

מסכת תענית · דף ג'

Elucidated Talmud · Statement and Proof · Navy & Gold Edition

THE SUGYA

In this daf, we are zocheh to delve deeper into the sugya of when we begin mentioning rain in our tefillos, specifically looking at the different tannaic opinions regarding the water libation (nisuch hamayim) on Sukkos. The Gemara explores how the Chachamim derive the halachos of nisuch hamayim from the pesukim in Parshas Pinchas, analyzing the views of Rabbi Akiva, Rabbi Yehoshua, and Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira.

We will also learn about the profound concept of Halacha L'Moshe M'Sinai, the oral traditions handed down directly from Sinai that have no explicit source in the written Torah. The Gemara connects this to the water libation, the aravah on Sukkos, and the halachos of plowing a field of ten saplings before Shemittah, bringing us to a beautiful discussion of how our tefillos for rain are structured on the Yom Tov of Shemini Atzeres.

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

OBJECTION

אי סבר לה רבבי יהודה בן בתירה — נימא כוותיה!

The Gemara objects: **If Rabbi Akiva holds in accordance with the opinion of Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira** regarding the textual source for the water libation, **let him say** that one begins mentioning rain **in accordance with his** ruling, which is from the second day of Sukkos, and not the sixth day!

ANSWER

קסבר רבי עקיבא: כי כתיב ניסוך יתירא — בששי הוא דכתיב.

The Gemara answers: **Rabbi Akiva holds** that **when the extra reference to libation is written** in the Torah, **it is on the sixth day that it is written**, as the plural word 'its libations' appears on the sixth day, while the other extra letters merely teach that this second libation must be of water.

BRAISA

תנא, רבי נתן אומר: "בקדש הסך נסך שֶׁכָּר לֵה", בשני ניסוכין הפתוב מדבר, אחד ניסוך המים ואחד ניסוך היין.

It is taught in a braisa, **Rabbi Natan says**: The verse states, "**In the Sanctuary you shall pour out a libation of strong drink to Hashem.**" By repeating the term for pouring, **the verse is speaking of two libations**: one is the water libation and one is the wine libation.

QUESTION

אימא תרוייהו דחמרא!

The Gemara asks: Why not say that **both of them are of wine**?

ANSWER

אם כן, לכתוב קרא או "הסך הסך", או "נסך נסך", מאי "הסך נסך" — שמעת מינה: חד דמיא וחד דחמרא.

The Gemara answers: If so, let the verse write either 'hassech hessech' or 'nassech nesech' using the same root. What is the meaning of the varied formulation 'hassech nesech'? Learn from this that one is of water and one is of wine.

QUESTION

אָלאַ, האַ דתנן: נִיסוּךְ הַמִּים כָּל שִׁבְעָה, מִנִּי?

The Gemara asks: However, that which we learned in a Mishnah that the water libation is performed all seven days of Sukkos, whose opinion is it?

EXPLANATION

אִי רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ — נִימָא חַד יוֹמָא, אִי רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא — תְּרֵי יוֹמֵי, אִי רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּן בֶּתִירָה — שְׁתֵּא יוֹמֵי!

If it is Rabbi Yehoshua, let us say it is performed only one day, on Shemini Atzeres. If it is Rabbi Akiva, it should be performed only two days, the sixth and seventh. If it is Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, it should be performed only six days, from the second day onward!

ANSWER

לְעוֹלָם רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֶּן בֶּתִירָה הִיא, וְסָבִירָא לֵיהּ כְּרַבִּי יְהוּדָה דְּמִתְנִיתִין.

The Gemara answers: Actually, the Mishnah is in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, and he holds in accordance with Rabbi Yehuda of our Mishnah in Sukkah.

EXPLANATION

דְּתַנּוּ, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: כָּל הַיּוֹם מְנַסֵּךְ כָּל שְׁמוֹנָה. וּמִפִּיק רֵאשׁוֹן וּמַעֲיִיל שְׁמִינִי.

As we learned in a Mishnah, Rabbi Yehuda says: With a log of water he would pour all eight days of Sukkos. And Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira removes the first day from this obligation and includes the eighth day, which results in seven days of water libations.

OBJECTION

וּמַאי שָׁנָא רֵאשׁוֹן דְּלֹא, דְּכִי רְמִיזֵי מִים — בְּשַׁנִּי הוּא דְּרְמִיזֵי; שְׁמִינִי נָמִי, כִּי רְמִיזֵי מִים — בְּשַׁבְּעִי הוּא דְּרְמִיזֵי!

The Gemara objects: And what is different about the first day that the water libation is not performed? Is it because when water is alluded to in the Torah, it is on the second day that it is alluded to? If so, on the eighth day as well, one should not perform the libation, because when water is alluded to for the last time, it is on the seventh day that it is alluded to!

RESOLUTION

אָלאַ: רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ הִיא, וְנִיסוּךְ הַמִּים כָּל שִׁבְעָה — הִלְכְּתָא גְמִירֵי לָהּ,

Rather, the Gemara retracts: The Mishnah is in accordance with Rabbi Yehoshua, and he holds that the obligation of the water libation all seven days is a halacha that was learned through tradition as a Halacha L'Moshe MiSinai.

PROOF

דאָמער רבֿי אַמי אָמער רבֿי יוחנן מִשׁוּם רבֿי נְחוּנְיָא אִישׁ בְּקַעַת בֵּית חוֹרְתָן: עֶשֶׂר נְטִיעוֹת, עֶרְבָה, וְנִיסוּף חַמִּים — הִלְכָה לְמֹשֶׁה מִסִּינַי.

As Rabbi Ami said that Rabbi Yochanan said in the name of Rabbi Nechunya of the valley of Beis Chortan: The law of **ten saplings** in the year preceding Shemittah, the law of the **aravah** on Sukkos, and the **water libation** are each a **Halacha L'Moshe MiSinai**.

BRAISA

רבֿי יהודה אומר מִשׁוּם רבֿי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: הָעוֹבֵר לִפְנֵי הַתִּיבָה בְּיוֹם טוֹב הָאֲחֵרוֹן שֶׁל חַג — הָאֲחֵרוֹן מִזְכִּיר, הָרִאשׁוֹן אֵינוֹ מִזְכִּיר.

It is taught in a braisa: **Rabbi Yehuda says in the name of Rabbi Yehoshua: One who passes before the Ark as prayer leader on the last Yom Tov of the Festival of Sukkos**, which is Shemini Atzeres, **the last** prayer leader, of Mussaf, **mentions** rain, but **the first** prayer leader, of Shacharis, **does not mention** rain.

BRAISA

בְּיוֹם טוֹב הָרִאשׁוֹן שֶׁל פֶּסַח — הָרִאשׁוֹן מִזְכִּיר, הָאֲחֵרוֹן אֵינוֹ מִזְכִּיר.

Conversely, **on the first Yom Tov of Pesach**, **the first** prayer leader, of Shacharis, still **mentions** rain, but **the last** prayer leader, of Mussaf, **does not mention** rain.

QUESTION

הֵי רבֿי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ?

The Gemara asks: **Which** statement of **Rabbi Yehoshua** is Rabbi Yehuda referring to?

OBJECTION

אֵילִימָא רבֿי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ דְּמִתְנִיתִין, הָא אָמַר: בְּיוֹם טוֹב הָאֲחֵרוֹן שֶׁל חַג הוּא מִזְכִּיר.

If we say it is the statement of **Rabbi Yehoshua of our Mishnah**, but didn't he say there that **on the last Yom Tov of the Festival he begins to mention** rain, which implies from the very beginning of the day, meaning the Maariv service?

OBJECTION

אָלָא: רבֿי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ דְּבִרְיֵיתָא, הָאָמַר: מִשְׁעַת הַנִּחָתוּ.

Rather, you will say it is **Rabbi Yehoshua of the braisa**. But didn't he say there that one mentions rain **from the time of putting down** the lulav, which is at the end of the seventh day, also implying from Maariv of Shemini Atzeres?

QUESTION

וְתוֹ, הָא דִּתְנִינָא, רבֿי יהודה אומר מִשׁוּם בֶּן בֶּטֵירָה: הָעוֹבֵר לִפְנֵי הַתִּיבָה בְּיוֹם טוֹב הָאֲחֵרוֹן שֶׁל חַג — הָאֲחֵרוֹן מִזְכִּיר,

And furthermore, that which is taught in another braisa, **Rabbi Yehuda says in the name of ben Beteira: One who passes before the Ark on the last Yom Tov of the Festival**, **the last** prayer leader **mentions** rain.

OBJECTION

הֵי בֶּן בֶּטֵירָה? אֵילִימָא רבֿי יהודה בֶּן בֶּטֵירָה — הָא אָמַר: בִּשְׁנֵי בָּחַג הוּא מִזְכִּיר!

Which ben Beteira is this? If we say it is Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, but didn't he say that on the second day of the Festival he begins to mention rain?

ANSWER

אמר רב נחמן בר יצחק: תהא ברבי יהושע בן בתירה,

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: Let it be understood as referring to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Beteira, and this resolves all the difficulties.

EXPLANATION

זמנין דקרי ליה בשמיה, וזמנין דקרי ליה בשמיה דאבא.

Sometimes Rabbi Yehuda calls him by his name, Rabbi Yehoshua, and sometimes he calls him by his father's name, ben Beteira.

EXPLANATION

והא מקמי דליסמכוהו, והא לבתר דליסמכוהו.

And this braisa where he is called by his father's name was from before they ordained him, and that braisa where he is called Rabbi Yehoshua was from after they ordained him.

BRAISA

תנא: בטל וברוחות, לא חיבו חכמים להזכיר. ואם בא להזכיר — מזכיר.

It was taught in a braisa: Regarding dew and regarding winds, the Sages did not obligate one to mention them in the Shemoneh Esrei. But if one comes to mention them, he may mention them.

EXPLANATION

מאי טעמא? אמר רבי חנינא: לפי שאין נעצרים.

What is the reason? Rabbi Chanina said: Because they are never withheld, so there is no need to pray for them.

QUESTION

וטל מנזל דלא מיעצר — דכתיב: "ויאמר אליהו התשבי מתשבי גלעד אל אחאב חי הי אלהי ישראל אשר עמדת לי לפניו אם יהיה השנים האלה טל ומטר כי אם לפי דברי",

And dew, from where do we know that it is never withheld? As it is written: "And Eliyahu the Tishbite, of the settlers of Gilead, said to Achav: As Hashem, the G-d of Israel, lives, before Whom I stood, there shall not be these years dew or rain, except according to my word."

PROOF

וכתיב: "לה הראה אל אחאב ואתנה מטר על פני האדמה", ואילו טל לא קאמר ליה, מאי טעמא — משום דלא מיעצר.

And it is written later when the drought ended: "Go, appear to Achav, and I will send rain upon the face of the earth." Whereas dew, He did not say to him that He would restore it. What is the reason? Because it was never withheld in the first place, as it is impossible for the world to exist without it.

QUESTION

וכי מאחר דלא מיעצר, אליהו אשתבועי למה ליה?

The Gemara asks: **And since it is never withheld, why did Eliyahu swear about it?**

ANSWER

הכי קאמר ליה: אפילו טל ברכה נמי לא אתי.

The Gemara answers: **This is what he said to him: Even dew of blessing also shall not come**, though regular dew will fall.

EXPLANATION

וליהדריה לטל דברכה? משום דלא מינכרא מילתא.

The Gemara asks: **And let Him restore the dew of blessing** explicitly in the verse? The Gemara answers: **Because the matter is not noticeable** to people, so it was not mentioned.

QUESTION

אלא רוחות מנא לן דלא מיעצרי?

The Gemara asks: **But winds, from where do we know that they are never withheld?**

ANSWER

אמר רבי יהושע בן לוי, דאמר קרא: "כי בארבע רוחות השמים פרשתי אתכם נאם ה'".

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said, as the verse states: "For like the four winds of the heavens have I spread you, says Hashem."

EXPLANATION

מאי קאמר ליה? אילימא הכי קאמר להו הקדוש ברוך הוא לישראל: דבדרתינכו בארבע רוחי

דעלמא, אי הכי — "בארבע"?" "בארבע" מיבעי ליה!

What is He saying to them? If we say this is what the Holy One, Blessed is He, is saying to Israel: 'That I have scattered you in the four directions of the world,' if so, why does it say 'like the four'? 'In the four' winds it should have said!

EXPLANATION

אלא הכי קאמר: כשם שאי אפשר לעולם בלא רוחות — כה אי אפשר לעולם בלא ישראל.

Rather, this is what He is saying: Just as it is impossible for the world to exist without winds, so it is impossible for the world to exist without Israel. Thus, winds are never completely withheld.

RULING

אמר רבי חנינא: הלכה, בימות החמה: אמר "משיב הרוח" — אין מחזירין אותו. אמר "מוריד

הגשם" — מחזירין אותו.

Rabbi Chanina said: Therefore, in the summer season, if one said 'He makes the wind blow,' we do not make him repeat the prayer. But if he said 'He makes the rain fall,' we do make him repeat the prayer.

RULING

בימות הגשמים: לא אמר "משיב הרוח" — אין מחזירין אותו. לא אמר "מוריד הגשם" — מחזירין אותו.

Conversely, in the rainy season, if one did not say 'He makes the wind blow,' we do not make him repeat the prayer. But if he did not say 'He makes the rain fall,' we do make him repeat the prayer.

RULING

ולא עוד, אלא אפילו אמר "מעביר הרוח ומפריח הטל" — אין מחזירין אותו.

And not only that, but even if he said in the summer 'He causes the wind to pass and the dew to blow away,' we do not make him repeat the prayer.

BRAISA

תנא: בעבים וברוחות לא חייבו חכמים להזכיר, ואם בא להזכיר — מזכיר, מאי טעמא — משום דלא מיעצרי.

It was taught in a braisa: Regarding clouds and regarding winds, the Sages did not obligate one to mention them, but if one comes to mention them, he may mention them. What is the reason? Because they are never withheld.

OBJECTION

ולא מיעצרי? והתני רב יוסף: "ועצר את השמים" — מן העבים ומן הרוחות.

The Gemara objects: And are they not withheld? But Rav Yosef taught in a braisa: The verse says, 'And He will shut up the heavens' — from clouds and from winds.

PROOF

אפה אומר מן העבים ומן הרוחות, או אינו אלא מן המטר? כשהוא אומר "ולא יהיה מטר" — הרי מטר אמור, הא מה אני מקיים "ועצר את השמים" — מן העבים ומן הרוחות.

Do you say it means from clouds and from winds, or is it only from rain? When it says immediately after, 'and there shall be no rain,' behold, rain is already mentioned. How then do I fulfill 'And He will shut up the heavens'? From clouds and from winds! This proves they can be withheld.

OBJECTION

קשיא רוחות ארוחות, קשיא עבים אעבים!

The Gemara notes: This is a difficulty between one statement regarding winds and the other statement regarding winds, and a difficulty between one statement regarding clouds and the other statement regarding clouds!

RESOLUTION

עבים אעבים לא קשיא: הא — בחרפי, הא — באפלי.

The Gemara resolves: Regarding clouds and clouds, it is not a difficulty: This statement that they are withheld refers to early clouds which bring rain, and that statement that they are not withheld refers to late clouds which do not bring rain.

RESOLUTION

רוחות ארוחות לא קשיא: הא — ברוח מצויה, הא — ברוח שאינה מצויה.

Regarding **winds and winds**, it is also not a difficulty: This statement that they are not withheld refers to a common wind, and **that** statement that they are withheld refers to an uncommon wind.

QUESTION

רוח שאינה מצויה חזקא לבי דרי!

The Gemara asks: But an uncommon wind is needed for the threshing floor to winnow the grain, so why is it withheld as a curse?

ANSWER

אפשר בנפוחתא.

The Gemara answers: It is possible to winnow with sieves and fans, so its absence is not a fatal curse.

BRAISA

תנא: העבים והרוחות שניות למטר.

It was taught in a braisa: Clouds and winds are secondary to rain in their benefit.

EXPLANATION

היכי דמי? אמר עולא, ואיתימא רב יהודה: דבתר מיטרא.

What is the case? Ulla said, and some say it was Rabbi Yehuda: This refers to clouds and winds that come after the rain.

QUESTION

למימרא דמעליותא היא? והכתיב: "יתן ה' את מטר ארצה אבק ועפר", ואמר עולא ואיתימא רב יהודה: זיקא דבתר מטרא!

The Gemara asks: Is this to say that it is a benefit? But isn't it written: 'Hashe^m will make the rain of your land powder and dust,' and Ulla, and some say Rabbi Yehuda, said that this curse refers to the wind that comes after the rain which kicks up dust?

ANSWER

לא קשיא: הא דאתא נוחא, הא דאתא רזקא.

The Gemara answers: It is not a difficulty: This beneficial wind is one that comes gently, and that harmful wind is one that comes harshly.

ANSWER

ואי בעית אימא: הא דמעלה אבק, הא דלא מעלה אבק.

And if you want, say instead: This harmful wind is one that kicks up dust, and that beneficial wind is one that does not kick up dust.

STATEMENT

ואמר רב יהודה: זיקא דבתר מיטרא — פמיטרא. עיכא דבתר מיטרא — פמיטרא. שמשא דבתר מיטרא — פתרי מטרי.

And Rav Yehuda said: Wind after rain is like more rain. A cloud after rain is like more rain. Sunshine after rain is like two rains.

EXPLANATION

לְמַעוּטֵי מַאי? לְמַעוּטֵי גִילְחֵי דְלִילָא, וְשִׁמְשָׁא דְבִינֵי קֶרְחִי.

The Gemara asks: To exclude what sunshine is not beneficial? To exclude the glow of the night, and sunshine between the clouds on a cloudy day, which are harmful.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבָּא: מַעֲלֵי תֵלְגָא לְטוּרֵי כַּחֲמֻשָּׁה מְטָרֵי לְאַרְעָא, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "כִּי לִשְׁלֹג יֹאמַר הוּא אֶרֶץ וְגֶשֶׁם מְטָר וְגֶשֶׁם מְטָרוֹת עֶזוּ".

Rava said: Snow is as beneficial to the mountains as five rains are to the land, as it is said: 'For to the snow He says: Become land, and to the shower of rain, and to the showers of His mighty rain.'

STATEMENT

וְאָמַר רַבָּא: תֵּלְגָא — לְטוּרֵי, מְטָרָא רַזִּיא — לְאִילָנֵי, מְטָרָא נִיחָא — לְפִירֵי,

And Rava said: Snow is beneficial for the mountains, a harsh rain is beneficial for the trees, a gentle rain is beneficial for the fruits,

SUMMARY

The Gemara begins by analyzing the textual derivations for the water libation, questioning how many days the libation is performed according to each Tanna. After exploring whether the seven-day obligation of nisuch hamayim fits the view of Rabbi Akiva or Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira, the Gemara concludes that according to Rabbi Yehoshua, this practice is actually a Halacha L'Moshe M'Sinai, alongside the mitzvah of aravah and the halachos of plowing near ten saplings before Shemittah. Finally, the Gemara transitions to discussing the precise tefillah services on Shemini Atzeres and Pesach when the shliach tzibbur begins and stops mentioning rain, analyzing how these practices align with the opinions of Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira.

The Gemara teaches us a beautiful, comforting truth about our place in the world. When discussing the winds, Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi points to the pasuk, "For I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven." He explains that just as the world cannot exist without winds, so too, the world cannot exist without Klal Yisrael.

Think about what this means for your daily avodah. A person can easily fall into feeling small, insignificant, or disconnected. You might think, "What does my little mitzvah, my learning, or my tefillah matter in the grand scheme of things?" But Hashem Himself tells us otherwise. Your very existence as a Yid is what keeps the entire creation alive. You are as essential to the world as the very air we breathe.

When you realize how indispensable you are to Hashem's world, it changes how you carry yourself. It brings a deep sense of chashivus, of holy responsibility, to every word of Torah you speak and every chesed you perform. You are not just getting through the day; you are sustaining the cosmos.

Today, before you do a mitzvah or say a berachah, stop for three seconds and remind yourself: "The world cannot exist without Klal Yisrael, and my avodah right now is keeping the world alive."