is not needed until later in the winter, or was he referring to all Jewish communities outside Eretz Yisrael? Many commentators argue that there is no reason why those living in areas where rain is required immediately after *Sukkot* or shortly thereafter should wait until sixty days after the autumnal equinox before inserting the prayer for rain into the *Amida* (see Rosh and Ritva).

In some places it was customary to insert the request for rain immediately after *Sukkot*, in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yoḥanan (4b), or on the seventh of Marḥeshvan, as stated by Rabban Gamliel in the mishna. However, in most Diaspora communities the request for rain was not recited until sixty days after the equinox. Some commentaries explain that the Sages instituted two dates on which to begin reciting the request for rain, one for Eretz Yisrael, and one for Babylonia. All other places must follow either the custom of Eretz Yisrael or Babylonia, as there is no third date (Ritva). The *ge'onim* ruled that all Diaspora communities wait until sixty days after the equinox before inserting the prayer for rain into the *Amida*, as in all matters the Diaspora communities follow the practices of Babylonia. Moreover, it is preferable to have a uniform date throughout the Diaspora to begin requesting rain. In any event, the prayer cannot be inserted immediately after *Sukkot*, as in many Diaspora communities there is still grain in the fields that must be harvested before the rains.

BACKGROUND

Babylonia is wealthy – עֵתִידָה בְּבָל: The soil of Babylonia is highly fertile, as it is formed from the sediment of rivers. Although only a small amount of rain fell in Babylonia, the rivers and their channels provided plenty of water for the land to produce crops, despite the lack of rain.

So that the last pilgrim can reach...the Euphrates River – כְּדֵי לְהַרְגִיל אֶת־הַנְּסִיךְ: There were several routes from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia. The main path was probably via Damascus, through Thapsacus, all the way along the Euphrates to Babylonia. Although this route, which followed inhabited areas, was very long, more than 500 km to Thapsacus, it was the best journey for large convoys, which occasionally included women and children. At a speed of roughly 30 to 40 km a day, the trip would take about fifteen days. A more direct path via the desert, at a quicker pace, offered the traveler a journey of roughly seven days.



Routes from Eretz Yisrael to Babylonia

אָמַר רַבִּי אוֹשְׁיָא: מַאי דְכָתִיב: "שְׁכַנְתָּ עַל מַיִם רַבִּים, רַבַּת אוֹצְרוֹתָ? מִי גָרַם לְבָבֶל שִׁיהוּ אוֹצְרוֹתֶיהָ מְלֵאוֹת בֶּרֶךְ? הֲיֵי אוֹמֵר מִפְּנֵי שְׁשׂוּכְנֶתָ עַל מַיִם רַבִּים. אָמַר רַב: עֵתִידָה בְּבָל דְּחֻצְאָא בְּלֵא מִיטְרָא. אָמַר אַבְי: נְקִיטִינן טוֹבְעִי וְלֵא יוֹבְשִׁי.

מתני' בְּשִׁלְשָׁה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן שׁוֹאֲלִין אֶת הַגְּשָׁמִים. רַבִּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר: בְּשִׁבְעָה בּו, חֲמִשָּׁה עָשָׂר יוֹם אַחַר הַחַג, כְּדֵי שְׁיָגִיעַ אַחֲרוֹן שְׁבִישָׁאֵל לְנַהַר פְּרָת.

גמ' אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: הֲלֹכָה כְּרַבִּן גַּמְלִיאֵל. תַּנְיָא: חֲנֻנְיָה אוֹמֵר: וּבִגְלוּתָהּ עַד שְׁשִׁים בְּתַקּוּפָה. אָמַר רַב הוֹנָא כְּרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: הֲלֹכָה כְּחֲנֻנְיָה.

אֵינִי וְהָאֵל בְּעוֹ מִינְיָה מִשְׁמוּאֵל: מֵאִימַת מְדַבְּרִינִי: וְתַן טַל וּמִטְרָא? אָמַר לָהּ: מְכִי מְעִילִי צִיבִי לְבִי טְבוּת רִישָׁבָא. דִּילְמָא אִידִי וְאִידִי חַד שִׁיעוּרָא הוּא.

Rabbi Oshaya said: What is the meaning of that which is written about Babylonia: "You who dwells on many waters, abundant in storehouses" (Jeremiah 51:13)? What caused Babylonia to have storehouses full of grain? You must say that it is due to the fact that it resides on many waters, the Tigris and the Euphrates Rivers, which render its land easy to irrigate. Similarly, Rav said: Babylonia is wealthy^{NB} since it can grow crops for harvest even without rain. Abaye said: We hold that it is better for a land to be swampy like Babylonia, and not dry, as crops in Babylonia grow all year.

MISHNA On the third of the month of Marḥeshvan one starts to request rain by inserting the phrase: And give dew and rain, in the blessing of the years, the ninth blessing of the *Amida*. Rabban Gamliel says: One starts to request rain on the seventh of Marḥeshvan, which is fifteen days after the festival of *Sukkot*. Rabban Gamliel explains that one waits these extra four days so that the last pilgrim of the Jewish people, who traveled to Jerusalem on foot for the Festival, can reach the Euphrates River^B without being inconvenienced by rain on his journey home.

GEMARA Rabbi Elazar said: The *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Rabban Gamliel, that one does not begin to request rain until the seventh of Marḥeshvan. It is taught in a *baraita* that Ḥananya^P says: And in the Diaspora^N one does not begin to request rain until sixty days into the season,^{NH} i.e., sixty days after the autumnal equinox. Rav Huna bar Ḥiyya said that Shmuel said: The *halakha* is in accordance with the opinion of Ḥananya.

The Gemara asks: Is that so? But they raised a dilemma before Shmuel: From when does one mention: And give dew and rain? He said to them: From when they bring wood into the house of Tavut the bird hunter [*rishba*].^L This is apparently a different date than that mentioned by Ḥananya. The Gemara suggests: Perhaps this and that are one measure of time, i.e., Shmuel merely provided a sign of sixty days after the autumnal equinox.

PERSONALITIES

Ḥananya – חֲנַנְיָה: Ḥananya, a nephew of Rabbi Yehoshua, was from the fourth generation of *tanna'im*. His principal teacher was his uncle, Rabbi Yehoshua, but he also learned Torah from other important Sages of that generation. He apparently went to live in Babylonia before the bar Kokheva revolt. After the war and the ensuing persecutions he was among the remnants of the chief Sages of that generation. This led him to attempt to regulate the Hebrew calendar in Babylonia, as it was difficult to do so in Eretz Yisrael, due

to Hadrian's decrees. This effort, which was tantamount to challenging the supreme authority of Eretz Yisrael, led to a sharp response from its Sages, who ultimately were able to persuade Ḥananya to change his mind. However, the results of his action were not entirely undone. The Sages viewed this action in such grave terms that they spoke of a curse upon Ḥananya's descendants due to this sin. Ḥananya lived a long life and died in Babylonia. The great *amora* Shmuel may have been one of his descendants.

HALAKHA

And in the Diaspora until sixty days into the season – וּבִגְלוּתָהּ עַד שְׁשִׁים בְּתַקּוּפָה: Those who live outside Eretz Yisrael begin to insert the request for rain in the ninth blessing of the *Amida* prayer on the night of the sixtieth day after the autumnal equinox. For this purpose, the equinox is determined by the calculations of the *amora* Shmuel, following the tradition of the *ge'onim*. In an ordinary year the request for rain is first inserted on December fourth, while in a Gregorian leap year the date is December fifth.

The later authorities disagree on the *halakha* of a resident

of Eretz Yisrael who travels abroad during this period of the year. Some maintain that one inserts the request for rain starting from the seventh of Marḥeshvan, in accordance with the custom in Eretz Yisrael (Rav Ya'akov Castro). Others claim that one follows the practice observed in the Diaspora and does not request rain until sixty days after the equinox (*Mishna Berura*). Some argue that the *halakha* depends on when one intends to return to Eretz Yisrael (*Peri Hadash*). In practice, various communities follow different customs in this regard (*Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 117:1).

LANGUAGE

The bird hunter [*rishba*] – רִישָׁבָא: According to Rashi, *rishba* is identical to the Aramaic *nishba*, which means a net. *Rishba* or *nishba* refers to one who spreads the nets, i.e., one who hunts birds or other animals. However, some

explain that *rishba* is an acronym for *reish beit abba*, the head of a paternal household. It is an honorific for the man who is the most prominent member of his family (*ge'onim*; see *Arukh*).

Those above...those below – עלאי...תתאי: Rabbeinu Hananel, following the *ge'onim*, has an alternate version of the text that states the reverse of the standard text of the Gemara in this instance: Rav said that the sixtieth day is treated as part of the period before the sixtieth day, and Shmuel said that the sixtieth day is part of the period after the sixtieth day. According to this version of the dispute, Shmuel is considered the one who lives above and therefore requires rain, as he lived in Neharde'a, which was situated upstream of the Euphrates River. Rav is viewed as living below and has less need of rain, because after emigrating to Babylonia he established his academy in Sura, a place downstream of the Euphrates from Neharde'a.

So as not to cause an increase in prices – שלא להפקיע את – השערים: According to the plain meaning of this mishna, a court may not decree a fast for the first time on a Thursday, as it is already a busy market day when people buy supplies for Shabbat. If the first of a series of fasts were on a Thursday, the demand for food would further increase, as people would go to the market to purchase food for breaking the fast. There is therefore a concern that merchants might take advantage of the sudden rise in demand to raise their prices. Other commentaries add that the villagers who come into town on that day to supply the townspeople with their produce might not hear about the fast in time to bring more than their usual amount of produce. Consequently, food prices will rise on account of the increase in demand (Rabbeinu Gershom). Others suggest that the suppliers might not come into town at all on that day on account of the fast, which will cause a sudden rise in the price of food just before Shabbat (*Sefer HaEshkol*).

HALAKHA

If the seventeenth of Marḥeshvan arrived – הגיע שבועה – עשר במרחשון: If the seventeenth of Marḥeshvan arrives and rain has not fallen, Torah scholars begin a series of three fasts, on a Monday, the following Thursday, and the next Monday. These fasts are treated as individual fasts (*Shulḥan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 575:1*).

If the New Moon of Kislev arrived – הגיע ראש חדש כסליו – If the New Moon of Kislev arrives and it has still not rained, the court decrees a series of three fasts upon the entire community, on a Monday, the following Thursday, and the next Monday. The prayer services of regular communal fast days are recited during these fasts (*Shulḥan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 575:2*).

One may not decree a fast on the community starting from a Thursday – אין גזרין תענית על הצבור בתחילה בחמישי: In order not to cause a rise in food prices, the court may not decree the first of a series of fasts on a Thursday. Some authorities rule that this *halakha* applies even in places where there is no concern that food prices will rise as a result of the declaration of a fast. Others say that if there is no concern for a sudden rise in food prices, the first of a series of fasts may indeed be decreed on a Thursday (*Magen Avraham*), and this is the accepted practice (*Shulḥan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 572:6*).

And they interrupt the sequence for New Moons – ומפסיקין בראשי חודשים: Those who have undertaken a series of fasts, including Torah scholars who are fasting as individuals on account of a drought, must interrupt the series if one of the fast days falls on Hanukkah, Purim, or a New Moon (*Shulḥan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 57:7*).

איבעינא להו: יום ששים כלפני ששים או בלאחר ששים? תא שמע: רב אמר: יום ששים בלאחר ששים. ושמואל אמר: יום ששים כלפני ששים.

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: וסימנך: עלאי בעו מיא, תתאי לא בעו מיא. אמר רב פפא: הלכתא: יום ששים בלאחר ששים.

מתני' הגיע שבועה עשר במרחשון ולא ירדו גשמים, התחילו היחידים מתענין שלש תעניות. אוכלין ושותין משחשיכה, ומוותרין במלאכה, וברחיצה, ובסיכה, ובנעילת הסנדל, ובתשמיש המטה. הגיע ראש חדש כסליו, ולא ירדו גשמים, בית דין גזרין שלש תעניות על הצבור. אוכלין ושותין משחשיכה, ומוותרין במלאכה, וברחיצה, ובסיכה, ובנעילת הסנדל, ובתשמיש המטה.

גמ' מאן יחידים? אמר רב הונא: רבנן. ואמר רב הונא: יחידים מתענין שלש תעניות, שני וחמישי ושני.

מאי קמשמע לן? תנינא: אין גזרין תענית על הצבור בתחילה בחמישי, שלא להפקיע את השערים. אלא שלש תעניות הראשונות שני וחמישי ושני.

מהו דתימא: הני מילי צבור, אבל יחיד לא. קמשמע לן. תנינא נמי הכי: כשהתחילו היחידים להתענות, מתענין שני וחמישי ושני, ומפסיקין בראשי חודשים.

A dilemma was raised before the Sages: Is the sixtieth day itself treated as part of the period before the sixtieth day or is it included in the period after the sixtieth day? The Gemara answers. Come and hear that there is a dispute in this regard. Rav said: The sixtieth day is part of the period after the sixtieth day, and Shmuel said: The sixtieth day is part of the period before the sixtieth.

Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said: And your mnemonic to remember the divergent opinions is: Those above require water; those belowⁿ do not require water. Since water flows downward, those who live in low places receive their water from above and are generally in less need of additional water. Accordingly, Shmuel, who lived in the lowlands of Babylonia, ruled that one begins to request for rain later, whereas Rav, who studied in Eretz Yisrael, which is higher in elevation and has a greater need for rain, stated an earlier date. Rav Pappa said: The *halakha* is that the sixtieth day is part of the period after the sixtieth day, as stated by Rav, and therefore one begins to mention the request for rain on the sixtieth day after the autumnal equinox.

MISHNA If the seventeenth of Marḥeshvan arrived^h and rain has not fallen, individuals, but not the entire community, begin to fast three fasts for rain. How are these fasts conducted? As the fast begins in the morning, one may eat and drink after dark, and one is permitted during the days of the fasts themselves to engage in the performance of work, in bathing, in smearing oil on one's body, in wearing shoes, and in conjugal relations. If the New Moon of Kislev arrived^h and rain has still not fallen, the court decrees three fasts on the entire community. Similar to the individual fasts, everyone may eat and drink after dark, and they are permitted to engage in the performance of work, in bathing, in smearing one's body with oil, in wearing shoes, and in conjugal relations.

GEMARA The Gemara asks: Who are these individuals mentioned in the mishna? Rav Huna said: This is referring to the Sages, who are held to a higher standard and are expected to undertake fasts even when ordinary people do not. And Rav Huna further said: The individuals who fast the three fasts do so on a Monday, and on the next Thursday, and again on the following Monday.

The Gemara asks: What is Rav Huna teaching us? We already learned this (15b):^b The court may not decree a fast on the community starting from a Thursday,^h so as not to cause an increase in prices.ⁿ Rather, the first three fasts are established on Monday, and Thursday, and Monday. What does Rav Huna's statement add to this ruling?

The Gemara answers: Rav Huna's comment is necessary, lest you say that this applies only to a community, but that in the case of an individual, no, the series of three fasts does not have to start on a Monday. This opinion is also taught^b in a *baraita* with regard to those mentioned in the mishna: When the individuals begin to fast, they fast on a Monday, a Thursday, and a Monday. And if one of the fast days occurs on a day with special observances, they interrupt the sequence for New Moons,^h

BACKGROUND

We already learned this – תנינא: This phrase introduces an objection that a prior statement or question is superfluous, as it is already covered in a mishna or a *baraita*.

This is also taught – תנינא נמי הכי: This phrase introduces a *baraita* that supports the previous statement of the Gemara or an individual *amora*.

ובימים טובים הכתובין במגילת תענית.

תנו רבנן: אל יאמר אדם: תלמיד אני; איני ראוי להיות יחיד. אלא כל תלמידי חכמים יחידים. איזהו יחיד ואיזהו תלמיד? יחיד כל שראוי למנותו פרנס על הצבור. תלמיד כל ששואליו אותו דבר הלכה בתלמודו ואומר, ואפילו במסכת דכלה.

תנו רבנן: לא כל הרוצה לעשות עצמו יחיד עושה; תלמיד, עושה. דברי רבי מאיר. רבי יוסי אומר: עושה, וזכור לטוב. לפי שאין שבת הוא לו, אלא צער הוא לו.

תניא אידך: לא כל הרוצה לעשות עצמו יחיד עושה; תלמיד, עושה. דברי רבי שמעון בן אלעזר. רבן שמעון בן גמליאל אומר: במה דברים אמורים? בדבר של שבת, אבל בדבר של צער עושה, וזכור לטוב, שאין שבת הוא לו, אלא צער הוא לו.

and for commemorative holidays that are written in *Megillat Ta'anit*, which contains a list of dates on which the Sages prohibited fasting.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: A person should not say: I am only a student, and consequently I am unworthy to be considered an individual who fasts, as stated in the mishna. Rather, with regard to the fasts of individuals, all Torah scholars are individuals. The *baraita* elaborates: Who is an individualⁿ and who is a student?^h An individual is anyone who is learned in Torah and worthy to be appointed leader and teacher over the community. A student is any Torah scholar who is asked a matter of *halakha* in his studies and he says the correct answer, and this is the case even if he is familiar only with the tractate of the *kalla* month,ⁿ i.e., the tractate the community studied that year.

The Sages taught in another *baraita*: Not everyone who wishes to make himself an individual and conduct himself accordingly may do so, and nor may everyone who wants to act like a student do so. This is the statement of Rabbi Meir. Rabbi Yosei says: One may do so, and he is even remembered for good,^b as the conduct of a Torah student is not a source of praise for him, but it is a source of pain for him. It is proper for one to take these obligations upon himself and he is not considered to be acting inappropriately.

It is taught in another *baraita*: Not everyone who wishes to make himself an individual may do so, and nor may everyone who wishes to act like a student do so. This is the statement of Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar.^p Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel^p says: In what case is this statement said? It is said with regard to a matter of praise, e.g., adorning oneself with the garments of a Torah scholar. However, with regard to a matter of pain, when Torah scholars act strictly, one may do so, and one who acts strictly is remembered for good, as it is not a source of praise for him, but it is a source of pain for him.

NOTES

Who is an individual – איזהו יחיד: It is stated in the Jerusalem Talmud that when the mishna speaks of individuals, it is referring to those Torah scholars who have already been appointed to positions of leadership in the community and found trustworthy. These people are worthy of fasting and reciting prayers on behalf of the entire community in times of trouble.

And even with the tractate of the *kalla* month – ואפילו במסכת דכלה: The early authorities dispute the meaning of this phrase. Some explain that the *baraita* is referring to the tractate studied at the assemblies held twice a year at the talmudic academies during the months of Adar and Elul (Rabbeinu Hananel; Ri, cited by *Tosafot* on *Shabbat* 114a). During each of these so-called *kalla* months, one specific tractate was studied, and public lessons were delivered on its topics, which rendered the material familiar even to ordinary people who could not devote their time to Torah study year-round. Accordingly, the *baraita* is stating that one is considered a student of Torah even if he can answer questions only on the tractate studied in a *kalla* month.

Others maintain that the *baraita* is referring to the minor tractate known as tractate *Kalla*, so named because it opens with a discussion of a certain regulation that applies to a bride, a *kalla* (Rashi and *Tosafot* on *Shabbat* 114a; Ritva; Rabbeinu Yehonatan). This tractate is not a part of the Talmud, but is a collection of *baraitot*. The material covered in the tractate is considered intellectually undemanding. Consequently, the *baraita* is saying that if someone can analyze those parts of the Talmud he has studied, even if he has learned only tractate *Kalla*, he is regarded as a student.

This interpretation is somewhat problematic, as the Gemara elsewhere (*Shabbat* 114a) states that a talmudic scholar is deemed worthy of public office only if he can answer halakhic questions on any part of the Talmud, even tractate *Kalla*, which indicates that this was a particularly difficult tractate. The early authorities explain that although this tractate was considered relatively easy, it was not studied regularly in the academies, and therefore one's mastery of it was considered a sign of great erudition.

HALAKHA

Who is a student – איזהו תלמיד: If one can successfully answer a single question about his studies, even concerning the *halakhot* of a Festival that are taught publicly, one is considered a student. This applies both to the status of an individual for the fasts mentioned in the mishna (*Magen Avraham*), and also with regard to the *halakha* of a man who betroths a woman on condition that he is a Torah student (*Shulhan Arukh, Even HaEzer* 37:27).

BACKGROUND

And he is remembered for good – וזכור לטוב: If one takes upon himself stringencies that are not required of everyone, this should not be seen as an act of vanity. On the contrary, one is regarded as acting beyond the letter of the law. Throughout the generations the Sages debated the level of stringency an ordinary person may take upon himself and the honors one is permitted to assume if these do not conform to one's general status, one's knowledge of Torah, and one's scrupulousness in the observance of mitzvot.

PERSONALITIES

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar – רבי שמעון בן אלעזר: Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar was one of the Sages of the Mishna during the last generation of *tanna'im*. We know almost nothing about his life or family. Furthermore, as he belonged to the generation in which the Mishna was edited, not many of his teachings appear in the Mishna itself, although they are found in *baraitot* and in the Gemara. Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar was a friend of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, and several disputes between them appear in the sources. He received most of his Torah knowledge from his teacher, Rabbi Meir, to whom he was devoted and in whose name he cites many rulings.

Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar lived in or near Tiberias, and although he apparently did not have an academy of his own, many statements are attributed to him, concerning both *halakha* and *aggada*.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel – רבן שמעון בן גמליאל: There were two Sages with this name. The first, who lived at the end of the Second Temple period, was executed by the Romans as a leader of the great Jewish revolt. The second was his grand-

son, son of Rabban Gamliel of Yavne. Here, and in general, the Sage cited in the Talmud is the second of the two, the father and teacher of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.

Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel the second was apparently appointed *Nasi* of the Sanhedrin after the bar Kokheva revolt, when the situation of the Jewish people in Eretz Yisrael was extremely dire and a great deal of political acumen was required to restore Jewish life in the country. Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel was one of the youngest of the great Sages of his generation and regarded himself as inferior in status to his contemporaries, the great disciples of Rabbi Akiva: Rabbi Yehuda, Rabbi Yosei, Rabbi Meir, and Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai. Nevertheless, he sought to strengthen the position of the *Nasi*. This led to a failed effort to remove him from the office; he ultimately retained his post and those who sought to depose him were severely reprimanded. Few *halakhot* are taught in his name, but the *amora'im* state that in almost every place where he presents a ruling, even against the opinion of an unattributed mishna, the *halakha* is in accordance with him. His most prominent disciple was his eminent son, Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.

Fasting for a trouble and it passed – מתענה על הצרה – ועברה: If an individual undertakes a fast due to a certain trouble and the trouble passes, or if one fasts for the recovery of an invalid and that person recovers or dies, one must complete the fast or fasts that he has committed to take upon himself. However, if one stipulates at the time of his undertaking the fast that he not have to fast once the cause is removed, he need not do so (see *Shulhan Arukh, Yoreh De'a*, chapter 220 and *Orah Hayyim* 569:1).

One who goes...to a place where they are fasting – ההולך למקום שמתענין: One who goes from a place where they are not fasting to a place where they are fasting must fast with the people in his destination, even if he already ate earlier in the day (*Eliyahu Rabba*). This is the *halakha* even if he intends to return to his original place of residence. However, since he did not take the fast upon himself, he is permitted to eat if he leaves the city borders. If one arrives before the day of the fast he is required to take the fast upon himself. Even if he neglects to do so explicitly, if he is present when that community takes the fast upon itself, he is obligated to complete the fast with them (*Taz, Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 574:2).

One who goes from a place where they are fasting – ההולך ממקום שמתענין: With regard to one who goes from a place where the community is fasting to a place where they are not fasting, if he intends to return, he must observe all the fasts of his place of residence. This applies even if he had not taken on this particular fast; if he had expressly taken on the fast the *halakha* is obvious, as he would in any case be obliged to fast for the fulfillment of his vow (*Taz*). However, if he was away from his city when the fast was decreed, he does not have to observe it (*Arukh HaShulhan*). If the fast was decreed not due to a current calamity, but as a memorial for earlier troubles, he is obligated to fast, even if he did not take it upon himself, as the Sages imposed upon him the stringencies of the place he left, provided that he intends to return there (*Eliyahu Rabba; Peri Megadim; Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 574:1).

Forgot and ate on a fast – שכח ואכל בתענית: One who accidentally eats on a fast day decreed upon the community must not display himself before those who are still fasting as one who has eaten. Even when one is not in the presence of people who are fasting one should not indulge in delicacies. Some claim that one must stop eating as soon as one remembers it is a fast day (*Magen Avraham; Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 574:3, and in the comment of Rema).

תנו רבנן: מי שהיה מתענה על הצרה ועברה, על החולה ונתרפא, הרי זה מתענה ומשלים. ההולך ממקום שאין מתענין למקום שמתענין הרי זה מתענה עמו. ממקום שמתענין למקום שאין מתענין הרי זה מתענה ומשלים.

שכח ואכל ושתה, אל יתראה בפני הצבור, ואל ינהיג עידונו בעצמו, שנאמר: "ויאמר יעקב לבניו: למה תתראו?" אמר להם יעקב לבניו: אל תראו עצמכם בשאתם שבעין, לא בפני עשו, ולא בפני ישמעאל, כדי שלא יתקנאו בכם.

"אל תרגו עליכם הדרך". אמר רבי אלעזר: אמר להם יוסף לאחיו: אל תתעסקו בדרך הלכה, שמא תרגו עליכם הדרך.

איני? והאמר רבי אלעאי בר ברכיה: שני תלמידי חכמים שמהלכים בדרך, ואין ביניהן דברי תורה, ראויין לישרף, שנאמר: "ויהי המה הלכים, הלוך ודבר, והנה רכב אש וסוסי אש ויפרדו בין שניהם". טעמא דאיכא דיבור, הא ליכא דיבור, ראויין לישרף!

לא קשיא. הא למיגרם; הא לעיוני.

The Sages taught in a *baraita*: With regard to one who was fasting for a certain trouble and the trouble passed,^h or if one was fasting for the recovery of a sick person and that person was healed, one may not cease his fast merely because its cause has been removed; rather, he completes his fast. The *baraita* continues: With regard to one who goes from a place where they are not fasting to a place where they are fasting,^{hN} he fasts with them. Conversely, with regard to one who goes from a place where they are fasting^h to a place where they are not fasting, he completes his fastⁿ as a resident of his hometown.

With regard to one who forgot the fast and ate^h and drank, he should not show himself before the community while satiated, and he should not indulge in luxuries. One should not think that because one has already eaten, his fast is completely nullified, and one may conduct himself as if it were not a fast day at all. Rather, one should minimize one's eating, as it is stated: "And Jacob said to his sons: Why do you show yourselves?" (Genesis 42:1). Jacob said to his sons: Do not show yourselves when you are satiated, not before the members of the house of Esau, nor before those of Ishmael, so that they not be jealous of you, as they suffer from hunger. This teaches that one should not show he is full when others are hungry.

§ The Gemara presents another piece of advice related to the story of Joseph and his brothers. Joseph said to them: "See that you not fall out by the way" (Genesis 45:24). Rabbi Elazar said that Joseph said to his brothers: Do not become occupied in a matter of *halakha*, lest you fall out on the way.ⁿ If you discuss a *halakha* while traveling you might get into an argument, and it is important for travelers to remain on good terms.

The Gemara asks: Is that so? But didn't Rabbi Elai bar Berekhya say: With regard to two Torah scholars who are walking along the road and there are no Torah matters discussed between them, they are worthy of being burned, as it is stated: "And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder" (II Kings 2:11). The reason that the chariot of fire did not harm Elisha is because there was a Torah matter between them, from which it may be inferred that had they not been discussing a Torah matter, they would have been worthy of being burned.

The Gemara answers: This is not difficult. This opinion of Rabbi Elai bar Berekhya is referring to studying by rote, by reviewing material one has already learned, which is permitted and even appropriate while traveling, whereas that opinion of Rabbi Elazar is referring to examining a *halakha* in depth, in which case it is likely that the scholars will come into conflict.

NOTES

One who goes from a place where they are not fasting to a place where they are fasting – ההולך ממקום שאין מתענין למקום שמתענין: The general principle is that one who intends to return home at the end of his journey is not required to adopt the stringencies of the places he is visiting (see *Pesahim* 50a). Here, however, the *baraita* obligates the traveler to observe the fast together with the community he is visiting. Some commentaries explain that one must observe this fast even if he plans to return home, as it is prohibited to separate oneself from the distress experienced by the community where he is residing, even if his stay is only temporary (Rabbeinu Yehonatan).

He completes his fast – מתענה ומשלים: A mishna (19a) states that if a fast is observed on account of drought and it begins to rain before noon, the fast need not be completed. Some commentaries distinguish between a fast observed on account of a drought and all other fasts. If it rains on the day of a fast for a drought, there is no longer any reason to continue the fast, as the community is no longer facing danger. However, if the purpose of the fast is to avert some other calamity, the fast must

be completed even if the danger has passed, as it may not have been entirely forestalled (Ra'avad, in his note on Rambam *Sefer Zemanim, Hilkhos Ta'anit* 1:15–16). Most other early authorities distinguish between an individual fast and a communal fast (Rambam; Ramban): The *baraita* is concerned with an individual fast, which must be completed even if the calamity has passed, whereas the mishna below speaks of a communal fast, which does not have to be completed if the danger has been averted, so as not to cause the community unnecessary hardship. A communal fast is always considered to have been decreed with the stipulation that it will not have to be completed if the calamity in question is removed.

Lest you fall out on the way – שמא תרגו עליכם הדרך: Rashi explains: In case you become lost on the way. Others similarly explain that the focus on *halakha* might cause them to become distracted and lose their bearings (Meiri). Yet others maintain that people observing them might suspect them of being quarrelsome (Rabbeinu Gershom).

Eating while traveling – אֲכִילָה בַדֶּרֶךְ – One who is traveling should not eat more than he would during a time of famine, in order to prevent intestinal disease (*Magen Avraham; Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 110:10*).

NOTES

Bowels – מַעֲיֵינָא: The commentary on the text follows Rabbeinu Hananel, who explains that this is a reference to diarrhea. If a traveler eats in his customary way, he is likely to suffer from stomach problems, which might prevent him from continuing his journey. Others suggest that if one who wishes to set out on a journey eats too much, his full stomach will weigh him down and make it difficult for him to travel as planned (Rabbeinu Gershom).

בַּמְתִּינְתָּא תְּנָא: אֵל תִּפְסְעוּ פְּסִיעָה גָּסָה, וְהִכְנִסוּ חֲמָה לְעִיר. אֵל תִּפְסְעוּ פְּסִיעָה גָּסָה, דְּאָמַר מָר: פְּסִיעָה גָּסָה נוֹטְלָת אַחַד מִחֲמֵשׁ מְאוֹת מִמְּאוֹר עֵינָיו שְׁל אָדָם.

It is taught in a *baraita* that Joseph said to his brothers: **Do not take long strides and bring the sun into the city**, i.e., you should enter the city to spend the night there before the sun has set. The Gemara elaborates: **Do not take long strides, as the Master said: A long stride takes away one five-hundredth of a person's eyesight**, and this loss is not worth the time saved.

וְהִכְנִסוּ חֲמָה לְעִיר, כְּדָרַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב. דְּאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: לְעוֹלָם יֵצֵא אָדָם בְּכִי טוֹב וְיִכְנַס בְּכִי טוֹב, שְׁנַאֲמַר: הַבִּקֵּר אֹר, וְהִאֲנִשִּׁים שְׁלַחוּ.

The Gemara further explains: **And bring the sun into the city**, this is in accordance with a statement that Rav Yehuda said that Rav said. **As Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: A person should always leave the place where he has spent the night with "it is good"** (Genesis 1:4), i.e., after sunrise, as the Torah uses the expression "it is good" with regard to the creation of light. This goodness is manifest in the sense of security one feels when it is light. **And likewise, when one comes into an unfamiliar city he should enter with "it is good," before sunset, as it is stated: "As soon as the morning was light, the men were sent away"** (Genesis 44:3).

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַבִּי חִיָּיא: הַמְהִלֵּךְ בַּדֶּרֶךְ אֵל יֹאכֵל יוֹתֵר מִשְׁנֵי רַעְבוֹן. מַאי טַעְמָא? הֲכֵא תַרְגִּימוּ: מְשֻׁם מַעֲיֵינָא. בְּמַעְרְבָא אָמְרִי: מְשֻׁם מְזוּנִי. מַאי בִּינְיָהוּ? אִיכָא בִּינְיָהוּ

Similarly, Rav Yehuda said that Rabbi Hiyya said: **One who is walking along the road should not eat more each day than he would normally eat each day in a year of famine.**^h The Gemara asks: **What is the reason for this? Here in Babylonia they interpreted that the reason is due to one's bowels.**ⁿ Since the exertion of traveling can damage full bowels, it is preferable to eat less than the normal amount. **In the West, Eretz Yisrael, they say that the reason is due to food**, i.e., if one eats too much, his food may not last the entire journey, and therefore he should ration his meals. The Gemara asks: **What is the practical difference between these two opinions? The Gemara answers: The practical difference between them**

Perek I
Daf 11 Amud a

דִּיתִיב בְּאַרְבָּא. אִי נָמִי: דְּקִאֲזִיל מֵאוֹנָא לְאוֹנָא.

is in a case where he is sitting in a boat. The traveler must be concerned about his food supply, but he need not worry that the jostling of the road might force him to exert himself, which has a tendency to cause digestive problems. **Alternatively, the practical difference is in a case where he is traveling from station [avna]^l to station.** Here the exertion of the road might cause digestive problems, but one need not be concerned about running out of food, as he can resupply along the way.

רַב פַּפָּא כָּל פְּרָסָה וּפְרָסָה אָכִיל חֲדָא רִיפְתָּא. קָסְבֵּר: מְשֻׁם מַעֲיֵינָא.

The Gemara relates that when Rav Pappa traveled, along **each and every parasangⁿ** he would eat one loaf of bread. Rav Pappa did so because he maintained that the prohibition was **due to the bowels**, and as he was healthy he was not concerned that travel by road would irritate his digestion.

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: כָּל הַמְרַעֵיב עֲצָמוּ בְּשָׁנֵי רַעְבוֹן נִיצֵל מִמִּיתָה מְשֻׁנָּה, שְׁנַאֲמַר "בְּרַעֵב פְּדִיךָ מִמּוֹת". מְרַעֵב מִיבְעֵי לֵיהּ! אֱלֵא, הֲכִי קָאֲמַר: בְּשִׁכְרָא שְׁמַרְעִיב עֲצָמוּ בְּשָׁנֵי רַעְבוֹן. נִיצֵל מִמִּיתָה מְשֻׁנָּה.

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: **Anyone who has food for himself but nevertheless starves himself in years of famine^h will be saved from an unusual death, as it is stated: "In famine, He will redeem you from death"** (Job 5:20).ⁿ This is derived from the precise wording of the verse. According to its straightforward meaning, instead of "in famine," it should have said: **From famine**, as one is delivered from famine. **Rather, this is what the verse is saying: As a reward for starving himself in years of famine, Job will be saved from an unusual death.**

HALAKHA

כָּל הַמְרַעֵיב – עֲצָמוּ בְּשָׁנֵי רַעְבוֹן: In times of famine, one should eat less and allow himself to go hungry, in accordance with the opinion of Rav Yehuda. Furthermore, it is prohibited to engage in marital relations during a famine, except on the night the wife ritually immerses herself. However, couples who are as yet without children may engage in relations even in years of famine. Many

authorities rule leniently in this regard, in accordance with the opinion that refraining from sexual relations during years of famine is an act of piety, not a requirement (see *Sha'arei Teshuva*). Others note that these regulations are not limited to times of famine, but they apply whenever the community is faced with an impending calamity (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 574:4*, and in the comment of Rema).

LANGUAGE

Station [avna] – אָוֹנָא: From the Syriac word for station or inn, although some associate it with the Greek εὐνή, *eunē*, meaning bed.

NOTES

Each and every parasang – כָּל פְּרָסָה וּפְרָסָה: Some commentators suggest that Rav Pappa maintains that the advice to a traveler to eat sparingly was to help him avoid digestive problems that might result from the consumption of a heavy meal. He therefore divided his rations into small quantities that he ate every parasang, roughly every 4 km. In this way he ate a large number of small meals, rather than a single heavy meal (*Sefat Emet*).

In famine, He will redeem you from death – בְּרַעֵב פְּדִיךָ: The fact that the verse does not state: He will redeem you from famine, but rather: He will redeem you from death, is an indication that you will be spared all types of unusual deaths (Maharsha).