

מסכת תענית · דף כ"ג

Elucidated Talmud · Statement and Proof · Navy & Gold Edition

THE SUGYA

In this daf, we learn about the beautiful ways Hashem shows His love for Klal Yisrael by sending rain in its proper season, specifically on nights when people are safely in their homes. The Gemara brings down the incredible hashgachah pratit seen in the days of Shimon ben Shetah and during the building of the Beis HaMikdash in Herod's time, showing how the Aibershter aligned the weather perfectly so as not to disrupt the people's holy work.

We then delve into the famous and awe-inspiring story of Honi HaMe'agel. When the world was in desperate need of rain, Honi drew a circle in the dust, swearing by Hashem's great Name that he would not step out until the rain fell. We see his deep, child-like relationship with the Ribono shel Olam as he coaxes the heavens to bring down exactly the right kind of rain — not too little, and not too destructive, but rains of blessing and benevolence.

All introductions, summaries, and contextual notes are the editor's commentary and are not part of the original text.

EXPLANATION

”בָּעֵתָם” — בְּלֵילֵי רַבִּיעִיּוֹת וּבְלֵילֵי שַׁבָּתוֹת.

The verse states that Hashem will give rain “**in their season**” — this means **on Wednesday eves** (Tuesday nights) and **on Shabbos eves** (Friday nights), when people are normally indoors.

PROOF

שָׁכַן מִצִּיּוֹנוֹ בַּיָּמִי שֶׁמָּעוֹז בֶּן שָׁטַח שֶׁיָּרְדוּ לָהֶם גְּשָׁמִים בְּלֵילֵי רַבִּיעִיּוֹת וּבְלֵילֵי שַׁבָּתוֹת,

For so we found in the days of Shimon ben Shetah, that rains fell for them only on Wednesday eves and on Shabbos eves,

PROOF

עַד שֶׁנֶּעְשׂוּ חֲטִימֵי כִבְלִיּוֹת, וְשִׁעוּרִים כְּגִרְעֵינֵי זֵיתִים, וְעֲדָשִׁים כְּדִינָרֵי זָהָב,

and the crops were so blessed until wheat became as large as kidneys, and barley as large as olive pits, and lentils as large as golden dinars,

PROOF

וְצָרְרוּ מֵהֶם דּוֹגְמָא לְדוֹרוֹת, לְהוֹדִיעַ כַּמָּה הֵחָטָא גּוֹרָם,

and they bound some of them as a sample for future generations, to make known how much damage sin causes by preventing such bounty,

PROOF

שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “עֲוֹנוֹתֵיכֶם הִטּוּ אֵלַי וְחַטָּאתֵיכֶם מָנְעוּ מִנִּי הַטּוֹב מִכֶּם.”

as it is stated in the Navi: “Your iniquities have turned away these blessings, and your sins have withheld the good from you.”

PROOF

וכן מצוינו בימי הורדוס, שהיו עוסקין בבנין בית המקדש, והיו יורדין גשמים בלילה,

And so we found in the days of Herod, when they were occupied with the building of the Beis HaMikdash, and rains would fall only at night so as not to disrupt the construction,

PROOF

למחר נשבה הרוח ונתפזרו העבים וזרחה החמה, ויצאו העם למלאכתן,

and the next day the wind blew and the clouds dispersed and the sun shone, and the people went out to their work,

PROOF

וידעו שכלאכת שמים בידיהם.

and they knew from this miracle that the work of Heaven was in their hands and desired by Hashem.

משנה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

מעשה ששלחו לחוני המעגל וכו'.

We learned in the Mishnah: An incident occurred where they sent to Choni HaMe'agel, etc.

גמרא GEMARA

BRAISA

תני רבנן: פעם אחת יצא רוב אדר ולא ירדו גשמים,

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: One time, most of the month of Adar had passed and rains had not yet fallen.

BRAISA

שלחו לחוני המעגל: התפלל וירדו גשמים!

They sent to Choni HaMe'agel: Pray, so that rains will fall!

BRAISA

התפלל, ולא ירדו גשמים.

He prayed, but rains did not fall.

BRAISA

עג עוגה ועמד בתוכה, כדרך שַעֲשֶׂה חֲבִיקוּק הַנָּבִיא, שֶׁנֶאֱמַר: "עַל מִשְׁמַרְתִּי אֶעֱמְדָה וְאֶתִּיצֶבֶה עַל מִצּוֹר וְגו'".

He drew a circle and stood inside it, in the manner that Chavakuk the Prophet did, as it is stated: "I will stand upon my watch, and set myself upon the tower, etc."

BRAISA

אָמַר לְפָנָיו: רַבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם! בְּנֶיךָ שָׂמוּ פָנֵיהֶם עָלַי, שְׂאֲנִי כְּכֵן בֵּית לְפָנֶיךָ.

He said before Him: Master of the Universe! Your children have turned their faces to me, because I am like a member of the household before You.

BRAISA

נִשְׁבַּע אָנִי בְּשֵׁמֶךָ הַגָּדוֹל שְׂאִינִי זֶה מִכָּאן עַד שֶׁתִּרְחַם עַל בְּנֶיךָ.

I swear by Your great Name that I am not moving from here until You have mercy on Your children.

BRAISA

הִתְחִילוּ גְשָׁמִים מִנְטָפִין.

Rains began to drizzle in tiny drops.

BRAISA

אָמְרוּ לוֹ תַלְמִידָיו: רַבִּי! רְאִינוֹהָ וְלֹא נָמוּת, כְּמַדּוּמִין אָנוּ שְׂאֵאִין גְּשָׁמִים יוֹרְדִין אֲלָא לְהַתִּיר שְׁבוּעָתְךָ.

His disciples said to him: Rebbe! We have seen you and we shall not die; we imagine that rains are not falling except to release you from your oath, but this is not enough to save us.

BRAISA

אָמַר: לֹא כֹה שְׂאֵלְתִּי, אֲלָא גְשָׁמֵי בּוֹרוֹת שִׁיחִין וּמַעְרוֹת.

Choni said to Hashem: Not for this did I ask, but rather for rains that will fill cisterns, ditches, and caves.

BRAISA

יָרְדוּ בְּזַעַת, עַד שֶׁכָּל טֶפֶחַ וְטֶפֶחַ כְּמֵלֵא פִי חֲבִית. וְשִׁיעֲרוּ חֲכָמִים שְׂאֵאִין טֶפֶחַ פְּחוּתָהּ מִלּוֹג.

The rains then fell with fury, until each and every drop was like the opening of a barrel. And the Sages estimated that no drop was less than a log in volume.

BRAISA

אָמְרוּ לוֹ תַלְמִידָיו: רַבִּי, רְאִינוֹהָ וְלֹא נָמוּת, כְּמַדּוּמִין אָנוּ שְׂאֵאִין גְּשָׁמִים יוֹרְדִין אֲלָא לְאַבֵּד הָעוֹלָם.

His disciples said to him: Rebbe, we have seen you and we shall not die; we imagine that rains are not falling except to destroy the world.

BRAISA

אָמַר לְפָנָיו: לֹא כֹה שְׂאֵלְתִּי, אֲלָא גְשָׁמֵי רְצוֹן בִּרְכָה וּנְדָבָה.

He said before Him: Not for this did I ask, but rather for rains of favor, blessing, and generosity.

BRAISA

יָרְדוּ כְּתִיקְנָן, עַד שֶׁעָלוּ כָּל הָעָם לְהַר הַבַּיִת, מִפְּנֵי הַגְּשָׁמִים.

The rains then fell normally, until all the people went up to the Temple Mount because of the rising rains.

BRAISA

אָמְרוּ לוֹ: רַבִּי, כְּשֶׁם שֶׁהִתְפַּלְלָתָ שְׂיֵרְדוּ, כֹּה הִתְפַּלְלִי וַיֵּלְכוּ לָהֶם.

They said to him: Rebbe, just as you prayed that they should fall, so pray that they should go away.

BRAISA

אָמַר לָהֶם: כֹּה מְקוּבָּלֵנִי שְׂאֵאִין מִתְפַּלְּלִין עַל רוֹב הַטּוֹבָה.

He said to them: Thus I have received as a tradition, that we do not pray over an abundance of good to stop.

BRAISA

אֵף עַל פִּי כֹן, הֵבִיאוּ לִי פֶר הַדָּאָה.

Even so, bring me a bull of thanksgiving.

BRAISA

הֵבִיאוּ לוֹ פֶר הַדָּאָה, סָמָךְ שְׁתֵּי יָדָיו עָלָיו, וְאָמַר לִפְנָיו:

They brought him a bull of thanksgiving, he leaned his two hands upon it, and said before Him:

BRAISA

רַבּוֹנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם! עַמָּךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל שֶׁהוֹצֵאתָ מִמִּצְרַיִם אֵינָן יְכוּלִין לֹא בְּרוֹב טוֹבָה וְלֹא בְּרוֹב פּוֹרְעָנוּת.

Master of the Universe! Your nation Israel whom You brought out of Egypt cannot endure either an abundance of good or an abundance of punishment.

BRAISA

כְּעֶסֶת עֲלֵיהֶם — אֵינָן יְכוּלִין לַעֲמוֹד, הִשְׁפַּעַתָּ עֲלֵיהֶם טוֹבָה — אֵינָן יְכוּלִין לַעֲמוֹד,

When You became angry with them, they could not stand; when You bestowed abundance of good upon them, they could not stand.

BRAISA

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ שִׁיִּפְסְקוּ הַגְּשָׁמִים, וַיְהִי רֵיוַח בָּעוֹלָם.

May it be Your will that the rains cease, and there be relief in the world.

BRAISA

מִיָּד נִשְׁבָּה הָרוּחַ, וְנִתְפָּזְרוּ הָעַנָּבִים, וַיִּזְרַח הַחֶמֶד, וַיֵּצְאוּ הָעָם לַשָּׂדֶה וַהֲבִיאוּ לָהֶם כְּמִהִין וּפְטָרִיּוֹת.

Immediately the wind blew, and the clouds dispersed, and the sun shone, and the people went out to the field and brought for themselves truffles and mushrooms.

BRAISA

שָׁלַח לוֹ שְׁמֵעוֹן בֶּן שָׁטַח: אִלְמָלָא חוֹנִי אַתָּה, גּוֹזְרִנִי עָלֶיךָ נִידוּי.

Shimon ben Shatach sent to him: Were you not Choni, I would decree banishment upon you.

BRAISA

שְׁאִילוּ שָׁנִים כְּשָׁנֵי אֵלִיהוּ שְׁמִפְתָּחוֹת גְּשָׁמִים בְּיָדוֹ שֶׁל אֵלִיהוּ, לֹא נִמְצָא שֵׁם שָׁמַיִם מִתְחַלֵּל עַל יָדָהּ,

For if these years were like the years of Eliyahu, when the keys of rain were in the hand of Eliyahu and he swore there would be no rain, would not the Name of Heaven have been desecrated by your hand if you swore not to move until it rained?

BRAISA

אָבָה מָה אֶעֱשֶׂה לָּךְ, שְׂאֵתָה מִתְחַטֵּא לְפָנַי הַמָּקוֹם וְעוֹשֶׂה לָּךְ רְצוֹנָהּ,

But what can I do to you, since you act like a favorite child before the Omnipresent and He does your will,

BRAISA

כְּבֶן שְׁמִתְחַטֵּא עַל אָבִיו וְעוֹשֶׂה לוֹ רְצוֹנוֹ,

like a son who acts like a favorite child with his father and he does his will,

BRAISA

וְאוֹמֵר לוֹ: אָבָא, הוֹלִיכֵנִי לְרַחֲצָנִי בְּחַמִּין. שְׁטַפְנִי בְּצוֹנִין. תֵּן לִי אֲגוּזִים, שְׁקָדִים, אֶפְרֹסִקִים וְרִמּוֹנִים — וְנוֹתֵן לוֹ.

and says to him: Father, take me to wash me in hot water, rinse me in cold water, give me nuts, almonds, peaches, and pomegranates — and he gives them to him.

BRAISA

וְעָלֶיךָ הַפֶּתוּב אוֹמֵר: "יִשְׂמַח אָבִיךָ וְאִמָּךְ וְתִגַּל יוֹלְדֶתְךָ."

And of you the verse says: "Your father and your mother shall rejoice, and she who bore you shall be glad."

BRAISA

תֵּנוּ רַבָּנֵינוּ: מָה שָׁלְחוּ בְּנֵי לְשִׁפְתַּת הַגִּזִּית לְחוֹנֵי הַמַּעֲגָל — "וְתִגְזֹר אִמָּר וְיָקָם לָךְ וְעַל דְּרָכֶיךָ נִגַּה אוֹר."

The Rabbis taught: What did the members of the Chamber of Hewn Stone send to Choni HaMe'agel? They sent the verse: "You shall decree a matter and it shall be established for you, and light shall shine upon your ways."

EXPLANATION

"וְתִגְזֹר אִמָּר" — אַתָּה גּוֹזֵרֶת מִלְּמַטָּה, וְהַקְדוּשׁ בָּרוּךְ הוּא מְקַיֵּים מֵאֲמָרָה מִלְּמַעְלָה.

They expounded: "You shall decree a matter" — you decreed below, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, fulfills your word from above.

EXPLANATION

“וְעַל דְּרָכֶיךָ נֹגַהּ אֹר” — דֹּר שֶׁהָיָה אֶפֶל הָאָרֶץ בְּתַפְלָתָהּ.

“And light shall shine upon your ways” — a generation that was in darkness, you illuminated with your prayer.

EXPLANATION

“כִּי הִשְׁפִּילוּ וַתֹּאמֶר גְּוָה” — דֹּר שֶׁהָיָה שֶׁפֶל הִגְבַּהֲתוּ בְּתַפְלָתָהּ.

“When they were cast down, you said: There is lifting up” — a generation that was cast down, you elevated with your prayer.

EXPLANATION

“וְיֹשֶׁה עֵינַיִם יוֹשָׁע” — דֹּר שֶׁשָּׂח בְּעוֹנוֹ הוֹשַׁעְתּוּ בְּתַפְלָתָהּ.

“And He saves the humble person” — a generation that was brought low by its sin, you saved with your prayer.

EXPLANATION

“יִמְלֹט אִי נָקִי” — דֹּר שֶׁלֹּא הָיָה נָקִי מִלִּטְתּוֹ בְּתַפְלָתָהּ.

“He will deliver the one who is not innocent” — a generation that was not innocent, you delivered with your prayer.

EXPLANATION

“וְנִמְלֹט בְּכָר בְּפִידָה” — מִלִּטְתּוֹ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיךָ הַבְּרוּרִין.

“And he will be delivered through the cleanness of your hands” — you delivered them through the clean work of your hands.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: כָּל יָמָיו שָׁל אוֹתוֹ צָדִיק, הָיָה מַצְטַעֵר עַל מִקְרָא זֶה: “שִׁיר הַמַּעֲלוֹת בְּשׁוּב ה' אֶת שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן הָיִינוּ כְּחֹלְמִים”,

Rabbi Yochanan said: All the days of the life of that righteous man, Choni, he was distressed over this verse: “A Song of Ascents: When Hashem returns the returnees of Zion, we were like dreamers.”

QUESTION

אָמַר: מִי אֵיכָּא דְנִיִּים שְׂבָעִין שָׁנִין בְּחֹלְמָא?

He said: Is there anyone who can sleep seventy years in a dream? How could the seventy years of the Babylonian exile be compared to a dream?

STATEMENT

יוֹמָא חַד הָוָה אָזַל בְּאוֹרְחָא, חֲזַיִיה לְהָהוּא גִבְרָא דְהָוָה נָטַע חֲרוּבָא,

One day he was walking on the road, and he saw a certain man who was planting a carob tree.

QUESTION

אָמַר לֵיהּ: הָאִי, עַד כַּמָּה שָׁנִין טָעִין?

Choni said to him: This tree, until how many years does it bear fruit?

ANSWER

אמר ליה: עד שבעין שנים.

The man said to him: Until seventy years.

QUESTION

אמר ליה...: פשיטא לך דחייית שבעין שנים?

Choni said to him: Is it obvious to you that you will live seventy years to benefit from it?

ANSWER

אמר ליה: אנא חרובא בעלמא אשכחיה. כי היכי דשת לו לי אבהתי — שת לי נמי לבראי.

The man said to him: I found a carob-filled world. Just as my ancestors planted for me, I also plant for my children.

STATEMENT

יתיב, קא פריה ריפתא, אתאי ליה שינתא, נים.

Choni sat down, wrapped bread to eat, sleep came upon him, and he slept.

STATEMENT

אהדרא ליה משוניתא, איכסי מעינא, ונים שבעין שנים.

A rocky formation surrounded him, he was hidden from sight, and he slept for seventy years.

STATEMENT

כי קם, חזייה לההוא גברא דהוא קא מלקט מינניהו,

When he woke up, he saw a certain man who was gathering carobs from it.

QUESTION

אמר ליה: אתה הוא דשתלתיה?

Choni said to him: Are you the one who planted it?

ANSWER

אמר ליה: בר בריה אנא.

The man said to him: I am his grandson.

INFERENCE

אמר ליה: שמע מינה דננימי שבעין שנים.

Choni said to himself: Learn from this that I have slept for seventy years.

STATEMENT

חזא לחמר[ת] יה דאתיילידא ליה רמכי רמכי.

He saw his she-donkey, that herds of offspring had been born to her over the years.

QUESTION

אָזל לְבֵיתָהּ אָמַר לָהּ: בְּרִיָּה דְחוֹנִי הַמַּעֲגָל מִי קַיִּים?

He went to his house and said to them: Is the son of Choni HaMe'agel still alive?

ANSWER

אָמְרוּ לָהּ: ... בְּרִיָּה לֵיתָא, בַּר בְּרִיָּה אֵיתָא.

They said to him: His son is no longer alive, but his grandson is alive.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לָהּ: אֲנָא חוֹנִי הַמַּעֲגָל. לֹא הִימְנוּהוּ.

He said to them: I am Choni HaMe'agel! But they did not believe him.

STATEMENT

אָזל לְבֵית הַמְדְּרָשׁ, שְׁמַעֲיָנָהּ לְרַבָּנָן דְּקָאמְרִי: נִהִירָן שְׁמַעְתָּתִין כְּבִשְׁנֵי חוֹנִי הַמַּעֲגָל,

He went to the Beis HaMedrash, and heard the Rabbis saying: Our halachic traditions are as clear to us as in the years of Choni HaMe'agel,

STATEMENT

דְּכִי הָיִי עֵייל לְבֵית מְדְרָשָׁא — כָּל קוּשְׁיָא דִּיהוּ לָהּ לְרַבָּנָן הָיָה מְפָרֵק לָהּ.

for when he would enter the Beis HaMedrash, any difficulty that the Rabbis had, he would resolve for them.

STATEMENT

אָמַר לָהּ: אֲנָא נִיחָא, וְלֹא הִימְנוּהוּ, וְלֹא עָבְדִי לֵיהּ יְקָרָא כְּדִמְבַּעֵי לֵיהּ.

He said to them: I am he! But they did not believe him, and they did not show him the honor that was due to him.

STATEMENT

חָלַשׁ דַּעֲתֵיהּ, בָּעָא רַחֲמִי, וּמִית.

He became depressed, prayed for mercy that he should die, and he died.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבָּא: הֵינֵנוּ דְּאָמְרִי אֵינְשֵׁי: אוּ חֲבֵרוּתָא אוּ מִיתוּתָא.

Rava said: This is what people say: Either companionship or death.

STATEMENT

אָבָא חִלְקִיָּה בַר בְּרִיָּה דְחוֹנִי הַמַּעֲגָל הָוָה,

The Gemara relates: Abba Chilkiyah was the grandson of Choni HaMe'agel,

STATEMENT

וְכִי מַצְטְרִיחַ עֲלָמָא לְמִיטְרָא הָוָה מְשֻׁדְרֵי רַבָּנָן לְגַבִּיָּה וּבָעֵי רַחֲמִי, וְאֶתִי מִיטְרָא.

and when the world needed rain, the Rabbis would send to him and he would pray for mercy, and rain would come.

STATEMENT

זימנא חדא איצטריה עלמא למיטרא, שדור רבנן זוגא דרבנן לגביה למכעי רחמי דגיתי מיטרא.

One time the world needed rain, and the Rabbis sent a pair of Rabbis to him to ask him to pray for mercy so that rain would come.

STATEMENT

אזול לביתיה ולא אשפחוהו, אזול בדכרא ואשפחוהו דהוה קא רפיק,

They went to his house and did not find him; they went to the field and found him where he was hoeing the ground.

STATEMENT

יהבו ליה שלמא ולא אסבר להו אפיה.

They greeted him, but he did not show them a welcoming face and did not even return their greeting.

STATEMENT

בפגיא, כי הוה מנגט ציבי, דרא ציבי ומרא בחד כתפא, וגלימא בחד כתפא.

In the evening, when he was gathering wood, he carried the wood and the hoe on one shoulder, and his cloak on the other shoulder.

STATEMENT

כולה אורחא לא סים מסאני, כי מטי למיא סים מסאניה.

The entire way he did not wear shoes, but when he reached water he put on his shoes.

STATEMENT

כי מטא להיזמי והיגי דלינהו למניה.

When he reached thorns and shrubs, he lifted his garments.

STATEMENT

כי מטא למתא, נפקה דביתהו לאפיה כי מיקשטא.

When he reached the town, his wife came out to meet him while she was adorned in fine clothing.

STATEMENT

כי מטא לביתיה, עלת דביתהו פרישא, והדר עיל איהו, והדר עילי רבנן.

When he reached his house, his wife entered first, and then he entered, and then the Rabbis entered.

STATEMENT

תיב וכריה ריפתא ולא אמר להו לרבנן תו פרוכו.

He sat and wrapped bread to eat, and did not say to the Rabbis: 'Come and eat with us.'

STATEMENT

פֿלג רִיפֿתָא לְיָנוּקִי, לְקַשִּׁישָׁא — חֲדָא, וּלְזוּטָרָא — תְּרִי.

He divided the bread among the children: to the older one, one portion, and to the younger one, two.

STATEMENT

אַמַּר לָהּ לְדַבֵּיתָהּ: יָדַעְנָא דְרַבָּנֵן מְשׁוּם מִיטָרָא קָא אָתוּ,

He said to his wife: I know that the Rabbis have come on account of rain.

STATEMENT

נִיֶּסֶק לְאַיְגָרָא וְנִיבְעֵי רַחֲמִי, אֲפֻשֶּׁר דְּמַרְצֵי הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וַיֵּיתִי מִיטָרָא וְלֹא נַחֲזִיק טִיבוּתָא לְנַפְשִׁין.

Let us go up to the roof and pray for mercy; perhaps the Holy One, Blessed be He, will be appeased and rain will come, and we will not take credit for ourselves.

STATEMENT

סְקוּ לְאַיְגָרָא, קָם אִיהוּ בְּחֻדָּא זְוִיתָא, וְאִיהִי בְּחֻדָּא זְוִיתָא,

They went up to the roof; he stood in one corner, and she stood in another corner.

STATEMENT

קְדוּם סְלוּק עֲנָנֵי מַהֲרָה זְוִיתָא דְּדַבֵּיתָהּ.

The clouds rose first from that corner of his wife.

QUESTION

כִּי נָחִית אַמַּר לָהּ: אַמַּאי אָתוּ רַבָּנֵן?

When he came down, he said to them: Why did the Rabbis come?

ANSWER

אַמְרוּ לֵיהּ: שְׁדַּרוּ לָן רַבָּנֵן לְגַבֵּי דְמַר לְמִיבְעֵי רַחֲמִי אֲמִיטָרָא.

They said to him: The Rabbis sent us to Master to pray for mercy for rain.

STATEMENT

אַמַּר לָהּ: בְּרוּךְ הַמָּקוֹם שֶׁלֹּא הִצְרִיחַ אֶתְכֶם לְאַבָּא חִלְקִיָּהּ.

He said to them: Blessed is the Omnipresent Who did not make you dependent on Abba Chilkiyah, since it has already rained.

STATEMENT

אַמְרוּ לֵיהּ: יָדַעְנֵן דְּמִיטָרָא מַחֲמַת מָר הוּא דְאַתָּא,

They said to him: We know that the rain came because of Master,

QUESTION

אָלֹא לִימָא לָן מָר הָנִי מִלֵּי דְתַמְיָהָא לָן:

but let Master tell us about these matters that puzzle us:

QUESTION

מאי טעמא כי יהיבנא למר ש'למא לא אסבר לן מר אפיה?

What is the reason that when we greeted Master, Master did not show us a welcoming face?

ANSWER

אמר להו: שקיר יום הווי, ואמינא: לא איפגור.

He said to them: I was a day laborer, and I said to myself: I must not idle from my employer's work.

QUESTION

ומאי טעמא דרא מר ציבי אחד כתפיה וג'לימא אחד כתפיה?

And what is the reason that Master carried the wood on one shoulder and the cloak on the other shoulder instead of putting the cloak under the wood?

ANSWER

אמר להו: טלית שאולה היתה. להכי שאלי, ולחכי לא שאלי.

He said to them: It was a borrowed cloak. For this purpose of wearing it I borrowed it, but for this purpose of carrying wood on it I did not borrow it.

QUESTION

מאי טעמא כולה אורחא לא סים מר מסאניה וכי מטי למיא סים מסאניה?

What is the reason that the entire way Master did not wear his shoes, but when he reached water he put on his shoes?

ANSWER

אמר להו: כולה אורחא חזינא, במיא לא קא חזינא.

He said to them: The entire way on dry land I can see what I am stepping on, but in the water I cannot see what is at the bottom.

QUESTION

מאי טעמא כי מטא מר להיזמי והיגי דלינהו למניה?

What is the reason that when Master reached thorns and shrubs, he lifted his garments?

ANSWER

אמר להו: זה מעלה ארוכה, וזה אינו מעלה ארוכה.

He said to them: This skin of the body heals if scratched, but this garment does not heal if torn.

QUESTION

מאי טעמא כי מטא מר למתא נפקה דביתהו דמר כי מיקשטא?

What is the reason that when Master reached the town, Master's wife came out adorned?

אמר להו: כִּי־יִשְׁלַח אֶתְּךָ עֵינַי בְּאִשָּׁה אַחֶרֶת.

He said to them: So that I should not cast my eyes upon another woman.

SUMMARY

The daf begins by explaining that ideal rains fall on Tuesday and Friday nights, illustrating this with the miraculous crops of Shimon ben Shetah's era and the overnight rains during the rebuilding of the Beis HaMikdash. The Gemara then details the dramatic episode of Honi HaMe'aggel, who drew a circle and refused to leave it until Hashem answered his prayers, adjusting the rainfall from mere droplets, to a torrential downpour, and finally to rains of blessing. Although Shimon ben Shetah noted that Honi's bold approach deserved ostracism under different circumstances, he acknowledged that Honi was like a beloved son who nags his father and gets his way, a status of favor that was celebrated by the Great Sanhedrin.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Gemara shows us the beautiful, intimate relationship of Honi HaMe'aggel, who stood before the Ribbono shel Olam like a beloved child asking his father for help. Yet, we also see the incredible power of our sins to hold back the beautiful, oversized bounty that Hashem wants to shower upon us, just as the generation of Shimon ben Shetah had to preserve giant grains of wheat to remind future generations of what we lose when we stray.

This teaches us a profound lesson about our daily avodah. Hashem is our loving Father, and He wants to give us the greatest, most abundant blessings. But so often, we block that flow of shefa through our own small compromises, our daily missteps, and our lack of focus. We don't need to wait for a drought to realize what we are missing; we can open the gates of blessing right now by clearing away the spiritual blockages.

Today, take three minutes before you daven Mincha or Maariv to think of one small spiritual compromise you make during the day—perhaps a lack of focus in a specific bracha or a moment of speaking lashon hara—and consciously let it go, opening the channel for Hashem's blessing to flow into your life.