

מסכת תענית · דף י"א

Elucidated Talmud · Statement and Proof · Navy & Gold Edition

THE SUGYA

In this section of the daf, we learn about the proper conduct of a Yid during times of communal distress, such as a famine. The Gemara discusses the physical precautions a traveler must take regarding food and digestion, illustrating this with the practice of Rav Pappa. From there, the Gemara transitions into the spiritual and ethical obligations of the individual during a public crisis, emphasizing that one must never separate himself from the tzibur.

We will learn how a person must share in the suffering of the community by limiting physical pleasures, such as restricting marital relations during a famine, unless one has not yet fulfilled the mitzva of being fruitful and multiply. The Gemara brings powerful baraitos that warn against seeking personal comfort when the tzibur is in pain, bringing proofs from Moshe Rabbeinu, who sat on a hard stone during the war with Amalek to share in Klal Yisrael's suffering.

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

EXPLANATION

דִּיתִיכ בְּאַרְכָּא.

The difference is in a case **where he is sitting in a boat**, where he must worry about food but not about physical exertion.

EXPLANATION

אִי נָמִי, דְּקָאֲזִיל מֵאוּנָא לְאוּנָא.

Alternatively, the difference is **where he is traveling from station to station**, where he must worry about physical exertion but not about food.

STATEMENT

רַב פַּפּא — כָּל פְּרָסָה וּפְרָסָה אָכִיל חֶדָּא רִיפְתָּא.

When **Rav Pappa** traveled, along **each and every parasang** he would eat one loaf of bread.

EXPLANATION

קִסְבֵּר, מְשׁוּם מַעֲיִנָּא.

He maintained that the prohibition against traveling on a fast day is **due to the bowels**, and since his digestion was healthy, he was not concerned.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: כָּל הַמְרַעִיב עֲצָמוֹ בְּשָׁנֵי רַעְבוֹן, — נִיָּצֵל מִמִּיתָה מְשׁוּנָה, שְׁנֵאֲמַר: "כִּרְעֵב קָדָה מָמוֹת".

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: Anyone who starves himself in years of famine is saved from an unusual death, as it is stated: "In famine, He will redeem you from death."

INFERENCE

”מֵרָעֵב מִיִּבְעֵי לֵיָּהּ, אֲלֵא הָכִי קֹאֲמֵר: בְּשָׂכַר שְׁמֵרַעִיב עֲצָמוֹ בְּשָׁנֵי רָעָבוֹן — נִיִּצּוֹל מִמִּיתָה מְשׁוּנָּה.

The verse should have said "From famine"; rather, this is what it is saying: In reward for starving himself in years of famine, he is saved from an unusual death.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רִישׁ לָקִישׁ: אָסוּר לְאָדָם לְשַׁמֵּשׁ מִטָּתוֹ בְּשָׁנֵי רָעָבוֹן, שֶׁנֶּאֱמָר: "וַיִּלְיוּסָר יָלֵד שְׁנֵי בָנִים בְּטָרָם תָּבוֹא שְׁנַת הָרָעֵב".

Reish Lakish said: It is prohibited for a person to have conjugal relations in years of famine, as it is stated: "And to Yosef were born two sons before the year of famine came."

BRAISA

תָּנָא: חֲסוּכֵי בָנִים מְשַׁמְשִׁין מִטָּתֵיהֶן בְּשָׁנֵי רָעָבוֹן.

It was taught in a Braisa: Those without children may have marital relations in years of famine to fulfill the mitzvah of procreation.

BRAISA

תָּנּוּ רַבָּנּוּ: בְּזֶמֶן שִׁישְׁרָאֵל שְׂרוּיִין בְּצַעַר וּפִירָשׁ אֶחָד מֵהֶן, בָּאִין שְׁנֵי מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת שְׂמֻלּוּיִן לוֹ לְאָדָם, וּמְנַחֲחִין לוֹ יָדֵיהֶן עַל רִאשׁוֹ, וְאוֹמְרִים: פְּלוֹנִי זֶה שֶׁפִּירָשׁ מִן הַצָּבוּר אֶל יִרְאָה בְּנַחֲמַת צָבוּר.

The Rabbis taught: When Israel is immersed in distress and one of them separates himself, the two ministering angels who accompany a person come and place their hands on his head and say: "This so-and-so who separated himself from the community, let him not see the consolation of the community."

BRAISA

תָּנָא אֵידֵד: (בְּזֶמֶן שֶׁהַצָּבוּר שְׂרוּי בְּצַעַר, אֵל יֹאמַר אָדָם: אֵלַי לְבִיתִי, וְאוֹכֵל וְאַשְׁתָּה, וְשָׁלוֹם עָלַי: נִפְשִׁי.

It was taught in another Braisa: When the community is immersed in suffering, a person may not say: "I will go to my home, and I will eat and drink, and peace be upon you, my soul."

BRAISA

וְאִם עוֹשֶׂה כֵּן — עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב אוֹמֵר: "וְהָיָה שִׂשׁוֹן וְשִׂמְחָה הָרֹג בְּקָר וְשָׁחַט צֹאן אָכַל בָּשָׂר וְשָׁתוֹת יַיִן אָכַל וְשָׁתוֹ כִּי מָחָר נָמוֹת,"

And if he does so, the verse says about him: "And behold joy and gladness, slaying oxen and killing sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we shall die."

BRAISA

מָה כְּתִיב בְּתַרְיָה — "וַיִּנָּלֶה בְּאֶזְנֵי ה' צָבָאוֹת אִם יִכְפֹּר הָעָוֹן הַזֶּה לָכֶם עַד תָּמָתוֹן".

What is written afterward? "And the Lord of hosts revealed Himself in my ears: Surely this iniquity shall not be expiated by you until you die."

BRAISA

עד כאן מידת בינונים. אבל במדת רשעים, מה כתיב?

Up to this point is the attribute of middling people who merely separate themselves. But with regard to the attribute of wicked people, what is written?

BRAISA

"אתיו אקחה יין ונסבא שר ויהיה כזה יום מחר",

"Come, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and tomorrow shall be as this day..."

BRAISA

מה כתיב בתריה: "הצדיק אכד ואין איש שם על לב כי מפני הרעה נאסף הצדיק".

What is written afterward? "The righteous perishes, and no man lays it to heart... for the righteous is taken away from the evil to come."

BRAISA

אלא, יצער אדם עם הצבור, שכן מצינו במלשה רבינו שציער עצמו עם הצבור,

Rather, a person should distress himself with the community, as we found with Moshe Rabbeinu, who distressed himself with the community,

BRAISA

שנאמר: "וידי משה כבדים ויקחו אבן וישמו תחתיו וישב עליה",

as it is stated: "But Moshe's hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat upon it."

BRAISA

וכי לא היה לו למשה פר אחד או כסת אחת לישוב עליה?

But did Moshe not have one pillow or one cushion to sit upon?

BRAISA

אלא כה אמר משה: הואיל וישראל שרויין בצער — אף אני אהיה עמם בצער.

Rather, Moshe said as follows: "Since Israel is immersed in suffering, I too will be with them in suffering."

BRAISA

וכל המצער עצמו עם הצבור — זוכה ורואה בנחמת צבור.

And anyone who distresses himself with the community merits and sees the consolation of the community.

BRAISA

ושמא יאמר אדם: מי מעיד בי?

And lest a person say: "Who will testify against me in secret?"

BRAISA

אֲבָנֵי בֵּיתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם וְקוֹרוֹת בֵּיתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם מְעִידִים בּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "כִּי אָבֹן מִקִּיר תִּזְעַק וְכָפִיס מֵעֵץ יַעֲנֶנָּה".

The stones of a person's house and the beams of a person's house testify against him, as it is stated: "For a stone shall cry out from the wall, and a beam out of the timber shall answer it."

STATEMENT

דְּבֵי רַבִּי שֵׁילָא אָמְרִי: שְׁנֵי מַלְאָכֵי הַשָּׁרֵת הַמְלֻוִּין לוֹ לְאָדָם, הֵן מְעִידִין עָלָיו, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "כִּי מַלְאָכָיו יִצְנֶנָּה לָךְ".

Those of the school of Rabbi Sheila say: The two ministering angels who accompany a person, they testify against him, as it is stated: "For He will give His angels charge over you."

STATEMENT

רַבִּי חִידְקָא אוֹמֵר: נִשְׁמָתוֹ שֶׁל אָדָם הִיא מְעִידָה עָלָיו, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "מִשְׁכַּבְתְּ חִיקָךְ שָׁמֶר פֶּתְחֵי פִּיהֶ".

Rabbi Chidka says: A person's soul testifies against him, as it is stated: "Keep the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom."

STATEMENT

וַיֵּשׁ אוֹמְרִים: אֲבָרָיו שֶׁל אָדָם מְעִידִים בּוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "אַתֶּם עֲדֵי נָאִם הִ'".

And some say: A man's limbs testify against him, as it is stated: "You are My witnesses, says Hashem."

BRAISA

"אֵל אֱמוּנָה וְאֵין עוֹל".

The verse states: "A God of faithfulness and without iniquity."

BRAISA

"אֵל אֱמוּנָה", כָּשֶׁם שֶׁנִּפְרָעִין מִן הָרָשָׁעִים לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא אֶפִּילוֹ עַל עֲבִירָה קְלָה שְׁעוֹשִׁין, כִּךָּ נִפְרָעִין מִן הַצַּדִּיקִים בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה עַל עֲבִירָה קְלָה שְׁעוֹשִׁין.

"A God of faithfulness" means just as punishment is exacted from the wicked in the World-to-Come even for a light transgression that they commit, so too, punishment is exacted from the righteous in this world for a light transgression that they commit.

BRAISA

"וְאֵין עוֹל", כָּשֶׁם שֶׁמִּשְׁלָמִין שְׂכָר לַצַּדִּיקִים לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא אֶפִּילוֹ עַל מִצְוָה קְלָה שְׁעוֹשִׁין, כִּךָּ מִשְׁלָמִין שְׂכָר לָרָשָׁעִים בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה אֶפִּילוֹ עַל מִצְוָה קְלָה שְׁעוֹשִׁין.

"And without iniquity" means just as reward is paid to the righteous in the World-to-Come even for a minor mitzvah that they fulfill, so too, reward is paid to the wicked in this world even for a minor mitzvah that they fulfill.

BRAISA

”צדיק וישר הוא”, אמרו: בשעת פטירתו של אדם לבית עולמו כל מעשיו נפרטין לפניו, ואומרים לו: כך וכך עשית במקום פלוני ביום פלוני, והוא אומר: הן,

Regarding “He is just and righteous,” they said: At the hour of a person's departure to his eternal home, all his deeds are enumerated before him, and they say to him: “You did such and such in such and such a place on such and such a day,” and he says: “Yes.”

BRAISA

ואומרים לו: חתום! וחתום. שנאמר: “ביד כל אדם יחתום”.

And they say to him: “Sign!” and he signs, as it is stated: “He makes the hand of every man sign.”

BRAISA

ולא עוד, אלא שמצדיק עליו את הדין, ואומר להם: יפה דנתוני, לקיים מה שנאמר “למען תצדיק בדברך”.

And not only that, but he justifies the judgment upon himself and says to them: “You have judged me well,” to fulfill that which is stated: “That You may be justified when You speak.”

STATEMENT

אמר שמואל: כל היושב בתענית נקרא חוטא.

Shmuel said: Anyone who sits in a fast is called a sinner.

PROOF

סבר כי האי תנא, דתנא: רבי אלעזר הקפר ברבי אומר, מה תלמוד לומר: “וכפר עליו מאשר חטא על הנפש”, וכי באיזה נפש חטא זה?

He holds like this Tanna, as it was taught: Rabbi Elazar HaKappar b'Rabbi says: What is the meaning when the verse says: “And make atonement for him, for that he sinned regarding the soul”? Indeed, against which soul did this nazirite sin?

PROOF

אלא שציער עצמו מן היין.

Rather, because he distressed himself by abstaining from wine.

PROOF

והלא דברים קל וחומר: ומה זה, שלא ציער עצמו אלא מן היין — נקרא חוטא, המציער עצמו מכל דבר ודבר — על אחת כמה וכמה.

And are these things not a kal vachomer: If this one, who only distressed himself from wine, is called a sinner, one who distresses himself from each and every thing by fasting, how much more so!

STATEMENT

רבי אלעזר אומר: נקרא קדוש, שנאמר: “קדוש יהיה גידל פֶּרַע שֶׁעַר רִאשׁוֹ”.

Rabbi Elazar says: He is called holy, as it is stated: "He shall be holy, he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long."

INFERENCE

ומה זה, שלא ציער עצמו אלא מדבר אחד — נקרא קדוש, המצער עצמו מכל דבר — על אחת כמה וכמה.

And if this one, who only distressed himself from one thing, is called holy, one who distresses himself from everything, how much more so!

QUESTION

ולשמואל, הא איקרי קדוש!

And according to Shmuel, but he is called holy!

ANSWER

הוא, אגידול פרע קאי.

That term "holy" refers to the growing of the hair, not his self-denial.

QUESTION

ולרבי אלעזר, הא נקרא חוטא!

And according to Rabbi Elazar, but he is called a sinner!

ANSWER

הוא דסאיב נפשיה.

That refers to a nazirite who defiled himself by contact with a corpse.

QUESTION

ומי אמר רבי אלעזר הכי? והאמר רבי אלעזר: לעולם ימוד אדם עצמו כאילו קדוש שרוי בתוך מעיו, שנאמר: "בקרבה קדוש ולא אבוא בעיר!"

But did Rabbi Elazar really say this? But didn't Rabbi Elazar say: A person should always measure himself as if a Holy One dwells within his innards, as it is stated: "The Holy One is in your midst, and I will not come in fury"? This implies one should not starve his body.

RESOLUTION

לא קשיא: הא — דמצי לצעורי נפשיה, הא — דלא מצי לצעורי נפשיה.

This is **not difficult**: This case where fasting is praised is where he is able to distress himself without falling ill; that case where it is discouraged is where he is not able to distress himself.

STATEMENT

ריש לקיש אמר: נקרא חסיד, שנאמר: "גמל נפשו איש חסד ועבר שארו וגו'".

Reish Lakish said: He is called a pious person, as it is stated: "The merciful man does good to his own soul, but he that is cruel troubles his own flesh."

STATEMENT

אמר רב ששון: האי בר בי רב דיתב בתעניתא — ליכול כלבא לשירותיה.

Rav Sheshes said: This Torah student who sits in a fast, let a dog eat his meal! Because he weakens himself from Torah study.

STATEMENT

אמר רב ירמיה בר אבא: אין תענית ציבור בבבל אלא תשעה באב בלבד.

Rav Yirmeyah bar Abba said: There is no public fast in Babylonia except for Tisha B'Av alone.

STATEMENT

אמר רב ירמיה בר אבא אמר ריש לקיש: אין תלמיד חכם רשאי לישב בתענית, מפני שממעט במלאכת שמים.

Rav Yirmeyah bar Abba said that Reish Lakish said: A Torah scholar is not permitted to sit in a fast, because he diminishes his work of Heaven by weakening himself.

מִשְׁנָה MISHNAH

MISHNAH

אוכלין ושותין משחשיכה כו'.

We learned in the Mishnah: They may eat and drink once it gets dark, etc.

גְּמָרָא GEMARA

STATEMENT

אמר רבי זעירא אמר רב הונא: יחיד שקיבל עליו תענית, אפילו אכל ושתה כל הלילה — למחר הוא מתפלל תפילת תענית.

Rabbi Zeira said that Rav Huna said: An individual who accepted a fast upon himself, even if he ate and drank the entire night, on the morrow he prays the fast prayer of Aneinu.

STATEMENT

לן בתעניתו — אינו מתפלל של תענית.

But if he slept through his fast and only fasted for a few hours of the day, he does not pray the fast prayer.

QUESTION

אמר רב יוסף: מאי קסבר רב הונא? סבירא ליה: אין מתעניין לשעות, או דלמא: מתעניין לשעות — והמתענה לשעות אינו מתפלל תפלת תענית?

Rav Yosef said: What does Rav Huna hold? Does he hold that we do not fast for hours, or perhaps we do fast for hours, but one who fasts for hours does not pray the fast prayer?

ANSWER

אמר ליה אביי: לעולם קסבר רב הונא מתעניין לשעות, והמתענה לשעות מתפלל תפלת תענית.

Abaye said to him: Actually, Rav Huna holds we do fast for hours, and one who fasts for hours does pray the fast prayer.

EXPLANATION

ושאני הכא, דאיכא שעות דליליא דלא קביל עליה מעיקרא.

And it is different here, as there are the hours of the night which he did not accept upon himself from the outset as part of the fast.

STATEMENT

מר עוקבא איקלע לגינזק, בעו מיניה: מתעניין לשעות או אין מתעניין לשעות? לא הוה בידיה.

Mar Ukva happened to come to Ginzak. They asked him: Do we fast for hours or do we not fast for hours? It was not in his hand to answer.

QUESTION

קומנזין של נכרים, אסורין או מותרין? לא הוה בידיה.

They asked: Wine jugs of non-Jews, are they forbidden or permitted? It was not in his hand.

QUESTION

במה שימש משה כל שבועת ימי המלואים? לא הוה בידיה.

They asked: With what garment did Moshe minister during all seven days of the consecration? It was not in his hand.

STATEMENT

אזל ושאל בי מדרשא.

He went and asked in the study hall.

RULING

אמרו ליה, הלכתא: מתעניין לשעות, ומתפלל לין תפלת תענית.

They said to him: The halacha is: We do fast for hours, and we do pray the fast prayer.

RULING

והלכתא: קומנזין של נכרים, לאחר שנים עשר חדש — מותרין.

And the halacha is: Wine jugs of non-Jews, after twelve months, are permitted.

ANSWER

בַּמָּה שִׁימַשׁ מֹשֶׁה כָּל שִׁבְעַת יְמֵי הַמִּלּוּאִים — בְּחָלוּק לָבָן.

With what did Moshe minister during all seven days of the consecration? In a white tunic.

STATEMENT

רַב כְּהָנָא מְתַנֵּי: בְּחָלוּק לָבָן שָׁאִין לוֹ אֵימָרָא.

Rav Kahana taught: In a white tunic that had no hem.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא:

Rav Chisda said:

SUMMARY

The Gemara teaches that anyone who starves himself during a famine out of solidarity with the community is saved from an unusual death. It is prohibited to have conjugal relations during years of famine, except for those who are still childless and must fulfill the mitzva of having children. If a person separates himself from the community's suffering, the ministering angels place their hands on his head and declare that he will not merit seeing the consolation of the tzibur. The Gemara warns that even if one acts in secret, his own home's stones and beams, his accompanying angels, his neshama, or his own limbs will testify against him on the Day of Judgment. Finally, the Sages expound on how Hashem, in His absolute justice, purifies the righteous by punishing them for minor transgressions in this world, while rewarding the wicked in this world for their minor mitzvos.

לְמַעַשׂה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

When the community is in pain, a Yid cannot simply retreat to the comfort of his own home and say, "Peace be upon you, my soul." The Gemara in Taanis teaches us a profound truth about what it means to be part of Klal Yisrael. When our brothers and sisters are suffering, we are forbidden to live as if everything is normal. We see this from Moshe Rabbeinu, who sat on a hard stone during the battle with Amalek. Surely the leader of the Jewish people had a pillow or cushion, but he refused to use it. He insisted on feeling the physical discomfort because his people were in distress.

This is not just a story about Moshe Rabbeinu; it is our daily avodah. True connection to the tzibbur is not felt when things are easy and celebratory, but when things are difficult. If we close our eyes to the pain of others and indulge in our own pleasures, we distance ourselves from the community's destiny. But when we choose to carry the burden with them, even in small, private ways, we bind our neshamah to theirs.

Today, take a moment to think of a fellow Yid or the community at large going through a difficult time. Choose one small luxury or comfort to hold back on today, whether it is a special treat, an extra indulgence, or a moment of personal comfort, and explicitly think to yourself: "I am doing this to stand together with my brothers and sisters in their pain."

