

This mishna, which includes all of this chapter's *mishnayot*, contains a series of blessings and *halakhot* that are not recited at specific times, but rather in response to various experiences and events.

מתני' הַרְוָאָה מְקוּם שֶׁנִּעְשׂוּ בוֹ נִסִּים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ בְּמְקוֹם הַזֶּה". מְקוֹם שֶׁנִּעְקְרָה מִמֶּנּוּ עֲבוֹדַת זָרָה, אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... שֶׁעָקַר עֲבוֹדַת זָרָה מֵאַרְצֵנוּ."

עַל הַזִּיקִין, וְעַל הַזְּעוּת, וְעַל הַרְעָמִים, וְעַל הַרוּחוֹת, וְעַל הַבְּרָקִים אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... שֶׁכָּחוּ וְגִבּוֹרֹתוֹ מֵאֵל עוֹלָם". עַל הַהָרִים וְעַל הַגְּבְעוֹת, וְעַל הַיַּמִּים, וְעַל הַנְּהָרוֹת, וְעַל הַמְּדַבְּרוֹת אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... עוֹשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית". רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אָמַר: הַרְוָאָה אֶת הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ שֶׁעָשָׂה אֶת הַיָּם הַגָּדוֹל", בְּזִמְנֵי שְׂרָוֵאוֹהוּ לְפָרְקִים.

עַל הַגְּשָׁמִים, וְעַל בְּשׂוֹרוֹת טוֹבוֹת, אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ הַטוֹב וְהַמֵּטִיב". עַל בְּשׂוֹרוֹת רָעוֹת, אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ דֵּיין הָאֱמֶת". בְּנֵה בַּיִת חָדָשׁ, וְקָנָה בָלִים חֲדָשִׁים, אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּיְמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה". מְבָרֵךְ עַל הַרְעָה מֵעֵין עַל הַטּוֹבָה, וְעַל הַטּוֹבָה מֵעֵין עַל הַרְעָה.

וְהַצּוֹעֵק לְשַׁעֲבֵר – הָרִי זֶה תִּפְלַת שְׂוֵא; הִיתָה אִשְׁתּוֹ מְעוֹבְרָת, וְאָמַר: "יְהִי רְצוֹן שֶׁתֵּלֵד אִשְׁתִּי זָכָר" – הָרִי זֶה תִּפְלַת שְׂוֵא; הִיָּה בָּא בְּדַרְדָּר וְשָׁמַע קוֹל צִוְחָה בְּעֵיר, וְאָמַר: "יְהִי רְצוֹן שֶׁלֹּא תִּהְיֶה בְּתוֹךְ בֵּיתִי" – הָרִי זֶה תִּפְלַת שְׂוֵא.

הַנִּכְנָס לְכָרֶךְ מִתְּפַלֵּל שְׁתֵּים, אַחַת בְּכַנְסָתוֹ וְאַחַת בִּיצִיאָתוֹ; בֶּן עֲזַאי אָמַר: אַרְבַּע, שְׁתֵּים בְּכַנְסָתוֹ וְשְׁתֵּים בִּיצִיאָתוֹ, נוֹתֵן הוֹדָאָה עַל שְׁעָבֵר וְצוֹעֵק עַל הָעֵתִיד.

חַיִּיב אָדָם לְבָרֵךְ עַל הַרְעָה כְּשֶׁשׁ שֶׁמְבָרֵךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְאַהֲבַתְּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ" וְגו'. "בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ" – בְּשֵׁנֵי יְצִירָתְךָ, בִּיצִירָתְךָ טוֹב וּבִיצִירָתְךָ רָע; "וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ" – אִפְּלִיו הוּא נוֹטֵל אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל מַאֲדָךְ – בְּכָל מְמוֹנְךָ. דָּבָר אַחֵר: "בְּכָל מַאֲדָךְ" – בְּכָל מְדָה וּמְדָה שֶׁהוּא מוֹדֵד לְךָ הֵי מוֹדָה לוֹ.

MISHNA One who sees a place where miracles occurred on Israel's behalf recites: Blessed^H...

Who performed miracles for our forefathers in this place. One who sees a place from which idolatry was eradicated recites: Blessed... Who eradicated idolatry from our land.

One who sees conspicuous natural occurrences recites a blessing. For *zikin* and *zeva'ot*, which the Gemara will discuss below, for **thunder, gale force winds, and lightning**, manifestations of the power of the Creator, one recites: **Blessed... Whose strength and power fill the world. For extraordinary (Rambam) mountains, hills, seas, rivers, and deserts, one recites: Blessed... Author of creation.**^{NH} Consistent with his opinion that a separate blessing should be instituted for each individual species, **Rabbi Yehuda says: One who sees the great sea^H recites a special blessing: Blessed... Who made the great sea.** As with all blessings of this type, one only recites it **when he sees the sea intermittently,**^H not on a regular basis.

For rain and other good tidings, one recites the special blessing: **Blessed... Who is good and Who does good. Even for bad tidings,**^H one recites a special blessing: **Blessed... the true Judge.** Similarly, when one built a new house or purchased new vessels, he recites: **Blessed... Who has given us life, sustained us, and brought us to this time.** The mishna articulates a general principle: **One recites a blessing for the bad that befalls him just as he does for the good.** In other words, one recites the appropriate blessing for the trouble that he is experiencing at present despite the fact that it may conceal some positive element in the future. **Similarly, one must recite a blessing for the good that befalls him just as for the bad.**

The mishna states: **And one who cries out over the past** in an attempt to change that which has already occurred, **it is a vain prayer.** For example, **one whose wife was pregnant and he says: May it be God's will that my wife will give birth to a male child, it is a vain prayer.** Or **one who was walking on the path home and he heard the sound of a scream in the city, and he says: May it be God's will that this scream will not be from my house, it is a vain prayer.** In both cases, the event already occurred.

The Sages also said: **One who enters a large city,** the Gemara explains below that this is in a case where entering the city is dangerous, **recites two prayers: One upon his entrance,** that he may enter in peace, **and one upon his exit,** that he may leave in peace. **Ben Azzai says:** He recites **four prayers, two upon his entrance and two upon his exit.** In addition to praying that he may enter and depart in peace, he gives thanks for the past and cries out in prayer for the future.

The mishna articulates a general principle: **One is obligated to recite a blessing for the bad that befalls him just as he recites a blessing for the good that befalls him, as it is stated:** "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart," "with all your soul, and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). The mishna explains this verse as follows: "With all your heart" means **with your two inclinations,**^N **with your good inclination and your evil inclination,** both of which must be subjugated to the love of God. **With all your soul means even if God takes your soul.** "And with all your might" means **with all your money,** as money is referred to in the Bible as might. **Alternatively, it may be explained that "with all your might" means with every measure that He metes out to you; whether it is good or troublesome, thank Him.**

HALAKHA

One who sees a place where miracles occurred on Israel's behalf recites: Blessed, etc. – הַרְוָאָה מְקוּם שֶׁנִּעְשׂוּ בוֹ נִסִּים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל, אָמַר: בְּרוּךְ... רַבִּי: One who sees a place where miracles were performed on Israel's behalf recites: Blessed... Who performed miracles, etc. This blessing, like all other blessings recited over a sight, requires invocation of God's name and His sovereignty (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:9; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 218:1).

Blessed... Author of creation – בְּרוּךְ... עוֹשֵׂה: One who sees mountains, hills, seas, rivers, or deserts recites: Blessed... Author of creation (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:15; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 228:1).

One who sees the great sea – הַרְוָאָה אֶת הַיָּם: One who sees the great sea, a reference to the Mediterranean Sea, though some say it refers to an ocean (*Leḥem Ḥamudot, Magen Avraham*) recites: Blessed... Who makes the great sea (*Tur*). Some say that he recites the blessing in the past tense: Who made the great sea, in accordance with the opinion of Rav Yehuda (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:15; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 228:1).

When he sees it intermittently – בְּזִמְנֵי שְׂרָוֵאוֹהוּ: Just as with all blessings recited over sight, one recites the blessing over the sea only if he did not see it for thirty days. The day that he saw it last and the day that he sees it now are not included in the tally (*Mishna Berura; Rambam Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:15; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 218:3, 224:13).

For bad tidings – עַל בְּשׂוֹרוֹת רָעוֹת: Over bad tidings, whether they are bad for him or for others (*Biur Halakha*), one recites: Blessed is the true Judge (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:3; *Shulḥan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 222, 2).

NOTES

Blessed... Author of creation – בְּרוּךְ... עוֹשֵׂה: Since some of these phenomena, e.g., thunder and lightning, are formed anew each time, the formula of the blessing is in the present tense (*Tziyyun LeNefesh Ḥayya*).

With your two inclinations – בְּשֵׁנֵי יְצִירָתְךָ: One fulfills the will of his Creator with his good inclination and combats the evil inclination to subdue it, thereby worshipping God with both inclinations (*Talmidei Rabbeinu Yona*).

LANGUAGE

Money belt [punda] – פונדה: The source of this word, which occasionally appears as *apunda*, is the Latin *funda*, meaning a belt pack, a money belt or Greek *φουνδα*, *funda*, meaning belt or pocket. A *punda* is a hollow belt with a pocket for money, thereby it serves as both a belt and a wallet.

BACKGROUND

Sadducees and Boethusians – צדוקים וביתוסים: These were heterodox sects during the Second Temple period. These sects did not accept the Oral Torah at all, and they interpreted the Written Torah in their own way. Several customs were introduced during the Second Temple period in order to help the Sadducees understand the error of their ways, i.e., to underscore the differences between normative practice and theirs, and to underscore the fact that the *halakha* ignores their opinions. Among these innovations were: Having the High Priest take an oath before entering the Holy of Holies on Yom Kippur and requiring other witnesses to testify to the reliability of the witnesses to the New Moon.

Valley of willows – פקתא דעבבות – This valley is well known in the Talmud as a desert, apparently, along the route taken by caravans. There was no drinking water there, and only in certain isolated places were there people selling water brought from the rivers. In addition, it was a place prone to attacks by highwaymen.

לא יקל אדם את ראשו כנגד שער המזרח, שהוא מכון כנגד בית קדשי הקדשים. ולא יבנס להר הבית במקלו, ובמנעלו, ובפונדתו, ובאבק שעל רגליו, ולא יעשנו קפנדריא; ורקיקה – מקל יחומר.

כל חותמי ברכות שבמקדש היו אומרים: "עד העולם". משקלקלו הצדוקים ואמרו אין עולם אלא אחד – התקינו שיהיו אומרים: "מן העולם ועד העולם".

והתקינו שיהא אדם שואל את שלום חברו בשם, שנאמר: "והנה בעו בא מבית לחם ויאמר לקוצרים: ה' עמכם, ויאמרו לו: יברכה ה'"; ואומר: "ה' עמך גבור החיל"; ואומר: "אל תבוזו כי זקנה אמן"; ואומר: "עת לעשות לה' הפרו תורתך". רבי נתן אומר: הפרו תורתך משום עת לעשות לה'.

גמ' מנא הני מילי? אמר רבי יוחנן, דאמר קרא: "ויאמר יתרו ברוך ה' אשר הציל וגו'".

אניסא דרבים מברכינן, אניסא דיחיד לא מברכינן! והא ההוא גברא דהוה קא אזיל בעבר מינא, נפל עליה אריא, אתעביד ליה ניסא ואיתצל מיניה; אתא לקמיה דרבא, ואמר ליה: כל אימת דמטיית להתם – בריך ברוך... שעשה לי ניס במקום הזה!

ואמר בריה דרבינא הוה קאזיל בפקתא דערבות וצתא למיא, אתעביד ליה ניסא איברי ליה עינא דמיא ואישתני.

The mishna teaches several Temple-related *halakhot*. One may not act irreverently or conduct himself flippantly opposite the eastern gate of the Temple Mount, which is aligned opposite the Holy of Holies. In deference to the Temple, one may not enter the Temple Mount with his staff, his shoes, his money belt [*punda*],¹ or even the dust on his feet. One may not make the Temple a shortcut to pass through it, and through an *a fortiori* inference, all the more so one may not spit on the Temple Mount.

The mishna relates: At the conclusion of all blessings recited in the Temple, those reciting the blessing would say: Blessed are You Lord, God of Israel, until everlasting [*haolam*], the world. But when the Sadducees^b strayed and declared that there is but one world and there is no World-to-Come, the Sages instituted that at the conclusion of the blessing one recites: From everlasting [*haolam*] to everlasting [*haolam*].

The Sages also instituted that one should greet another in the name of God,ⁿ i.e., one should mention God's name in his greeting, as it is stated: "And presently Boaz came from Bethlehem and said to the harvesters, The Lord is with you, and they said to him, May the Lord bless you" (Ruth 2:4). And it says: "And the angel of God appeared to him and said to him, God is with you, mighty man of valor" (Judges 6:12). And it says: "And despise not your mother when she is old" (Proverbs 23:22), i.e., one must not neglect customs which he inherits. And lest you say that mentioning God's name is prohibited, it says: "It is time to work for the Lord; they have made void Your Torah" (Psalms 119:126), i.e., it is occasionally necessary to negate biblical precepts in order to perform God's will, and greeting another is certainly God's will. Rabbi Natan says another interpretation of the verse: "Make void Your Torah" because "it is the time to work for the Lord,"ⁿ i.e., occasionally it is necessary to negate biblical precepts in order to bolster the Torah.

GEMARA With regard to the obligation to recite a blessing for a miracle, the Gemara asks: From where are these matters derived?ⁿ Rabbi Yohanan said: The verse states: "And Jethro said: Blessed be the Lord, Who delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of Pharaoh; Who delivered the people from under the hand of the Egyptians" (Exodus 18:10); a blessing is recited for a miracle.

The Gemara asks: For a miracle that occurs for the multitudes we recite a blessing, but for a miracle that befalls an individual person we do not recite a blessing? Wasn't there an incident where a certain man was walking along the right side of the Euphrates River when a lion attacked him, a miracle was performed for him, and he was rescued? He came before Rava, who said to him: Every time that you arrive there, to the site of the miracle, recite the blessing, "Blessed... Who performed a miracle for me in this place."

And once when Mar, son of Ravina, was walking in a valley of willows^b and was thirsty for water, a miracle was performed for him and a spring of water was created for him, and he drank.

NOTES

שׂיהא אדם – One should greet another in the name of God – שואל את שלום חברו בשם: Some explain that the greeting: Shalom, is included in this category. Since the Sages said that Shalom is one of God's names, one who greets another with Shalom greets him with the name of God (*Arukh*).

Rabbi Natan says: "Make void Your Torah" because "it is the time to work for the Lord" – רבי נתן אומר הפרו תורתך משום עת –

לעשות לה': Some explain that Rabbi Natan did not seek to add anything to the mishna. However, since this is the end of the chapter and of the tractate, and in most tractates there is an attempt to end on a positive note. Therefore, he reversed the order of the verse so that tractate *Berakhot* would end with: It is the time to work for the Lord (Rabbi Zekharya Stern).

From where are these matters derived – מנא הני מילי – Rashi

has a variant, simpler reading of this question. However, the question remains: All of these blessings were instituted by the Sages. Why, then, does the Gemara seek Torah support for them? There is still room to say that there is no reason for one to recite a blessing over a miracle that was performed on behalf of another, as he himself did not derive any benefit from that miracle. Therefore, evidence is cited from Jethro, who recited a blessing under those circumstances (*Tziyyun LeNefesh Hayya*).

ותו זמנא תדא הוה קאזיל ברסתקא דמחוזא ונפל עליה גמלא פריצא. איתפרקא ליה אשיתא, על לגוה; כי מטא לערבות, ברוך: ברוך... שעשה לי גם בערבות ובגמל, כי מטא לרסתקא דמחוזא. ברוך: ברוך... שעשה לי גם בגמל ובערבות! - אמרי: אנפסא דרבים כולי עלמא מיחיבי לברוכי, אנפסא דיחיד - איהו חייב לברוכי.

תנו רבנן: הוואה מעברות הים, ומעברות הירדן, מעברות נחלי ארנון, אבני אלגביש במורד בית חורון, ואבן שבקש לירוק עוג מלך הבשן על ישראל, ואבן שישב עליה משה בשעה שעשה יהושע מלחמה בעמלק, ואשתו של לוט, וחומת יריחו שנבלעה במקומה - על כולן צריך שיתן הודאה ושבח לפני המקום.

בשלמא מעברות הים, דכתיב: "ויבאו בני ישראל בתוך הים ביבשה", מעברות הירדן, דכתיב: "ויעמדו הכהנים נשאי הארון ברית ה' בחרבה בתוך הירדן הכן וכל ישראל עברים בחרבה עד אשר תמו כל הגוי לעבור את הירדן".

אלא מעברות נחלי ארנון מנלן? - דכתיב: "על כן יאמר בספר מלחמת ה' את והב בסופה" וגו'; תנא: "את והב בסופה" - שני מצורעים היו דהו מהלכין בסוף מנהג ישראל, כי הו קא חלפי ישראל אתו אמוראי

Furthermore, once when Mar, son of Ravina, was walking in the marketplace [risteka]^l of Mehoza and a wild camel [gamla peritza]^l attacked him. The wall cracked open, he went inside it, and he was rescued. Ever since, when he came to the reeds he recited: Blessed...Who performed a miracle for me in the reedsⁿ and with the camel. And, when he came to the marketplace of Mehoza he recited: Blessed...Who performed a miracle for me with the camel and in the reeds, indicating that one recites a blessing even for a miracle that occurs to an individual. The Sages say: On a miracle performed on behalf of the multitudes, everyone is obligated to recite a blessing;^h on a miracle performed on behalf of an individual, only the individual is obligated to recite a blessing.^h

The Sages taught in a *baraita* a list of places where one is required to recite a blessing due to miracles that were performed there: One who sees the crossings of the Red Sea, where Israel crossed; and the crossings of the Jordan;^h and the crossings of the streams of Arnon; the hailstones of Elgavish on the descent of Beit Horon; the rock that Og, King of Bashan, sought to hurl upon Israel; and the rock upon which Moses sat when Joshua waged war against Amalek; and Lot's wife; and the wall of Jericho that was swallowed up in its place. On all of these miracles one must give thanks and offer praise before God.

The Gemara elaborates: Granted, the miracles at the crossings of the sea are recorded explicitly in the Torah, as it is stated: "And the Israelites went into the sea on dry ground and the water was a wall for them on their right and on their left" (Exodus 14:22). So too, the miracle at the crossings of the Jordan, as it is stated: "The priests who bore the ark of God's covenant stood on dry land within the Jordan, while all Israel crossed on dry land until the entire nation finished crossing the Jordan" (Joshua 3:17).

However, from where do we derive the miracle that occurred at the crossing of the streams of Arnon? As it is stated: "Wherefore it is said in the Book of the Wars of the Lord: *Vahev in Sufa*, and the valleys of Arnon. And the slope of the valleys that incline toward the seat of Ar, and lean upon the border of Moab" (Numbers 21:14-15). It was taught: "*Vahev in Sufa*"; there were two lepers, one named Et and the second named Hev, who were walking at the rear of the camp of Israel. As Israel passed, the Emorites came

LANGUAGE

Marketplace [risteka] - רִסְתָּקָא: From the Iranian rastak, meaning a straight line. In talmudic times, it was used to mean district or village. Here it refers to a row of stores or the fence surrounding them.

Wild camel [gamla peritza] - גַּמְלָא פְרִיצָא - Rav Sa'adia Gaon explains here, and so it seems from the context, that this refers to a camel in heat. During their rutting period, camels run wild and pose a danger to all who encounter them.

NOTES

Who performed a miracle for me in the reeds - שְׁעָשָׂה לִי מִוִּנְיָתוֹ מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יְיָ: He mentioned the place but not the miracle. The miracle was, in essence, performed to the place with the appearance of the spring. Remnants of the spring remained there as well (*Hagahot* of Rabbi Nehemya Beirakh).

HALAKHA

For a miracle that was performed on behalf of the multitudes, everyone is obligated to recite a blessing - אֲנִיפָא דְרַבִּים כּוּלֵי עַלְמָא מִיחיבי לְבְרוּכֵי - For a miracle that was performed for the entire Jewish people, or at least the majority thereof, everyone is required to recite a blessing. If it was performed for only a segment of the Jewish people, only those for whom the miracle was performed recite a blessing (*Mishna Berura*; Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:9; *Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 218:2).

For a miracle that was performed on behalf of an individual, only the individual is obligated to recite a blessing - אֲנִיפָא דְיָחִיד אִיהוּ חַיִּיב לְבְרוּכֵי - Upon arriving at a place where a miracle was performed for him, one recites a blessing for his miracle. All his progeny must also recite a blessing for this miracle. His children recite: Who performed a miracle for my father; his descendants recite: Who performed a miracle for my father's father, or: Who performed a miracle for my ancestors (*Mishna Berura*). He must include in the blessing all miracles that were performed for him in other places; in accordance with the opinion of Ravina (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhot Berakhot* 10:9; *Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 218:4-5).

One who sees the crossings of the Red Sea and the crossings of the Jordan, etc. - הַוֹּאֵה מִעֲבֹרוֹת הַיָּם: One who sees a place where miracles were performed for Israel, i.e., the crossings of the sea and the Jordan and the rest of the places that miracles were performed for the people of Israel at various times, recites: Blessed...Who performed miracles for our forefathers in this place (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Hayyim* 218:1).

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עבדי להון נקירותא וטשו בהון, אמרי: כי חלפי ישראל הכא נקטלינו, ולא הוה ידעי דארון הוה מסגי קמניהו דישאל והוה מימך להו טורי מקמניהו; כיון דאתא ארון, אנדבקו טורי בהדי הדדי וקטלינו, ונחת דמניהו לנחלי ארנון. כי אתו את והב, חזו דמא דקא נפיק מביני טורי, אתו ואמרי להו לישאל ואמרו שירה, היינו דכתיב: "ואשד הנחלים אשר נטה לשבת ער ונשען לגבול מואב".

and prepared caves for themselves and they hid in them. They said: When Israel passes here we will kill them. And they did not know that the Ark of the Covenant preceded the children of Israel and would flatten mountains before them. When the Ark came, the mountains adhered one to another and killed them; and their blood flowed down to the streams of Arnon. When Et and Hev, the lepers, arrived, they saw the blood that was emerging from between the mountains, and they came and told Israel what had happened. Israel recited a song of praise, as it is stated: "And at the cascade of the brooks that goes down to the dwelling of Ar, and lies upon the border of Moab" (Numbers 21:15). This refers to the cascade of the brooks where the mountain, which had once been a valley, spread out in the direction of the mountain in Ar, in Moab.

אבני אלגביש - מאי אבני אלגביש?

Among the sites enumerated in the mishna where one is obligated to recite a blessing in recognition of the miracles that occurred there, was the site of the hailstones of Elgavish. The Gemara asks: What are the hailstones of Elgavish?

NOTES

The rock that Og, King of Bashan, sought to throw upon Israel – אָבֹן – שָׁבַקְשׁ עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן לְזָרוֹק עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל: Almost all commentators explain this by means of allusion and esoterica, as this story is aggadic and not historical. One approach suggests that Moses was concerned that Og had unique merit in his favor due to his interaction with Abraham (see tractate *Nidda* 61a); that is represented by the mountain that was as wide as the entire camp of Israel. The merit of Israel, who are likened to grasshoppers (Numbers ch. 13), succeeds in perforating this mountain. According to this *aggada*, the story of the killing of Og can be understood as joining the merit of Moses, ten cubits is an exaggeration, with the merit of the nation, the axe, and the merit of the forefathers, Moses' leap, in order to kill Og (Rashba). An additional approach suggests that a mountain is a common metaphor for the evil inclination (see the end of Tractate *Sota*), and Og wanted to corrupt Israel just as Balak did, which is alluded to by the mountain he wished to throw upon them. In this case, Israel's merit saved them from being corrupted (*Darash Moshe*).

HALAKHA

Over Lot – על לוט – One who sees Lot's wife, the pillar of salt, recites a blessing both for the miracle that was performed for her and for the miracle that was performed for Lot, her husband. Over Lot's wife, one recites: Blessed...the true Judge, while over Lot: Blessed...Who remembers the righteous (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 218:8).

תָּנָא: אַבְנִים שְׁעָמְדוּ עַל גַּב אִישׁ וַיִּרְדּוּ עַל גַּב אִישׁ; עָמְדוּ עַל גַּב אִישׁ – זֶה מֹשֶׁה, דְּכָתִיב: "וְהָאִישׁ מֹשֶׁה עָנּוּ מְאֹד", וְכָתִיב: "וַיַּחְדְּלוּ הַקְּלוֹת וְהַבָּרָד וּמִטֵּר לֹא נָתַךְ אַרְצָה". יָרְדוּ עַל גַּב אִישׁ – זֶה יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, דְּכָתִיב: "קַח לְךָ אֶת יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן נּוּן אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ בּוֹ", וְכָתִיב: "וַיְהִי בְּנוֹסֶם מִפְּנֵי בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל הֵם בְּמוֹרֵד בֵּית חֹרֶן וְהַהַשְׁלִיךְ עֲלֵיהֶם אַבְנִים גְּדוֹלוֹת".

אָבֹן שָׁבַקְשׁ עוֹג מֶלֶךְ הַבָּשָׁן לְזָרוֹק עַל יִשְׂרָאֵל – גְּמָרָא גְּמִירֵי לָהּ. אָמַר: מַחְנֵה יִשְׂרָאֵל כַּמָּה הָיָה – תִּלְתָּא פְּרָסִי, וְאִייל וְאִיעָקֵר טוּרָא בַר תִּלְתָּא פְּרָסִי וְאִישְׁדִּי עֲלֵיהֶוּ וְאִיקְטִילֵנְהוּ. אִיל עָקֵר טוּרָא בַר תִּלְתָּא פְּרָסִי וְאִישְׁדִּי עַל רִישֵׁיהּ, וְאִישְׁדִּי קוֹדֵשׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא עֲלֵיהּ קַמְצֵי וְנִקְבוּהָ וְנַחֲתֵי בְּצוּרֵיהּ;

הוּא בְּעֵי לְמַשְׁלָפָה, מִשְׁכִּי שִׁינֵיהּ לְהָאִי גִיסָא וְלָהּ אִיסָא וְלֹא מְצִי לְמַשְׁלָפָה, וְהֵינּוּ דְכָתִיב: "שִׁנֵּי רְשָׁעִים שִׁבְרֵת"; וְכֹדְרֵי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לֵקִישׁ, דְּאָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לֵקִישׁ: מֵאִי דְכָתִיב "שִׁנֵּי רְשָׁעִים שִׁבְרֵת" – אֵל תִּקְרִי "שִׁבְרֵת" אֶלָּא "שִׁבְרֵבְתָּ".

מֹשֶׁה כַּמָּה הָיָה – עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹת, שְׁקִיל נֶרְגָא בַר עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹן שׁוֹר עֶשֶׂר אַמּוֹן, וּמַחֲטִייה בְּקֶרְסוּלֵיהּ וְקִטְלֵיהּ.

וְאָבֹן שִׁיבַע עֲלֵיהּ מֹשֶׁה – דְּכָתִיב: "וַיְדִי מֹשֶׁה כְּבָדִים וַיִּקְחוּ אָבֹן וַיִּשְׂמְנוּ תַחְתָּיו וַיִּשָּׁב עָלָיו".

וְאִשְׁתּוֹ שֶׁל לוֹט – שְׁנַאָמַר: "וַתִּבֶּט אִשְׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֶרָיו וַתִּהְיֶה נְצִיב מֶלֶח". וְחוֹמַת יְרִיחוֹ שְׁנִבְלָעָה – דְּכָתִיב: "וַתִּפֹּל הַחוֹמָה תַחְתֵּיהָ".

בְּשִׁלְמָא כּוּלְהוּ – נִיסָא, אֶלָּא אִשְׁתּוֹ שֶׁל לוֹט, פּוֹרְעָנוּתָא הוּא! – דְּאָמַר "בְּרוּךְ... דִּין הָאָמֶת".

וְהָא "הוֹדָאָה וְשִׁבַח" קִתְּנֵי! – תְּנִי: עַל לוֹט וְעַל אִשְׁתּוֹ מְבָרְכִים שְׁתֵּימָם, עַל אִשְׁתּוֹ אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... דִּין הָאָמֶת", וְעַל לוֹט אָמַר: "בְּרוּךְ... זִכְרָא אֶת הַצְּדִיקִים". אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אִפִּילוּ בְּשַׁעַת כַּעַסוֹ שֶׁל הַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא זִכְרָא אֶת הַצְּדִיקִים, שְׁנַאָמַר: "וַיְהִי בְּשַׁחַת אֱלֹהִים אֶת עַרְי הַכֹּהֵן וַיִּזְכְּרוּ אֱלֹהִים אֶת אַבְרָהָם וַיִּשְׁלַח אֶת לוֹט מִתּוֹךְ הַהִפְכָּה" וְגו'.

It is taught in the midrash: They are the stones that remained suspended in the air and did not fall because of [al gav] a man [ish] and they fell down because of [al gav] a man [ish]. The Gemara explains: They remained suspended because of a man; that is Moses, whom the verse refers to as a man, as it is written: "And the man Moses was very modest" (Numbers 12:3), and it is written: "And Moses went out of the city from Pharaoh, and spread forth his hands unto the Lord; the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured upon the earth" (Exodus 9:33). Moses' hailstones remained suspended. And the stones descended because of a man; that is Joshua, who was also called man, as it is written: "Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is spirit" (Numbers 27:18). And it is written that when Joshua and his people waged war against the army of the Emorite kings, God told him not to fear them because God would deliver them into his hands; and indeed, they died by means of these stones: "As they fled from before Israel, while they were at the descent of Beit Horon, that the Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them unto Azeka, and they died; they were more who died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew by sword" (Joshua 10:11).

With regard to the rock that Og, King of Bashan, sought to throw upon Israel,ⁿ there is no biblical reference, but rather a tradition was transmitted. The Gemara relates that Og said: How large is the camp of Israel? It is three parasangs. I will go and uproot a mountain three parasangs long and I will hurl it upon them and kill them. He went, uprooted a mountain three parasangs long, and brought it on his head. And The Holy One, Blessed be He, brought grasshoppers upon it and they pierced the peak of the mountain and it fell on his neck.

Og wanted to remove it from his head; his teeth were extended to one side of his head and to the other and he was unable to remove it. And that is what is written: "You break the teeth of the wicked" (Psalms 3:8). And this is in accordance with the homiletic interpretation of Rabbi Shimon Ben Lakish, as Rabbi Shimon Ben Lakish said: What is the meaning of that which is written: "You break the teeth of the wicked"? Do not read it as: You break [shibarta], but rather as: You lengthened [shirbavta].

The story concludes: How tall was Moses? He was ten cubits tall. He took an axe ten cubits long, jumped up ten cubits, and struck Og in the ankle and killed him.

One must recite a blessing when he sees the rock upon which Moses sat, as it is written: "But Moses' hands were heavy; and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon" (Exodus 17:12).

And one must recite a blessing upon seeing Lot's wife, as it is stated: "But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt" (Genesis 19:26). And the wall of Jericho that was swallowed, as it is written: "And the wall fell down flat" (Joshua 6:20).

The Gemara asks: Granted, that one recites a blessing on all of these. They are miracles; however, Lot's wife is a tragedy. Why recite a blessing on a tragedy? The Gemara answers: One who sees that place recites: Blessed...the true Judge.

The Gemara asks: But the *baraita* teaches that for all of these one must give thanks and offer praise? The Gemara answers: The language of the mishna should be emended and teach: Over Lot^h and his wife one recites two blessings. Over his wife he recites: Blessed...the true Judge, and on Lot he recites: Blessed...Who remembers the righteous. As Rabbi Yohanan said: From the story of Lot it is possible to learn that even during a time of wrath of the Holy One, Blessed be He, He remembers the righteous, as it is stated: "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities in which Lot dwelt" (Genesis 19:29).

וְחֹמַת יְרִיחוֹ שֶׁנִּבְלְעָה – וְחֹמַת יְרִיחוֹ נִבְלְעָה? וְהֵא נִפְלָה! שְׁנֵאמַר: "וַיְהִי כִשְׁמַעַת הָעָם אֶת קוֹל הַשּׁוֹפָר וַיִּרְעוּ הָעָם תְּרוּעָה גְדוֹלָה, וַתִּפֹּל הַחֹמָה תַּחְתֵּיהָ!" כִּיּוֹן דְּפוּתֵיהָ וְרוּמָהּ כִּי הִדְדִי מִנְהוּ, מִשּׁוּם הִכִי אֲבִלְעָה בְלוּעִי.

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב: אַרְבַּעַת צְרִיכִין לְהוֹדוֹת – יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם, הוֹלְכֵי מִדְּבָרוֹת, וּמִי שֶׁהָיָה חוֹלֵה וְנִתְרַפָּא, וּמִי שֶׁהָיָה חִבּוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִים וַיֵּצֵא.

יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם מִנְלָן – "יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בְּאֵינֹת וְגו' הִמָּה רָאוּ מַעֲשֵׂי ה'", וְאָמַר: "וַיַּעֲמֵד וַיִּתְּחַלֵּף וַיִּשְׁמַע יְרֵדוֹ תְהוֹמוֹת", וְאָמַר: "וַיִּחַגּוּ וַיִּנְעוּ בְשָׂבוֹר", וְאָמַר: "וַיִּצְעְקוּ אֶל ה' בְּצַר לָהֶם וּמִמַּצְרֵקֵיהֶם וַיֵּצֵאוּ", וְאָמַר: "יִקָּם סֵעָרָה לְרַמְמָה", וְאָמַר: "וַיִּשְׁמַחוּ כִּי יִשְׁתַּקְּוּ", וְאָמַר: "וַיִּדּוּ לַה' חֲסִדוֹ וְנִפְלְאוֹתָיו לְבָנֵי אָדָם".

הוֹלְכֵי מִדְּבָרוֹת מִנְלָן – דְּכַתְּבִיב: "תַּעֲנוּ בְּמִדְבָר בִּישִׁימוֹן דְּרַךְ עִיר מוֹשֵׁב לֹא מִצְאֹו וַיִּצְעְקוּ אֶל ה' וַיִּדְרִיכֵם בְּדֶרֶךְ יִשְׂרָאֵל", "וַיִּדּוּ לַה' חֲסִדוֹ".

מִי שֶׁחָלָה וְנִתְרַפָּא – דְּכַתְּבִיב: "אֲוִילִים מִדְּרַךְ פֶּשַׁע וּמִמַּעֲוֹתֵיהֶם יִתְעַנּוּ כֹּל אֲכַל תִּתְעַב נַפְשָׁם" וְגו', "וַיִּצְעְקוּ אֶל ה' בְּצַר לָהֶם" וְגו', "וַיִּשְׁלַח דְּבָרוֹ וַיִּרְפָּאֵם" וְגו', "וַיִּדּוּ לַה' חֲסִדוֹ".

The mishna also taught that we recite a blessing for the wall of Jericho that was swallowed up in its place. The Gemara asks: **Were the walls of Jericho swallowed up into the ground? Didn't they fall, as it is stated: "And it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the shofar, that the people shouted with a great shout, and the wall fell down flat"** (Joshua 6:20)? The Gemara explains: **Since the width and height of the walls were equal to one another, therefore, they were swallowed.** Had they merely fallen it would have had no effect, as their width was equal to their height.

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: **Four must offer thanks^{NH} to God with a thanks-offering and a special blessing. They are: Seafarers, those who walk in the desert, and one who was ill and recovered, and one who was incarcerated in prison^N and went out.** All of these appear in the verses of a psalm (Psalms 107).

The Gemara elaborates: **From where do we derive that seafarers are required to thank God?**

"They who go down to the sea in ships, who do business in great waters; they see the works of the Lord" (Psalms 107:23–24).

And it says: "For He commands and raises the stormy wind which lifts up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble" (Psalms 107:25–26).

And it says: "They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end."

And it says immediately thereafter: "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He brings them out of their distress" (Psalms 107:28).

And it says: "He makes the storm calm, so the waves thereof are still" (Psalms 107:29),

and it says: "Then are they glad because they be quiet; so He brings them unto their desired haven" (Psalms 107:30),

and it says: "They are grateful to God for His loving-kindness and His wonders for mankind" (Psalms 107:31).

The Gemara asks: **From where do we derive that those who walk in the desert are required to thank God?** The Gemara answers:

As it is written in the same psalm:

"They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city in which to dwell" (Psalms 107:4),

"And then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses.

And He led them forth by the right way" (Psalms 107:6–7).

After God guides them on the right way, it is said: **"They are grateful to God for His goodness"** (Psalms 107:8).

That **one who was ill and recovered** must offer thanks is derived, as it is written:

"Fools, because of their transgression and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.

Their soul abhors all manner of meat and they draw near unto the gates of death" (Psalms 107:17–18),

and: "Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saves them from their distress" (Psalms 107:19),

and then: "He sent His word and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions" (Psalms 107:20).

After they are healed: **"They are grateful to God for His goodness"** (Psalms 107:21).

אַרְבַּעַת צְרִיכִין לְהוֹדוֹת – Four must offer thanks – The order here is different from the order of the verses. In Psalms they were enumerated according to frequency; the most frequent appearing first. Here they are enumerated according to the danger presented by each; the most dangerous listed first (Rav Hai Gaon).

Based on those verses, it would appear that only those who encountered difficulty or danger, e.g., a sea traveler who encountered a storm or a traveler in the desert who lost his way, would be obligated to offer thanks. Others argue that this obligation is incumbent upon anyone who undergoes one of these experiences, whether or not he encountered an actual threat. Some suggest that beyond these four experiences, one who encounters and survives any danger is obligated to offer thanks, as well, and those enumerated in the verses and the Gemara are simply common occurrences. Others disagree and rule that they may recite the blessing on a voluntary basis but are not obligated to do so (*Me'iri*).

One who was incarcerated in prison – מי שְׁהָיָה חִבּוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִים: According to Rav Hai Gaon, the obligation to express thanks upon release from prison is incumbent upon anyone who was incarcerated, even if it was for purely financial matters, e.g., outstanding debts or failure to pay taxes. Others hold that the obligation applies only if he was imprisoned for capital crimes (*Magen Avraham*). Others hold that the ruling is based on conditions in the prison.

HALAKHA

Four must offer thanks – אַרְבַּעַת צְרִיכִין לְהוֹדוֹת: Those who go to sea and successfully reach their destination, those who walk in the desert and arrive at a settlement, a sick person who was healed, and one who was in prison and was released must offer thanks with the blessing: Blessed...Who bestows good-

ness on the unworthy, Who has bestowed on me much good. Those who hear respond: May He Who bestowed much good on you continue to bestow on you much good, Selah (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkhhot Berakhot* 10:8; *Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 219:1–2).

HALAKHA

And he must offer thanks before ten people – וְצָרִיךְ לְאֹדוּי קַמֵּי עֲשָׂרָה: One offers thanks for a miracle in the presence of ten people, two of whom must be Sages who have studied *halakha* (Magen Avraham). It is customary to recite this blessing in the synagogue after the Torah reading. Even if there are not ten people, one is obligated to recite the blessing (Rambam *Sefer Ahava, Hilkkhot Berakhot* 10:8; *Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 219:3).

You have exempted me from offering thanks – פְּטַרְתָּנִי יְתֵי מִלְאֹדוּי: If one recites a blessing for a miracle that befell someone else and the individual for whom the miracle was performed heard the entire blessing, intended to fulfill his obligation (*Mishna Berura*), and answered amen, he is exempt from offering any further thanks. The authorities imposed certain restrictions with regard to the ability of one to recite this blessing on another's behalf (see *Magen Avraham, Taz; Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim* 219:4).

NOTES

You have exempted me from offering thanks – פְּטַרְתָּנִי יְתֵי מִלְאֹדוּי: Some suggest that they did so intentionally so that Rav Yehuda would not be inconvenienced. Furthermore, so that he would not need to recite the formula: Blessed...Who bestows goodness on the unworthy, publicly in the synagogue because it contains an element of self-deprecation (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

מִי שֶׁהָיָה חָבוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֶסְרוֹרִין מִנְּלִין – דְּכַתִּיב: "וְשָׁבִי הַשֶּׁךְ וְצַלְמוֹת" וְגו', "כִּי הִמְרוּ אִמְרֵי אֵל" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיִּכְנַע בְּעַמְל לִבָּם" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיִּזְעַקוּ אֶל ה' בְּצַר לָהֶם", וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיִּצְיֵאֵם מִחֹשֶׁךְ וְצַלְמוֹת" וְגו', וְאוֹמֵר: "וַיֹּדוּ לַה' חֶסְדּוֹ".

מֵאִי מִבְּרַךְ? – אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה: "בְּרִיךְ... גּוֹמֵל חֶסְדִּים טוֹבִים". אַבְיֵי אָמַר: וְצָרִיךְ לְאֹדוּי קַמֵּי עֲשָׂרָה, דְּכַתִּיב: "וַיִּרְוּמָוְהוּ בְּקֹהֶל עַם" וְגו'. מַר זוּטְרָא אָמַר: וְתַרְנִין מִיַּנְיָהוּ רַבָּנָן, שְׁנַיָאָמַר: "וּבְמוֹשָׁב זְקֵנִים יִהְלָלוּהוּ".

מִתְקִיף לָהּ רַב אֲשִׁי וְאִימָא כּוֹלְהָ רַבָּנָן! – מִי כְּתִיב "בְּקֹהֶל זְקֵנִים"? "בְּקֹהֶל עַם" כְּתִיב. – וְאִימָא: בֵּי עֲשָׂרָה שְׂאָר עֲמָא, וְתַרְי רַבָּנָן! – קִשְׂיָא.

רַב יְהוּדָה חָלַשׁ וְאַתְפַּח, עַל לִגְבִּיהַּ רַב חֲנָא בְּגִדְתָּאָהּ וְרַבָּנָן, אָמְרֵי לֵיהּ: בְּרִיךְ רַחֲמֵנָא דִּיהֶבְךָ נִיחָלָן וְלֹא יִהְבְּךָ לְעַפְרָא. אָמַר לָהּ: פְּטַרְתָּנִי יְתֵי מִלְאֹדוּי.

וְהָא אָמַר אַבְיֵי: בְּעֵי אֹדוּי בְּאִפֵּי עֲשָׂרָה! – דְּהוּ בֵּי עֲשָׂרָה, וְהָא אִיהוּ לֹא קָא מוֹדָה! – לֹא צָרִיךְ, דְּעֵינִי בְּתַרְיָהּ אִמְּוִן.

אָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה: שְׁלֹשָׁה צָרִיכִין שִׁמּוּר, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: חוֹלָה, חֲתָן, וְכוּלָּהּ. בְּמַתְנֵיתָא תַּנְא: חוֹלָה, חֲתָן, וְכוּלָּהּ. וַיֵּשׁ אֹמְרִים: אֶף אֲבִיל. וַיֵּשׁ אֹמְרִים: אֶף תַּלְמִידֵי חֲכָמִים בְּלִילָהּ.

וְאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה, שְׁלֹשָׁה דְּבָרִים הַמְאָרִיךְ בְּהֵן מְאָרִיכִין יָמָיו וְשָׁנוּתָיו שֶׁל אָדָם: הַמְאָרִיךְ בְּתַפְלָתוֹ, וְהַמְאָרִיךְ עַל שְׁלִחְנוֹ, וְהַמְאָרִיךְ בְּבֵית הַכֶּסֶף.

וְהַמְאָרִיךְ בְּתַפְלָתוֹ, מַעֲלִיזָא הִיא?! וְהָאֵמַר רַבֵּי חִיָּיא בַר אֲבָא אָמַר רַבֵּי יוֹחָנָן:

From where do we derive that one who was incarcerated in prison must offer thanks?

As it is written: "Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, bound in affliction and iron.

Because they rebelled against the words of God and scorned the counsel of the most High" (Psalms 107:10–11).

And it says: "Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; they fell down, and there was none to help" (Psalms 107:12),

and it says: "Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saved them from their distresses" (Psalms 107:13),

and it says: "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,

and broke their shackles" (Psalms 107:14).

And after God takes them out from that darkness and shadow of death, it says: "They are grateful to God for His goodness."

The Gemara asks: What blessing does he recite? Rav Yehuda said: Blessed is...Who bestows acts of loving-kindness. Abaye said: And he must offer thanks before ten people,¹⁴ as it is written in the same chapter: "Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people and praise Him in the assembly of the elders" (Psalms 107:32), and congregation indicates a group of at least ten. Mar Zutra said: Two of them must be Sages, as it is stated there: "And praise Him in the assembly of elders." These elders are the Sages, and the use of the plural indicates a minimum of two.

Rav Ashi strongly objects to this: Say that all of them must be Sages. The Gemara rejects this: Is it written: In the congregation of elders? In the congregation of the people is written; and the Sages are among them. Yet there is still room to object: Say that ten are from the rest of the people, and in addition there must be two Sages. No satisfactory answer was found, and the question remains difficult, although the *halakha* was not rejected.

The Gemara relates: Rav Yehuda fell sick and recovered, Rav Hana of Baghdad and the Sages entered to visit him. They said to him: Blessed is God Who gave you to us and did not give you to the dust. He said to them: You have exempted me from offering thanks,¹⁵ as your statement fulfilled my obligation to recite a blessing.

The Gemara asks: But didn't Abaye say that one must offer thanks before ten? The Gemara answers: There were ten people there when the Sages blessed God in Rav Yehuda's presence. The Gemara raises another difficulty: But Rav Yehuda did not offer thanks himself; others offered thanks on his behalf. The Gemara answers: He did not need to recite it himself as he answered amen after their blessing. Answering amen after a blessing is tantamount to reciting the blessing himself.

Incidental to Rav Yehuda's earlier statement, which organized several cases into a single category, the Gemara cites similar statements of his. Rav Yehuda said: Three require protection from harm: A sick person, a bridegroom, and a bride. It was taught in a *baraita*: A sick person, a woman in childbirth, a bridegroom, and a bride require protection from harm. And some say: Even a mourner. And some say: Even Torah scholars at night. Those whose thoughts are focused elsewhere or are in a weakened physical state require protection.

And Rav Yehuda said: There are three matters which, when one who prolongs their duration, they extend a person's days and years. They are: One who prolongs his prayer, one who prolongs his mealtime at the table, and one who prolongs his time in the bathroom.

The Gemara asks: And one who prolongs his prayer; is that a virtue? Didn't Rabbi Hiyya bar Abba say that Rabbi Yohanan said:

Perek IX
Daf 55 Amud a

כל המאריך בתפלתו ומעיין בה סוף בא לידי כאב לב, שנאמר: תוחלת ממשכה מחלה לב. ואמר רבי יצחק: שלשה דברים מזבירים עונותיו של אדם, ואלו הן: קיר נטוי, ועיני תפלה, ומוסר דין על חבירו לשמים!

הא לא קשיא, הא – דמעין בה, הא – דלא מעין בה, והיכי עבד – דמפיש ברחמי.

והמאריך על שלחנו – דלמא אתי עניא ויהיב ליה, דכתיב: "המזבח עץ שלוש אמות גבה", וכתיב: "וידבר אלי זה השלחן אשר לפני ה'", פתח במזבח וסיים בשלחן! רבי יוחנן ורבי אלעזר דאמרי תרוניהו: כל זמן שביית המקדש קיים – מזבח מכפר על ישראל, ועבשו – שלחנו של אדם מכפר עליו.

והמאריך בבית הכסא מעליותא הוא? והתנא, עשרה דברים מביאין את האדם לידי תחתונות: האוכל עלי קנים, ועלי גפנים, ולולבי גפנים, ומוריגי בהמה, ושדרו של דג, ודג מליח שאינו מבושל כל צרכו, והשותה שמרי יין, והמקנה בסיד ובחרסית, והמקנה בצרור שקנה בו חברו, ויש אומרים: אף התולה עצמו בבית הכסא יותר מדאי!

לא קשיא, הא – דמאריך ותלי, הא – דמאריך ולא תלי.

כי הא דאמרה ליה ההיא מטרוניתא לרבי יהודה ברבי אלעאי: פניך דומים למגדלי חזירים ולמלוי ברבית – אמר לה: הימנותא! לדידי תרוניהו אסירן; אלא, עשרים וארבעה בית הכסא איכא מאושפיואי לבי מדרשא, דכי איילנא בדיקנא נפשאי בבולהו.

Anyone who prolongs his prayer and expects it to be answered,^H will ultimately come to heartache, as it is stated: "Hope deferred makes the heart sick" (Proverbs 13:12). Similarly, Rabbi Yitzhak said: Three matters evoke a person's sins, and they are: Endangering oneself by sitting or standing next to an inclined wall that is about to collapse, expecting prayer to be accepted, as that leads to an assessment of his status and merit, and passing a case against another^N to Heaven, as praying for Heaven to pass judgment on another person causes one's own deeds to be examined and compared with the deeds of that other person. This proves that prolonging prayer is a fault.

The Gemara resolves the apparent contradiction: This is **not difficult**. This, where we learned that prolonging prayer is undesirable, refers to a situation when one **expects** his prayer to be accepted, while this, where Rav Yehuda says that prolonging prayer prolongs one's life, refers to a situation where one does **not expect** his prayer to be accepted. **How does he prolong his prayer? By increasing his supplication.**

As for the virtue of **prolonging one's** mealtime at the table, which Rav Yehuda mentioned, the Gemara explains: **Perhaps a poor person will come during the meal and the host will be in a position to give him food immediately, without forcing the poor person to wait.** The Sages elsewhere praised a person who acts appropriately at a meal, as it is written: "The altar, three cubits high and the length thereof, two cubits, was of wood, and so the corners thereof; the length thereof, and the walls thereof, were also of wood" (Ezekiel 41:22), and it is written in the continuation of that verse: "And he said unto me: This is the table that is before the Lord." The language of this verse is difficult, as it begins with the altar and concludes with the table. Rather, Rabbi Yohanan and Rabbi Elazar both say: As long as the Temple stood, the altar atoned for Israel's transgressions. Now that it is destroyed, a person's table atones for his transgressions.

With regard to what Rav Yehuda said in praise of one who prolongs his time in the bathroom, the Gemara asks: **Is that a virtue? Wasn't it taught in a baraita: Ten things bring a person to suffer from hemorrhoids: One who eats the leaves of bulrushes, grape leaves, tendrils of grapevines, the palate and tongue of an animal, as well as any other part of the animal which is not smooth and which has protrusions, the spine of a fish, a salty fish that is not fully cooked, and one who drinks wine dregs, and one who wipes himself with lime and clay, the materials from which earthenware is made, and one who wipes himself with a stone with which another person wiped himself. And some say: One who suspends himself too much in the bathroom as well.** This proves that prolonging one's time in the bathroom is harmful.

The Gemara responds: This is **not difficult**. This *baraita*, which teaches that doing so is harmful, refers to where one **prolongs** his time there and **suspends** himself, while this statement of Rav Yehuda refers to where one **prolongs** his time there and **does not suspend** himself.

The Gemara relates the benefits of prolonging one's time in the bathroom. Like that incident when a matron [*matronita*]¹ said to Rabbi Yehuda son of Rabbi El'ai: Your face is fat and full, like the faces of pig farmers and usurers who do not work hard and who make a plentiful living. He said to her: **Honestly, those two occupations are prohibited to me; rather, why is it that my face is nice? Because there are twenty-four bathrooms between my lodging and the study hall, and when I walk I stop and examine myself in all of them.**

HALAKHA

Anyone who prolongs his prayer and expects it to be answered – המאריך בתפלתו ומעיין בה – One should not expect that because he prayed with conviction God must fulfill his request. On the contrary, doing so evokes his sins. Rather, he should approach his prayer with the thought that even though he is poor and contemptible, he requests that the Creator grant his request in His abundant loving-kindness for His creations (*Shulhan Arukh, Orah Hayyim 98:5*).

NOTES

ומוסר דין על חבירו – And passing a case against another – This refers specifically to a case where there is a court of law capable of adjudicating the case. If one foregoes the court, it appears that he is so confident that his merit will guarantee that his request will be granted. Therefore, the heavenly court closely examines his deeds (*Tosefot Rabbi Yehuda HaHasid*).

LANGUAGE

Matron [*matronita*] – מטרוניתא – This is the Aramaic form of the Latin word *matrona*, meaning woman; particularly an important woman.

HALAKHA

A cup of blessing over which to recite a blessing and he does not recite a blessing – בוס של ברכה – לְבָרֵךְ וְאֵינוֹ מְבָרֵךְ. It is inappropriate for a guest to refuse the offer of the cup of blessing to recite the blessing (*Magen Avraham*). The life of one who refuses is, God forbid, cut short (*Shulhan Arukh, Oraḥ Ḥayyim* 201:3).

NOTES

And one who conducts himself with an air of superiority – וְהַמְנַהֵיג אֶת עַצְמוֹ בְּרִבּוּנוֹת: Stating that one who conducts himself with an air of superiority will find his days and years curtailed appears to contradict other places in the Gemara where a Rabbi is implored to present himself in an authoritative manner. The Maharsha suggests that there is a distinction between one elected or appointed as a community leader, who must act with assertiveness, and one who conducts himself with an air of superiority without the agreement and support of the community.

Three require mercy – שְׁלֹשָׁה צְרִיכִים חַמִּימִים: This is mentioned so that one will be certain to pray for mercy at all times for these matters, and to teach that it is effective to pray for mercy in these cases (*Tosefot Rabbi Yehuda HaḤasid*). Some explained that one should pray for mercy in these areas even if they are already in place or have already occurred, lest they change for the worse (*Tziyyun LeNefesh Ḥayya*).

Three matters are proclaimed by the Holy One, Blessed be He, Himself: Famine, plenty, and a good leader – אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים מְכָרוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם מְכָרוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעַצְמוֹ, וְאֵלוֹ הֵן: רָעָב, וְשׂוֹבַע, וּפְרִנָּה טוֹב: An example of this is Joseph's interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams (*Genesis* 41). Joseph tells Pharaoh: "What God is about to do He has declared unto Pharaoh" (*Genesis* 41:25). He then explains that God informed Pharaoh by means of his dreams of famine, plenty, and the need to appoint a good leader to oversee collection and distribution of the food (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

One may only appoint a leader over a community if he consults with the community – אֵין מְעַמְדִין פְּרָנִס עַל – הַעֲבֹר אֶלָּא אִם בְּנִי נְמַלְכִים בְּעֵבֹר: The reason that this consultation is essential is because if there is communal agreement with regard to the appointment, the leader's decisions will more likely be accepted and followed. This is also the basis for establishing courts in matters of litigation. Each side chooses one judge and the third judge is chosen by both parties. Both Rashi and *Tosafot* (*Sanhedrin* 23a) explain that this method of selection is employed so that the litigants will more readily accept the decisions of the court (*Etz Yosef*).

וְאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה, שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים מְקַצְרִים יָמָיו וְשָׁנוּתָיו שֶׁל אָדָם: מִי שְׁנוֹתָנִין לוֹ סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה לְקִרְוֹת וְאֵינוֹ קוֹרֵא, בּוֹס שֶׁל בְּרָכָה לְבָרֵךְ וְאֵינוֹ מְבָרֵךְ, וְהַמְנַהֵיג עַצְמוֹ בְּרִבּוּנוֹת.

סֵפֶר תּוֹרָה לְקִרְוֹת וְאֵינוֹ קוֹרֵא – דְּכַתִּיב: "כִּי הוּא חַיִּךְ וְאָרְךְ יָמֶיךָ". בּוֹס שֶׁל בְּרָכָה לְבָרֵךְ וְאֵינוֹ מְבָרֵךְ – דְּכַתִּיב: "וְאַבְרָכָה מְבָרְכֶיךָ". וְהַמְנַהֵיג עַצְמוֹ בְּרִבּוּנוֹת – דְּאָמַר רַבִּי חֲמָא בְּרַחֲמֵי חַיִּינָא: מִפְּנֵי מָה מֵת יוֹסֵף קוֹדֵם לְאַחֲיוֹ – מִפְּנֵי שֶׁהִנְהִיג עַצְמוֹ בְּרִבּוּנוֹת.

וְאָמַר רַב יְהוּדָה אָמַר רַב, שְׁלֹשָׁה צְרִיכִים רַחֲמִים: מֶלֶךְ טוֹב, שָׁנָה טוֹבָה, וְחֵלוֹם טוֹב. מֶלֶךְ טוֹב – דְּכַתִּיב: "פְּלֹגֵי מַיִם לֵב מֶלֶךְ בְּיַד ה'". שָׁנָה טוֹבָה – דְּכַתִּיב: "תְּמִיד עֵינֵי ה' אֵלֶיךָ בָּה מְרֵא שֵׁית הַשָּׁנָה וְעַד אַחֲרֵית שָׁנָה". חֵלוֹם טוֹב – דְּכַתִּיב: "וְתַחֲלִימֵנִי וְתַחֲיֵנִי".

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: שְׁלֹשָׁה דְבָרִים מְכָרוֹ עֲלֵיהֶם הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא בְּעַצְמוֹ, וְאֵלוֹ הֵן: רָעָב, וְשׂוֹבַע, וּפְרִנָּה טוֹב. רָעָב – דְּכַתִּיב: "כִּי קָרָא ה' לְרָעָב" וְגו', שׂוֹבַע – דְּכַתִּיב: "וְקָרָאתִי אֶל הַדָּגָן וְהִרְבִּיתִי אוֹתוֹ", פְּרִנָּה טוֹב – דְּכַתִּיב: "וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר רֵאֵה קְרָאתִי בְשֵׁם בְּצַלְאֵל" וְגו'.

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אֵין מְעַמְדִין פְּרָנִס עַל הַעֲבֹר אֶלָּא אִם בְּנִי נְמַלְכִים בְּעֵבֹר, שְׁנֵאמַר: "רֵאוּ קְרָא ה' בְּשֵׁם בְּצַלְאֵל". אָמַר לוֹ הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמַשָּׂה: מִשָּׂה, הֲגוֹן עֲלֶיךָ בְּצַלְאֵל? אָמַר לוֹ: רְבוּנוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם, אִם לְפָנֶיךָ הֲגוֹן – לְפָנֶי לֹא כָּל שְׂכָן? אָמַר לוֹ: אַף עַל פִּי בְּךָ, לֹךְ אֲמֹר לָהֶם. הֲלֹךְ וְאָמַר לָהֶם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל: הֲגוֹן עֲלֵיכֶם בְּצַלְאֵל? אָמְרוּ לוֹ: אִם לְפָנֶי הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא וְלְפָנֶיךָ הוּא הֲגוֹן – לְפָנֶינוּ לֹא כָּל שְׂכָן!

אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹנָתָן: בְּצַלְאֵל עַל שֵׁם חֲכָמְתוֹ נִקְרָא. בְּשַׁעַת שְׂאֵמֶר לוֹ הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא לְמַשָּׂה: לֹךְ אֲמֹר לוֹ לְבַצְלָאֵל עֲשֵׂה לִי מִשְׁכָּן אַרְזוֹן וְכֵלִים, הֲלֹךְ מִשָּׂה וְהִפֵּךְ, וְאָמַר לוֹ: עֲשֵׂה אַרְזוֹן וְכֵלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן. אָמַר לוֹ: מִשָּׂה רַבִּינוּ, מִנְהַגוֹ שֶׁל עוֹלָם – אָדָם בּוֹנֵה בַיִת וְאַחַר כֵּן מְכַנֵּס לְתוֹכוֹ כֵּלִים, וְאַתָּה אוֹמֵר: עֲשֵׂה לִי אַרְזוֹן וְכֵלִים וּמִשְׁכָּן! כֵּלִים שְׂאֵמֶי עוֹשֶׂה – לְהִיכֵן אֲכַנְסֶם? שְׂמָא כֵּן אָמַר לֹךְ הַקְדוּשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁכָּן אַרְזוֹן וְכֵלִים. אָמַר לוֹ: שְׂמָא בְּצַל אֵל הָיִית וְיַדְעָת!

And Rav Yehuda said: Three things curtail a person's days and years: One who is invited and given the Torah scroll to read and he does not read, one who is given a cup of blessing over which to recite a blessing and he does not recite a blessing,¹¹ and one who conducts himself with an air of superiority.¹²

The Gemara details the biblical sources for these cases: One who is given the Torah scroll to read and he does not read, as it is written of the Torah: "It is your life and the length of your days" (*Deuteronomy* 30:20). A cup of blessing over which to recite a blessing and he does not recite a blessing, as it is written: "I will bless them that bless you" (*Genesis* 12:3); one who blesses is blessed and one who does not bless does not merit a blessing. And with regard to one who conducts himself with an air of superiority, as Rabbi Hama, son of Rabbi Hanina, said: Why did Joseph die before his brothers, as evidenced by the order in the verse: "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation" (*Exodus* 1:6)? Because he conducted himself with an air of superiority, and those who did not serve in a leadership role lived on after he died.

Rav Yehuda said in the name of Rav: Three matters require a plea for mercy¹³ to bring them about: A good king, a good year, and a good dream. These three, kings, years, and dreams, are all bestowed by God and one must pray that they should be positive and constructive. The Gemara enumerates the sources for these cases: A good king, as it is written: "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the watercourses: He turns it whithersoever He will" (*Proverbs* 21:1). A good year, as it is written: "The eyes of the Lord, thy God, are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (*Deuteronomy* 11:12). And a good dream, as it is written: "O Lord, by these things men live, and altogether therein is the life of my spirit; wherefore You will recover me [*vatahlimeni*], and make me to live" (*Isaiah* 38:16). Due to their apparent etymological similarity, the word *tahlimeni* is interpreted as deriving from the word *halom*, dream.

Similarly, Rabbi Yohanan said: Three matters are proclaimed by the Holy One, Blessed be He, Himself: Famine, plenty, and a good leader.¹⁴ The Gemara enumerates the sources for these cases: Famine, as it is written: "For the Lord has called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years" (*II Kings* 8:1). Plenty, as it is written: "And I will call for the grain, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you" (*Ezekiel* 36:29). And a good leader, as it is written: "And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: See, I have called by name Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah" (*Exodus* 31:1–2).

With regard to Bezalel's appointment, Rabbi Yitzhak said: One may only appoint a leader over a community if he consults with the community¹⁵ and they agree to the appointment, as it is stated: "And Moses said unto the children of Israel: See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel, son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah" (*Exodus* 35:30). The Lord said to Moses: Moses, is Bezalel a suitable appointment in your eyes? Moses said to Him: Master of the universe, if he is a suitable appointment in Your eyes, then all the more so in my eyes. The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: Nevertheless, go and tell Israel and ask their opinion. Moses went and said to Israel: Is Bezalel suitable in your eyes? They said to him: If he is suitable in the eyes of the Holy One, Blessed be He, and in your eyes, all the more so he is suitable in our eyes.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Nahmani said that Rabbi Yonatan said: Bezalel was called by that name on account of his wisdom. When the Holy One, Blessed be He, said to Moses: Go say to Bezalel, "Make a tabernacle, an ark, and vessels" (see *Exodus* 31:7–11), Moses went and reversed the order and told Bezalel: "Make an ark, and vessels, and a tabernacle" (see *Exodus* 25–26). He said to Moses: Moses, our teacher, the standard practice throughout the world is that a person builds a house and only afterward places the vessels in the house, and you say to me: Make an ark, and vessels, and a tabernacle. If I do so in the order you have commanded, the vessels that I make, where shall I put them? Perhaps God told you the following: "Make a tabernacle, ark, and vessels" (see *Exodus* 36). Moses said to Bezalel: Perhaps you were in God's shadow [*betzel El*], and you knew precisely what He said. You intuited God's commands just as He stated them, as if you were there.

אמר רב יהודה אמר רב: יודע היה בצלאל לְצַרֵּף אוֹתוֹת שֶׁנִּבְרְאוּ בְּהֵן שָׁמַיִם וָאָרֶץ. כְּתוּב הֵכָא: "וַיִּמְלֵא אֹתוֹ רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בְּחָכְמָה וּבְתַבּוּנָה וּבְדַעַת", וְכְתוּב הֵתָם: "ה' בְּחָכְמָה יָסַד אֶרֶץ כּוֹנֵן שָׁמַיִם בְּתַבּוּנָה", וְכְתוּב: "בְּדַעַתוֹ תְּהוֹמוֹת נִבְקְעוּ".

אמר רבי יוחנן: אין הקדוש ברוך הוא נותן חכמה אלא למי שיש בו חכמה, שנאמר: "יִהְיֶה חֲכָמָתָא לְחַכְמִין וּמְנַדְעָא לְיַדְעִי בִּינָה". שָׁמַע רַב תַּחְלִיפָא בַר מַעְרְבָא וְאָמְרָה קַמֵּיה דְרַבִּי אַבְהוּ, אָמַר לֵיה: אֲתוֹן מְהֵתָם מִתְנִיתוּ לֵה, אֲנִן מְהֵכָא מִתְנִינֵן לֵה – דְכְתוּב: "וּבְלֵב כָּל חָכְם לֵב נָתַתִּי חֲכָמָה".

אמר רב חסדא: כל חלום ולא טוֹת. ואמר רב חסדא: חלמא דלא מפשור – כאגרתא דלא מקריא. ואמר רב חסדא: לא חלמא טבא מקיים כוליה, ולא חלמא בישא מקיים כוליה. ואמר רב חסדא: חלמא בישא עדיף מחלמא טבא. ואמר רב חסדא: חלמא בישא – עציבותיה מסתייה, חלמא טבא – תדווייה מסתייה. אמר רב יוסף: חלמא טבא – אפילו לדידי בדיחותיה מפפחא ליה. ואמר רב חסדא: חלמא בישא קשה מנגדא, שנאמר: "וְהָאֱלֹהִים עֲשָׂה שִׁירָאוֹ מִלְּפָנָיו". ואמר רבה בר בר חנה אמר רבי יוחנן: זה חלום רע.

"הַנְּבִיא אֲשֶׁר אֶתוֹ חֲלוֹם יְסַפֵּר חֲלוֹם וְאֲשֶׁר דִּבְרֵי אֹתוֹ יְדַבֵּר דְּבָרֵי אֱמֶת מִה לְתַבְּנֵן אֵת הַבֶּר נָאִם ה'", וְכִי מִה עֲנִין בַּר וְתַבְּנֵן אֲצִל חֲלוֹם? אֵלָּא אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי: כְּשֵׁם שְׂאִי אֶפְשָׁר לְבָר בְּלֵא תַבְּנֵן – כִּךְ אִי אֶפְשָׁר לְחֲלוֹם בְּלֵא דְבָרִים בְּטָלִים.

אמר רבי ברכיה: חלום, אף על פי שמקצתו מתקיים – כולו אינו מתקיים, מנא לן – מיוסף, דכתיב: "וַהֲנֵה הַשָּׁמֶשׁ וְהַיָּרֵחַ" וגו'.

Rav Yehuda said that Rav said: Bezalel knew how to join the letters with which heaven and earth were created. From where do we derive this? It is written here in praise of Bezalel: "And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship" (Exodus 31:3); and it is written there with regard to creation of heaven and earth: "The Lord, by wisdom, founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens" (Proverbs 3:19), and it is written: "By His knowledge the depths were broken up and the skies drop down the dew" (Proverbs 3:20). We see that wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, the qualities with which the heavens and earth were created, are all found in Bezalel.

On a similar note, Rabbi Yohanan said: The Holy One, Blessed be He, only grants wisdom to one who already possesses wisdom, as it is stated: "He gives wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to they who know understanding" (Daniel 2:21). Rav Tahalifa, from the West, Eretz Yisrael, heard this and repeated it before Rabbi Abbahu. Rabbi Abbahu said to him: You learned proof for this idea from there; we learn it from here: As it is written in praise of the builders of the Tabernacle: "And in the hearts of all who are wise-hearted I have placed wisdom" (Exodus 31:6).

Related to what was stated above, that one should pray for a good dream, the Gemara cites additional maxims concerning dreams and their interpretation. Rav Hisha said: One should see any dream, and not a fast.^N In other words, any dream is preferable to a dream during a fast. And Rav Hisha said: A dream not interpreted is like a letter not read. As long as it is not interpreted it cannot be fulfilled; the interpretation of a dream creates its meaning. And Rav Hisha said: A good dream is not entirely fulfilled and a bad dream is not entirely fulfilled. And Rav Hisha said: A bad dream is preferable to a good dream, as a bad dream causes one to feel remorse and to repent. And Rav Hisha said: A bad dream, his sadness is enough for him; a good dream, his joy is enough for him. This means that the sadness or joy engendered by the dream renders the actual fulfillment of the dream superfluous. Similarly, Rav Yosef said: Even for me, the joy of a good dream negates it. Even Rav Yosef, who was blind and ill, derived such pleasure from a good dream that it was never actually realized. And Rav Hisha said: A bad dream is worse than lashes, as it is stated: "God has so made it, that men should fear before Him" (Ecclesiastes 3:14), and Rabba bar Hana said that Rabbi Yohanan said: That is a bad dream that causes man to fear.

With regard to the verse: "The prophet that has a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What has the straw to do with the grain? says the Lord" (Jeremiah 23:28), the Gemara asks: What do straw and grain have to do with a dream? Rather, Rabbi Yohanan said in the name of Rabbi Shimon bar Yoḥai: Just as it is impossible for the grain to grow without straw, so too it is impossible to dream without idle matters. Even a dream that will be fulfilled in the future contains some element of nonsense.

On a similar note, Rabbi Berekhya said: Even though part of a dream is fulfilled, all of it is not fulfilled. From where do we derive this? From the story of Joseph's dream, as it is written: "And he said: Behold, I have dreamed yet a dream: and, behold, the sun and the moon

כָּל חֲלוֹם וְלֹא טוֹת – טוֹת: Any dream, and not a fast – טוֹת: Some explain that every dream has meaning except for a dream that one dreams during a fast, as while afflicted in the midst of a fast one will certainly experience bad dreams (*Arukh, Tosefot Rabbi Yehuda HaHasid*). Some explain that the Gemara means that any dream, even a bad one, is preferable to fasting (Rav Sa'adia Gaon). The commentaries are reluctant to interpret Rav Hisha's statement according to its simple meaning, i.e., one should never fast in response to a dream, as it is Rav Hisha himself who teaches (*Shabbat* 11a) that if one experiences a bad dream it is advantageous to fast that very same day (*lyyūn Ya'akov*).