

מסכת תענית · דף ו'

Elucidated Talmud · Statement and Proof · Navy & Gold Edition

THE SUGYA

In this daf, we are zocheh to delve deeper into the beautiful and vital topic of rain, which is the very lifeblood of Eretz Yisrael and a direct sign of Hashem's hashgacha over His children. We begin with a warm and moving berachah that one tzaddik gives to another, wishing that his offspring should be just like him, before returning to the sugya of the rains. The Gemara explores the deep meanings behind the Torah's terms for the early and late rains, showing how every drop is sent with divine purpose and love.

We will learn the profound lessons of the yoreh (the first rain) and the malkosh (the last rain), understanding how they are designed to bring berachah to the world rather than destruction. The Gemara also guides us through the specific times of the year when these rains must fall to be considered a blessing, showing how the timing of the rain directly affects the growth of the crops and stirs the hearts of Klal Yisrael to teshuvah.

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

STATEMENT

יְהִיו כְּמוֹתָהּ. אַף אַתָּה, בְּמָה אֲבָרְכָךָ? אִם בְּתוֹרָה — הָרִי תוֹרָה, אִם בְּעוֹשֶׁר — הָרִי עוֹשֶׁר, אִם בְּבָנִים — הָרִי בָנִים, אֲלֵא: יְהִי רְצוֹן שְׁיִהְיוּ צְאֲצְאֵי מַעֲיָה כְּמוֹתָהּ.

May they be like you. So too with you, my friend, with what shall I bless you? If I bless you with Torah, behold, you already have Torah; if with wealth, behold, you already have wealth; if with children, behold, you already have children. Rather, may it be Hashem's will that the offspring of your innards shall be like you.

BRAISA

תִּנּוּ רַבָּנֵינוּ: "יֹרֶה" — שְׁמוֹרָה אֶת הַבְּרִיּוֹת לְהַטִּיחַ גִּגּוֹתֶיהֶן, וּלְהַכְנִיֵס אֶת פִּירוֹתֶיהֶן, וּלְעֲשׂוֹת כָּל צְרֻכֵיהֶן.

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: Why is the first rain called yoreh? Because it instructs the people to plaster their roofs, and to bring in their fruits, and to do all their other needs in the field before the heavy rains come.

EXPLANATION

דָּבָר אַחֵר: שְׁמוֹרָה אֶת הָאָרֶץ וּמִשְׁקָהּ עַד תְּהוֹם, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "תִּלְמִיָּהּ רוּחַ נַחַת גְּדוּדֶיהָ בְּרִבְיָהּ תִּמְגַּגְנָהּ צִמְחָהּ תְּבַרְרָה".

Another explanation: It is called yoreh because it saturates the earth and waters it down to the depths, as it is stated in the pasuk: "Saturate its furrows, settle its ridges, with showers You melt it, its growth You bless."

EXPLANATION

דָּבָר אַחֵר: "יֹרֶה" — שְׁיִירֵד בְּנַחַת וְאֵינוֹ יוֹרֵד בְּזַעַף.

Another explanation: Yoreh means that it comes down gently and does not come down with fury.

OBJECTION

או אינו "יורה", אלא שמשיר את הפירות, ומשטיף את הזרעים, ומשטיף את האילנות — תלמוד לומר: "מלקוש", מה מלקוש לברכה — אף יורה לברכה.

Or perhaps the word yoreh does not mean this, but rather it is related to shooting, meaning that it knocks off the fruits, and washes away the seeds, and washes away the trees? Therefore, the verse states: "And the malkosh"; just as malkosh is for a blessing, so too yoreh is for a blessing.

OBJECTION

או אינו "מלקוש", אלא שמשפיל את הבתים, ומשבר את האילנות, ומעלה את הסקאין — תלמוד לומר: "יורה", מה יורה לברכה — אף מלקוש לברכה.

Or perhaps the word malkosh does not mean this, but rather it is a harsh rain that knocks down the houses, and breaks the trees, and brings up the locusts? Therefore, the verse states: "Yoreh"; just as yoreh is for a blessing, so too malkosh is for a blessing.

QUESTION

ויורה גופיה מנלן — דכתיב: "ובני ציון גילו ושמחו בה' אלהיכם כי נתן לכם את המורה לצדקה ויורד לכם גשם מורה ומלקוש בראשון".

And as for yoreh itself, from where do we know that it is for a blessing? As it is written: "And children of Zion, rejoice and be glad in Hashem your G-d, for He has given you the moreh (first rain) in righteousness, and He has brought down for you rain, moreh and malkosh, in the first month."

BRAISA

תנו רבנן: יורה במרחשון, ומלקוש בניסן.

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: The yoreh falls in Marcheshvan, and the malkosh falls in Nissan.

OBJECTION

אתה אומר: יורה במרחשון ומלקוש בניסן, או אינו אלא יורה בתשרי ומלקוש באייר? תלמוד לומר: "בעתו".

Do you say that the yoreh is in Marcheshvan and malkosh is in Nissan, or is it rather that yoreh is in Tishrei and malkosh is in Iyar? Therefore, the verse states: "In its season."

EXPLANATION

"מלקוש" — אמר רב נהילאי בר אידי אמר שמואל: דבר שפיל קשיותיהן של ישראל.

Regarding the word malkosh, Rav Nehilai bar Idi said that Shmuel said: It means a thing that circumcises and softens the stubbornness of Israel, bringing them to teshuvah.

EXPLANATION

דבי רבי ישמעאל תנא: דבר שפיל תבואה בקשיה.

The school of Rabbi Yishmael taught: It is a thing that fills out the grain in its stalks.

EXPLANATION

בְּמַתְנִיתָא תָּנָא: דְּבַר שְׂיֹרֵד עַל הַמְּלִילוֹת וְעַל הַקֶּשֶׁיִן.

In a Braisa it was taught: It is a thing that comes down upon the ears of corn and upon the stalks.

BRAISA

תָּנּוּ רַבָּנֵי: יוֹרֵה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן, וּמַלְקוֹשׁ בְּנִיסָן. אַתָּה אוֹמֵר יוֹרֵה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן, אוֹ אֵינוֹ אֶלָּא בְּחֹדֶשׁ כֶּסֶלִיו?
תִּלְמוּד לֹאמַר: "בְּעֵתוֹ יוֹרֵה וּמַלְקוֹשׁ", מָה מַלְקוֹשׁ בְּעֵתוֹ — אִךְ יוֹרֵה בְּעֵתוֹ,

The Rabbis taught in a Braisa: The yoreh is in Marcheshvan, and the malkosh is in Nissan. Do you say that the yoreh is in Marcheshvan, or is it rather in the month of Kislev? Therefore, the verse states: "In its season, yoreh and malkosh"; just as malkosh is in its proper season, so too yoreh must be in its proper season.

STATEMENT

כִּיּוֹן שְׂיֵצֵא נִיסָן וַיִּרְדּוּ גֶשְׁמִים אֵינוֹ סִימָן בְּרָכָה.

And once Nissan has passed and rains fall, it is not a sign of blessing but a curse; so too, if Marcheshvan passes without rain, it is not the ideal time.

BRAISA

תָּנָא אֵידֵךְ: יוֹרֵה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן וּמַלְקוֹשׁ בְּנִיסָן, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר. וַחֲכָמִים אוֹמְרִים: יוֹרֵה בְּכֶסֶלִיו.

It was taught in another Braisa: The yoreh is in Marcheshvan and the malkosh is in Nissan; these are the words of Rabbi Meir. But the Sages say: The yoreh is in Kislev.

QUESTION

מֵאֵן חֲכָמִים? אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: רַבִּי יוֹסִי הִיא, דְּתָנָא:

Who are "the Sages" of this Braisa? Rav Chisda said: It is Rabbi Yose, as it was taught in a Braisa:

BRAISA

אִיזוֹ הִיא רִבִּיעָה רִאשׁוֹנָה? הַבְּכִירָה — בְּשִׁלְשָׁה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן, בֵּינוֹנִית — בְּשִׁבְעָה בּו, אַפִּילָה — בְּשִׁבְעָה
עָשָׂר בּו, דְּבָרֵי רַבִּי מֵאִיר.

When is the first rainfall? The earliest is on the third of Marcheshvan; the intermediate is on the seventh of it; the latest is on the seventeenth of it; these are the words of Rabbi Meir.

BRAISA

רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: בְּשִׁבְעָה, וּבְשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר, וּבְעֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה.

Rabbi Yehudah says: On the seventh, and on the seventeenth, and on the twenty-third of Marcheshvan.

BRAISA

רַבִּי יוֹסִי אוֹמֵר: בְּשִׁבְעָה עָשָׂר, וּבְעֶשְׂרִים וּשְׁלֹשָׁה, וּבִרְאֵשׁ חֹדֶשׁ כֶּסֶלִיו.

Rabbi Yose says: On the seventeenth, and on the twenty-third of Marcheshvan, and on Rosh Chodesh Kislev.

BRAISA

וכן הָיָה רַבִּי יוֹסֵי אוֹמֵר: אֵין הַיְחִידִים מְתַעֲנִין עַד שְׁנֵינִיעַ רֹאשׁ חֹדֶשׁ כִּסְלִיו.

And so Rabbi Yose would say: The individuals do not begin to fast for rain until Rosh Chodesh Kislev arrives.

RULING

אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: הָלָכָה כְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי.

Rav Chisda said: The halachah is like Rabbi Yose.

STATEMENT

אֲמִימַר מִתְּנִי לָהּ דָּרַב חֲסִידָא בְּהָא לִישָׁנָא: בְּשַׁלְשָׁה בְּמַרְחֶשְׁוֹן שׁוֹאֲלִין אֶת הַגְּשָׁמִים, רַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר: בְּשִׁבְעָה בּוֹ, אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: הָלָכָה כְּרַבֵּן גַּמְלִיאֵל.

Ameimar would teach this statement of Rav Chisda in this version: On the third of Marcheshvan we begin to ask for rain; Rabban Gamliel says: On the seventh of it. Rav Chisda said: The halachah is like Rabban Gamliel.

QUESTION

כַּמָּאן אֲזִילָא הָא דִּתְנִינָא, רַבֵּן שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן גַּמְלִיאֵל אוֹמֵר: גְּשָׁמִים שְׁיִירְדּוּ שִׁבְעָה יָמִים זֶה אַחֲרֵי זֶה אֶתְּה מוֹנָה בְּהֵן רְבִיעָה רִאשׁוֹנָה וּשְׁנִיָּה וּשְׁלִישִׁית, כַּמָּאן — כְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי.

According to whom goes that which is taught in a Braisa: Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel says: Rains that fell for seven consecutive days, you count them as the first, second, and third rainfalls? According to whom is this? It is according to Rabbi Yose, who has a seven-day interval between each period.

RULING

אָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: הָלָכָה כְּרַבִּי יוֹסֵי.

Rav Chisda said: The halachah is like Rabbi Yose.

QUESTION

בְּשַׁלְמָא רְבִיעָה רִאשׁוֹנָה — לְשֹׂאוֹל. שְׁלִישִׁית — לְהַתְעַנּוֹת. שְׁנִיָּה, לְמָאי?

Granted, the first rainfall is needed to know when to ask for rain. And the third is needed to know when to fast. But the second rainfall, for what halachic purpose is it mentioned?

ANSWER

אָמַר רַבִּי זֵירָא: לְנִדְרִים, דִּתְנִין: הַנּוֹדֵר עַד הַגְּשָׁמִים — מְשַׁיְרְדּוּ גְשָׁמִים עַד שֶׁתֵּרֵד רְבִיעָה שְׁנִיָּה.

Rabbi Zeira said: For vows, as we learned in a Mishnah: One who vows not to benefit from his friend "until the rains," the vow is in effect from when the rains begin to fall until the second rainfall descends.

ANSWER

רַב זְבִיד אָמַר: לְזִיתִים. דִּתְנִין: מֵאִמְתִּי כָּל אָדָם מוֹתֵרִין בְּלֶקֶט בְּשִׁכְחָה וּבִפְאָה — מְשַׁיְלְכוּ הַנְּמוֹשׁוֹת. בְּפֶרֶט וּבַעוֹלָלוֹת — מְשַׁיְלְכוּ עֲנָיִים בְּפֶרֶם וּבֹאֹו. בְּזִיתִים — מְשַׁתְּרֵד רְבִיעָה שְׁנִיָּה.

Rav Zevid said: For olives, as we learned in a Mishnah: From when is any person permitted to take the ownerless leket, shichchah, and peah from a field? From when the namoshos have gone through. And for peret and olelos in a vineyard?

From when the poor go through the vineyard and return. And for olives? From when the second rainfall descends.

EXPLANATION

מאי "נמושות"? אמר רבי יוחנן: סבי דאזלי אתיגרא. ריש לקיש אמר: לקוטי בתר לקוטי.

What are namoshos? Rabbi Yochanan said: The elderly who walk with a staff and gather slowly. Resh Lakish said: The gatherers after the gatherers.

ANSWER

רב פפא אמר: כדי להלך בשבילי הרשות. דאמר מר: מהלכין כל אדם בשבילי הרשות — עד שתירד רביעה שניה.

Rav Papa said: The second rainfall is significant to allow walking on private paths through fields. As the Master said: Any person may walk on private paths until the second rainfall descends, because after that it ruins the soil.

ANSWER

רב נחמן בר יצחק אמר: לבער פירות שביעית. דתנן: עד מתי נהנין ושורפין בתוך ובקש של שביעית — עד שתירד רביעה שניה.

Rav Nachman bar Yitzchak said: To biur (remove) the fruits of Sheviis, as we learned in a Mishnah: Until when may one benefit from and burn straw and stubble of Sheviis? Until the second rainfall descends.

EXPLANATION

מאי טעמא? דכתיב: "ולבהמתך ולחיה אשר בארצך", כל זמן שחיה אוכלת בשדה — האכל לבהמתך בבית. כלה לחיה מן השדה — כלה לבהמתך מן הבית.

What is the reason? As it is written: "And for your domestic animal and for the wild beast that is in your land"; as long as the wild beast can eat in the field, you may feed your domestic animal in the house. Once it is gone for the wild beast from the field, you must remove it for your domestic animal from the house.

EXPLANATION

אמר רבי אבהו: מאי לשון "רביעה" — דבר שרובע את הקרקע. כדרב יהודה, דאמר רב יהודה: מיטרא בעלה דארעא הוא, שנאמר: "כי כאשר ירד הגשם והשילג מן השמים ושמה לא ישוב כי אם הרה את הארץ והו לידה והצמיחה".

Rabbi Abbahu said: What is the meaning of the term revi'ah? A thing that mates with the ground. Like that of Rav Yehudah, for Rav Yehudah said: Rain is the husband of the earth, as it is stated: "For as the rain and snow descend from heaven and do not return there, unless it has watered the earth and made it bring forth and bud."

STATEMENT

ואמר רבי אבהו: רביעה ראשונה — כדי שתירד בקרקע טפח. שניה — כדי לגוף בה פי חבית.

And Rabbi Abbahu said: The first rainfall must be enough to penetrate into the ground one tefach. The second must be enough to seal the mouth of a barrel with it.

RULING

אמר רב חסדא: גשמים שיורדו כדי לגוף בהן פי חבית אין בהן משום "ועצר".

Rav Chisda said: Rains that fell enough to seal the mouth of a barrel with them, they do not have the status of "And He will withhold" the heavens.

RULING

ואמר רב חסדא: גשמים שיורדו קודם "ועצר", אין בהן משום "ועצר".

And Rav Chisda said: Rains that fell before the curse of "And He will withhold" is read in Shema, they do not have the status of "And He will withhold."

EXPLANATION

אמר אביי: לא אמרן אלא קודם "ועצר" דאורתא, אבל קודם "ועצר" דצפרא — יש בהן משום "ועצר". דאמר רב יהודה בר יצחק: הני ענני דצפרא לית בהו מששא, דכתיב: "מה אעשה לך אפרים מה אעשה לך יהודה וחסדכם כענן בקר וגו'".

Abaye said: We only said this regarding rain before the "And He will withhold" of the evening, but rain before the "And He will withhold" of the morning has the status of "And He will withhold." For Rav Yehudah bar Yitzchak said: These morning clouds have no substance, as it is written: "What shall I do for you, Ephraim? What shall I do for you, Yehudah? For your goodness is like a morning cloud..."

QUESTION

אמר ליה רב פפא לאביי, והא אמרי אינשי: במפתח בבי מיטרא — בר חמרא מוה שקוה וגני!

Rav Papa said to Abaye: But don't people say: When it rains at the opening of the gates in the morning, donkey driver, fold your sack and sleep because it will rain all day?

ANSWER

לא קשיא: הא דקטיר בעיבא, הא דקטיר בענני.

This is not difficult: This case of substantial rain is when the sky is bound with thick clouds, and that case of unsubstantial rain is when it is bound with light clouds.

STATEMENT

אמר רב יהודה: טבא לשתא דטבת ארמלתא. איכא דאמרי: דלא ביירי תרביצי, ואיכא דאמרי: דלא שקיל שודפנא.

Rav Yehudah said: It is good for the year when Teves is a widow (dry). Some say this is because the gardens do not lie fallow, and some say it is because the blast does not take the crops.

QUESTION

איני? והאמר רב חסדא: טבא לשתא דטבת מנוולתא!

Is that so? But didn't Rav Chisda say: It is good for the year when Teves is muddy and ugly with rain?

ANSWER

לא קשיא: הא דאתא מיטרא מעיקרא, הא דלא אתא מיטרא מעיקרא.

This is not difficult: This statement of Rav Yehudah is where rain came beforehand in Marcheshvan and Kislev, and that statement of Rav Chisda is where rain did not come beforehand.

RULING

וְאָמַר רַב חֲסִידָא: גְּשָׁמִים שֶׁיָּרְדוּ עַל מִקְצֵת מְדִינָה וְעַל מִקְצֵת מְדִינָה לֹא יָרְדוּ — אֵין בָּהֶן מְשׁוּם
”וְעָצָר”.

And Rav Chisda said: Rains that fell on part of a province, and on part of the province did not fall, they do not have the status of “And He will withhold.”

QUESTION

אֵינִי? וְהִכְתִּיב: ”וְגַם אֲנֹכִי מְנַעַתִּי מִכֶּם אֶת הַגֶּשֶׁם בְּעוֹד שְׁלֹשָׁה חֳדָשִׁים לְקָצִיר וְהַמְטַרְתִּי עַל עֵיר
אַחַת וְעַל עֵיר אַחַת לֹא אֲמַטִּיר חֶלְקָה אַחַת תִּמָּטֵר וְגו’”, וְאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: שְׁתִּיחֶן לְקָלְלָהּ!

Is that so? But isn't it written: "And I also withheld the rain from you when there were yet three months to the harvest, and I caused it to rain upon one city and upon another city I did not cause it to rain; one field was rained upon..." and Rav Yehudah said that Rav said: Both of them are for a curse!

ANSWER

לֹא קִשְׁיָא: הָא דְאַתָּא טוֹבָא, הָא דְאַתָּא כְּדַמְבָּעִי לִיה.

This is not difficult: This curse is where it came in excess and ruined the crops, and that blessing is where it came as much as was needed.

PROOF

אָמַר רַב אֲשִׁי: דִּיקָא נָמִי, דְּכִתִּיב: ”תִּמָּטֵר” — תִּהְיֶה מְקוֹם מָטֵר. שְׁמַע מִינֶהּ.

Rav Ashi said: It is also precise in the pasuk, as it is written: "It shall be rained upon" — meaning it will be a place of too much rain. Learn from this.

STATEMENT

אָמַר רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ: מֵאֵימָתִי מְבָרְכִין עַל הַגְּשָׁמִים — מִשְׁיֵצָא חֲתָן לְקִרְאָת כְּלָה.

Rabbi Abbahu said: From when do we bless over the rains? From when the groom goes out to meet the bride, meaning when the puddles on the ground splash up to meet the falling drops.

ANSWER

מֵאֵי מְבָרְךְ? אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: ”מוֹדִים אֲנִיחֶנוּ לָךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ עַל כָּל טֶפֶח וְטֶפֶח שֶׁהוֹרֵדְתָּ לָנוּ”.

What does he bless? Rav Yehudah said that Rav said: "We thank You, Hashem our G-d, for every single drop that You have brought down for us."

STATEMENT

וְרַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מְסַיֵּים בֵּה הֵכִי: ”אֵילּוּ פִינוּ מְלֵא שִׁירָה כִּיִּם וְלִשְׁוֹנֵנוּ רִנָּה כְּהַמוֹן גְּלִיו כּו’”, עַד ”אֵל
יַעֲזֹבוּנוּ רַחֲמֶיךָ ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְלֹא עֲזָבוּנוּ, כְּרוֹךְ רוֹב הַהוֹדָאוֹת”.

And Rabbi Yochanan concludes it like this: "Were our mouth full of song like the sea, and our tongue joy like the abundance of its waves..." until "may Your mercies not forsake us, Hashem our G-d, and not abandon us. Blessed is the

QUESTION

”רוב ההודאות” ולא ”כל ההודאות”? אמר רבא, אימא: ”אל ההודאות”. אמר רב פפא: הלכך.

The Gemara asks: "Abundant thanksgivings" and not "all thanksgivings"? Rava said: Say instead: "G-d of thanksgivings."
Rav Papa said: Therefore,

SUMMARY

The Gemara begins by analyzing the terms yoreh and malkosh, explaining that the yoreh instructs people to prepare their homes and fields, moistens the earth, and falls gently, while the malkosh fills out the grain in its stalks and softens the stubbornness of Klal Yisrael by inspiring teshuvah. We then learn a tannaitic dispute regarding the exact dates of the first rainfall, with Rabbi Meir, Rabbi Yehuda, and Rabbi Yosei offering different ranges of dates spanning from the third of Marheshvan until the New Moon of Kislev. Finally, the Gemara establishes the halachah in accordance with Rabbi Yosei regarding the fasting schedule for a drought, and in accordance with Rabban Gamliel that we begin asking for rain on the seventh of Marheshvan.

למעשה WHAT TO TAKE HOME

The Gemara teaches us that the first rain is called "yoreh" because it "instructs" (moreh) people to plaster their roofs, bring in their produce, and prepare for the coming season. Think about this, my dear friend: rain is a direct, miraculous gift from Hashem, yet its very name tells us to get up and do our part. Hashem sends the blessing, but He expects us to prepare the vessel. If we leave our roofs unplastered and our fields untended, the very same rain that should have brought life and warmth will instead cause damage and loss.

This is a profound rule in all of our avodah. We often pray for parnassah, for shalom bayis, or for hatzalah in our learning, and we wait for a miracle to fall from Heaven. But the Torah is teaching us that when the blessing is about to come, we must first "plaster our roofs." We have to make a vessel. If you want your children to grow up with yiras Shamayim, you cannot just pray; you must show them a home filled with warmth for mitzvos. If you want success in your learning, you must set a fixed time and clear away the distractions.

Even the "malkosh," the late rain, is described by Shmuel as that which "circumcises the stubbornness (kashyuteihen) of Israel." When things do not go exactly as we planned, or when the blessings are delayed, it is not to break us, chas v'shalom. It is Hashem gently softening our hearts, breaking through our stubbornness, and bringing us closer to Him. Every drop of rain, and every event in our lives, is sent with precise timing and immense love to help us grow.

Today, when you pray for Hashem's blessing in any area of your life, take one practical step to prepare your "vessel" for that blessing—whether it is setting a distraction-free zone for your learning or making a concrete plan to avoid a conflict at home.