

וַיָּלְכוּ וַיָּבֹאוּ – אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן מִשּׁוּם
רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחִי: מְקִישׁ הֶלִיכָה
לְבִיָּאָה, מִה בִּיָּאָה בְּעֵצָה רָעָה, אִף
הֶלִיכָה בְּעֵצָה רָעָה.

”וַיִּסְפְּרוּ לוֹ וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּאָנֹ” וְכַתִּיב:
”אֶפֶס כִּי עַז הָעָם” – אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן
(סִימָן: אִמְ”ת לְבַד”ו לֹו”ה) מִשּׁוּם רַבִּי
מֵאִיר: כָּל לָשׁוֹן הָרַע שָׂאִין בּוֹ דְּבַר אֱמֶת
בְּתַחֲלִיתוֹ – אֵין מִתְקַיֵּים בְּסוֹפוֹ.

And they went and they came” (Numbers 13:25–26). Rabbi Yohanan says in the name of Rabbi Shimon ben Yoḥai: This verse likens their going to their coming. Just as their coming back was with wicked counsel, so too, their going to Eretz Yisrael was with wicked counsel.^N

The Torah states: “And they told him, and said: We came to the land to which you sent us, and it also flows with milk and honey” (Numbers 13:27), and then it is written: “However the people that dwell in the land are fierce” (Numbers 13:28). Why did the spies praise the land and then slander it? Rabbi Yohanan says three statements in the name of Rabbi Meir, represented by the mnemonic device: Truth, alone, borrowing.^N The first statement answers this question: Any slander that does not begin with a truthful statement^N ultimately does not stand, i.e., it is not accepted by others.

NOTES

אִף הֶלִיכָה בְּעֵצָה – So too their going was with wicked counsel – רַעָה: One explanation of this statement is that just as their return to the wilderness was guided by wicked counsel, so too, their departure from the Valley of Eshkol was guided by wicked counsel (*Sefat Emet*). According to this explanation, Rashi’s statement (see Numbers 13:3) that when the spies left for Eretz Yisrael they were considered upright and flawless does not contradict this statement, as they were righteous until they reached Eretz Yisrael.

סִימָן אִמְ”ת – The mnemonic truth, alone [*levado*], borrowing – לְבַד”ו לֹו”ה: This is a mnemonic for the statements said by Rabbi

Yohanan in the name of Rabbi Meir in this tractate. The acronym should be: Truth, ensnared [*lekhado*], borrowing, as elsewhere (42b), Rabbi Yohanan quotes the statement of Rabbi Meir: His own mouth ensnared that wicked one, and in another place (46b) he quotes Rabbi Meir with regard to anyone who does not lend and borrows. However, Rabbi Yohanan quotes Rabbi Meir in another place (36b): His bow returned to its strength, so perhaps the mnemonic should include that and be: Truth, returned, ensnared, borrowing (*Heshek Shlomo*).

לָשׁוֹן – Slander that does not begin with a truthful statement – הָרַע שָׂאִין בּוֹ דְּבַר אֱמֶת בְּתַחֲלִיתוֹ: The commentaries ask: What

did the spies lie about? The Maharsha explains that since the spies did not return with the basic food staples of wheat, barley, and olives, they implicitly told the people that the land did not produce sufficient food for sustenance. Furthermore, although the spies were not in Hebron, they nevertheless reported about the giants who lived there. Others explain that they lied in that they said: “The people that dwell in the land are fierce,” even though the people of the land feared the Jewish people, as stated by Rahab (Joshua 2:10). Others suggest that they said Eretz Yisrael is “a land that eats its inhabitants” (Numbers 13:32), where people die frequently (see *Ir Binyamin*).

Do not read, than us [*mimmennu*] but rather, than Him [*mimmennu*] – אֵל תִּקְרִי מִמֶּנּוּ אֶלָּא מִמֶּנּוּ – Rashi omits this sentence, as the expression: Do not read, generally indicates that a different vocalization is being suggested. Here, however, both readings are identical. According to the *Arukh*, the Gemara is pointing out that the verse does not use the term *mennu*, meaning: Than us; rather, it says *mimmennu*, meaning: Than him. Other commentaries explain that in Babylonia, the term *mimmennu* was written with different punctuation for: Than us, and: Than him. Therefore, the Gemara, which was written in Babylonia, is teaching that it should be read not with the punctuation that would render it: Stronger than us, but with the punctuation that would render it: Stronger than him (Dunash; Rabbi Avraham Ibn Ezra; Rashba).

The verse states: “And Caleb stilled [*vayyahas*] the people toward Moses” (Numbers 13:30). Rabba says: This means that he persuaded them [*hesitan*] with his words. *Vayyahas* and *hesitan* share the same root in Hebrew.

How did he do so? Joshua began to address the people, and as he was speaking they said to him: Should this person, who has a severed head, as he has no children, speak to the people about entering Eretz Yisrael?

Caleb said to himself: If I speak they will also say something about me and stop me from speaking. He began to speak and said to them: And is this the only thing that the son of Amram, Moses, has done to us? They thought that he wanted to relate something to the discredit of Moses, and they were silent.

He then said to them: He took us out of Egypt, and split the sea for us, and fed us the manna. If he says to us: Build ladders and climb to the heavens, should we not listen to him? “We should go up at once,” even to the heavens, “and possess it” (Numbers 13:30).

The verses continue: “But the men that went up with him said: We are not able to go up against the people; as they are stronger than us” (Numbers 13:31). Rabbi Hanina bar Pappa says: The spies said a serious statement at that moment. When they said: “They are stronger,” do not read the phrase as: Stronger than us [*mimmennu*],^N but rather read it as: Stronger than Him [*mimmennu*], meaning that even the Homeowner, God, is unable to remove His belongings from there, as it were. The spies were speaking heresy and claiming that the Canaanites were stronger than God Himself.

The spies said: “It is a land that consumes its inhabitants” (Numbers 13:32). Rava taught: The Holy One, Blessed be He, said: I intended the land to appear to consume its inhabitants for their own good, but they considered this proof that the land was bad. I intended it for their good by causing many people to die there so that anywhere that the spies arrived, the most important of them died, so that the Canaanites would be preoccupied with mourning and would not inquire about them. And there are those who say that God caused Job to die at that time, and everyone in Canaan was preoccupied with his eulogy, and did not pay attention to the spies. However, the spies considered this proof that the land was bad and said: “It is a land that consumes its inhabitants.”

The spies said: “And we were like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and so were we in their eyes” (Numbers 13:33). Rav Mesharshiyya says: The spies were liars. Granted, to say: “We were like grasshoppers in our own eyes,” is well, but to say: “And so were we in their eyes,” from where could they have known this?

The Gemara responds: But that is not so, as when the Canaanites were having the mourners’ meal, they had the meal beneath cedar trees, and when the spies saw them they climbed up the trees and sat in them. From there they heard the Canaanites saying: We see people who look like grasshoppers in the trees.

The verse states: “And all the congregation lifted up their voice and cried” (Numbers 14:1). Rabba says that Rabbi Yohanan says: That day was the eve of the Ninth of Av, and the Holy One, Blessed be He, said: On that day they wept a gratuitous weeping, so I will establish that day for them as a day of weeping for the future generations.

“וַיְהִי כִּלְבָבָתָא דְהָעָם אֶל מֹשֶׁה” – אָמַר רַבָּה: שְׁהִסִּיתָ בְּדַבְרֶיךָ.

פָּתַח יְהוֹשֻעַ. דְּקָא מִשְׁתַּעֵי אָמְרִי לֵיה: דִּין רָאשׁ קְטִיעָה יְמַלֵּל?

אָמַר: אִי מִשְׁתַּעֵינָא אָמְרִי בִי מִלְתָּא וְחִסְמִין לִי. אָמַר לָהֶן: וְכִי זֶו בְּלִבְד עָשָׂה לָנוּ בֶן עֶמְרָם? סָבְרִי בְּגִנּוּתִיהָ קָא מִשְׁתַּעֵי, אִישְׁתִּיקוּ.

אָמַר לָהֶן: הוֹצִיאָנוּ מִמִּצְרַיִם וְקָרַע לָנוּ אֶת הַיָּם וְהֶאֱכִילָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן. אִם יֹאמְרוּ עָשׂוּ סוּלָמוֹת וְעָלוּ לְרִקְיעַ, לֹא נִשְׁמַע לֹא? “עָלָה נַעֲלָה וְיִרְשָׁנוּ אֶתָּה” וּגו’.

“וְהָאֲנָשִׁים אֲשֶׁר עָלוּ עִמּוֹ אָמְרוּ לֹא נוֹכֵל” וּגו’ – אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִינָא בַר פַּפָּא: דְּבַר גָּדוֹל דְּבַר מְרָגְלִים בְּאוֹתָהּ שָׁעָה, “כִּי חָזַק הוּא מִמֶּנּוּ” – אֵל תִּקְרִי “מִמֶּנּוּ” אֶלָּא “מִמֶּנּוּ”: כְּבִיכּוֹל, אֶפְיֻלוּ בַּעַל הַבַּיִת אֵינוֹ יָכוֹל לְהוֹצִיא כָּלֵיו מִשָּׁם.

“אֶרֶץ אֹכֶלֶת יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ הִיא” – דָּרַשׁ רַבָּא, אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: אֲנִי חֲשַׁבְתִּיהָ לְטוֹבָה וְהֵם חֲשַׁבוּ לָרָעָה. אֲנִי חֲשַׁבְתִּיהָ לְטוֹבָה – דְּכָל הַיָּכָא דְמָטוּ, מֵת חֲשִׁיבָא דִידָהּ, כִּי הִיכִי דְנִיטְרָדוּ וְלֹא לְשָׂאֲלוּ אַבְתְּרִייהוּ. וְאִיכָא דְאָמְרִי: אִיב נַח נַפְשִׁיהּ, וְאִטְרִידוּ כּוּלֵי עֲלָמָא בְּהַסְפִּידָא. הֵם חֲשַׁבוּ לָרָעָה – “אֶרֶץ אֹכֶלֶת יוֹשְׁבֶיהָ הִיא”.

“וְנֹהֵי בְעֵינֵינוּ כַּחַגְבִּים וְכֵן הֵינּוּ” וּגו’ – אָמַר רַב מִשְׁרָשִׁי: מְרָגְלִים שְׁקִירֵי הָווּ. בְּשִׁלְמָא “וְנֹהֵי בְעֵינֵינוּ כַּחַגְבִּים” – לַחֲיִי, אֶלָּא “וְכֵן הֵינּוּ בְעֵינֵיהֶם” מָנָא הוּא יִדְעֵי?

וְלֹא הִיא, כִּי הוּא מְבַרֵי אֲבִילִי, תּוֹתִי אֲרוּי הוּא מְבַרֵי. וְכִי חֲזִינוּהוּ, סָלְקוּ יָתְבִי בְּאִילָנִי. שְׁמַעֵי דְקֶאֱמְרִי: קְתוּינִי אֵינְשִׁי דְדָמוּ לְקִמְצֵי בְּאִילָנִי.

“וַיִּתְּשָׂא כָל הָעֵדָה וַיִּתְּנוּ אֶת קוֹלָם וַיִּבְכּוּ” – אָמַר רַבָּה אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: אוֹתוֹ הַיּוֹם עָרַב תְּשַׁעֲהָ בָּאָב הִיא. אָמַר הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: הֵן בָּכוּ בְּכִיָּה שֶׁל חֲנָם, וְאֲנִי אֶקְבַּע לָהֶם בְּכִיָּה לְדוֹרוֹת.

Their tongues were stretched out and fell upon their navels – נִשְׁתַּרְבֵּב לְשׁוֹנָם וְנָפַל עַל טִיבוֹרָם – The *Iyyun Ya'akov* explains that they received this punishment because they spoke slander about the land with their tongues and because Eretz Yisrael is called “the navel of the earth” (Ezekiel 38:12).

Because he relieved himself [*asa tzerakhav*] in its presence – שִׁעֲשָׂה צָרְכּוֹ בְּפָנָיו – Many commentaries ask how such a disgraceful thing could be said about Uzzah, especially in light of the Gemara's statement that he entered the World-to-Come. Some explain that he relieved himself far away from the Ark but was facing in its direction, which is prohibited (see *Iyyun Ya'akov*). Another explanation, based on a midrash, is that the expression *asa tzerakhav*, literally, cared for his needs, is a reference to the blessing one recites when donning his shoes in the morning: Who has provided me with all I need. In this context it refers to the fact that Uzzah put on his shoes in front of the Ark (see *Anaf Yosef*).

BACKGROUND

Diphtheria – אֶסְכֶּרֶה: This is an infectious disease that causes the mucous membrane of the throat to swell and creates a choking feeling. It is common among young children, and until recently, with the invention of a vaccination against it, it was a fatal disease that caused its victims to die from choking. During the Second Temple period, people who served in the non-priestly watches would fast for one day each week, in the merit of which infants would not be afflicted with diphtheria.

“וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל הָעֵדָה לְרוֹגֵם אֹתָם בְּאֲבָנִים,” וְכַתִּיב: “וְכַבּוֹד ה' נִרְאָה בְּאֹהֶל מוֹעֵד” – אָמַר רַבִּי חִיַּיא בַּר אֲבָא: מְלֻמָּד, שֶׁנִּטְלוּ אֲבָנִים וְזָרְקוּם בְּלִפְי מַעֲלָה.

“וַיָּמָתוּ הָאֲנָשִׁים מוֹצְאֵי דִבַּת הָאָרֶץ רָעָה בְּמַגֵּפָה” – אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן בֶּן לִקְיִשׁ: שָׁמָּה מֵתָה מְשׁוּנָה. אָמַר רַבִּי חֲנִנְיָא בַּר פֶּפְאָה, דָּרַשׁ רַבִּי שִׁילָא אִישׁ כֶּפֶר תְּמַרְתָּא: מְלֻמָּד, שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּרְבֵּב לְשׁוֹנָם וְנָפַל עַל טִיבוֹרָם, וְהָיוּ תוֹלְעִים יוֹצְאוֹת מִלְּשׁוֹנָם וְנִכְנְסוֹת בְּטִיבוֹרָם, וּמְטִיבוֹרָם וְנִכְנְסוֹת בְּלִשְׁוֹנָם. וְרַב נַחֲמָן בַּר יִצְחָק אָמַר: בְּאֶסְכֶּרֶה מֵתוּ.

וְכֵיוֹן שֶׁעָלָה הָאֲחֵרוֹן שְׂבִי שִׁירָאֵל מִן הַיַּרְדֵּן חֲזָרוּ מֵיָם לְמִקְוָמוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “וַיְהִי בַעֲלוֹת הַכֹּהֲנִים נִשְׁאִי אֲרוֹן בְּרִית ה' מִתּוֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן נִתְקַיְּמוּ כְּפוֹת רִגְלֵי הַכֹּהֲנִים אֶל הַחֲרָבָה וַיִּשְׁבּוּ מִן הַיַּרְדֵּן לְמִקְוָמָם וַיֵּלְכוּ כְּתָמוּל שְׁלִשׁוֹם עַל כָּל גְּדוּתָיו.”

נִמְצָא אֲרוֹן וְנוֹשְׂאָיו וְכֹהֲנִים מֵצֵד אֶחָד וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל מֵצֵד אֶחָד. נִשְׂאֵי אֲרוֹן אֶת נוֹשְׂאָיו וְעָבְרוּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “וַיְהִי כַּאֲשֶׁר תָּם כָּל הָעָם לַעֲבֹר וַיַּעֲבֹר אֲרוֹן ה' וְהַכֹּהֲנִים לִפְנֵי הָעָם.”

וְעַל דִּבְרֵי זֶה נִנְעֵשׂ עוֹזָא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “וַיִּבְאֹר עַד גֶּזֶן בֵּידוֹ וַיִּשְׁלַח עוֹזָא אֶת יָדוֹ לֶאֱחֹז אֶת הָאֲרוֹן.” אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: עוֹזָא, נוֹשְׂאֵי נִשְׂאֵי עוֹזָא, עוֹזָא לֹא כָּל שֶׁבֶן!

“וַיַּחַר אֵף ה' בְּעֹזָה וַיַּכְהוּ שָׁם... עַל הַשָּׁל” וְגו' – רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, חֵד אָמַר: עַל עֶסְקֵי שָׁלוֹ, וְחֵד אָמַר: שִׁעֲשָׂה צָרְכּוֹ בְּפָנָיו.

“וַיָּמָת שָׁם עִם אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים” – אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: עוֹזָא בָּא לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא. שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “עִם אֲרוֹן הָאֱלֹהִים,” מָה אֲרוֹן לְעוֹלָם קָיָם, אֵף עוֹזָא בָּא לְעוֹלָם הַבָּא.

“וַיַּחַר לְדָוִד עַל אֲשֶׁר פָּרַץ ה' פָּרֹץ בְּעֹזָה” – אָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: שֶׁנִּשְׁתַּנּוּ פָּנָיו כְּחֲרָרָה.

The verse states: “But all the congregation bade stone them with stones” (Numbers 14:10), and it is written immediately afterward: “When the glory of the Lord appeared in the Tent of Meeting” (Numbers 14:10). Rabbi Ḥiyya bar Abba says: This teaches that they took stones and threw them upward as if to throw them at God.

The verse states: “And those men who brought out an evil report of the land, died by the plague before the Lord” (Numbers 14:37). Rabbi Shimon ben Lakish says: This means that they died an unusual death. Rabbi Ḥanina bar Pappa says that Rabbi Sheila Ish Kefar Temarta taught: This teaches that their tongues were stretched out from their mouths and fell upon their navels,ⁿ and worms were crawling out of their tongues and entering their navels, and worms were likewise coming out of their navels and entering their tongues. This is the painful death that they suffered. And Rav Naḥman bar Yitzḥak says: They died of diphtheria,⁸ which causes one to choke to death.

§ The Gemara returns to discuss the entry of the Jewish people into Eretz Yisrael. And once the last one of the Jewish people ascended out of the Jordan, the water returned to its place, as it is stated: “And it came to pass, as the priests that bore the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord came up out of the midst of the Jordan, as soon as the soles of the priests’ feet were drawn up unto the dry ground, that the waters of the Jordan returned to their place, and went over all its banks, as it had before” (Joshua 4:18). The Gemara understands that the priests who carried the Ark stood in the water until all of the Jewish people passed through the Jordan. Once all the Jewish people had reached the other side of the Jordan, the priests stepped back from the water and the Jordan returned to its natural state.

It follows that the Ark and its bearers and the priests were on one side of the Jordan, the east side, and the rest of the Jewish people were on the other side, the west side. Subsequently, the Ark carried its bearers in the air and crossed the Jordan, as it is stated: “When all the people were completely passed over, the Ark of the Lord passed on, and the priests, before the people” (Joshua 4:11).

And over this matter Uzzah was punished for not taking proper care of the Ark, as it is stated: “And when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon, Uzzah put forth his hand to hold the Ark; for the oxen stumbled” (1 Chronicles 13:9). The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: Uzzah, the Ark carried its bearers when it crossed the Jordan; all the more so is it not clear that it can carry itself?

§ The verse states: “And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Uzzah; and God smote him there for his error [*hashal*]” (II Samuel 6:7). Rabbi Yoḥanan and Rabbi Elazar disagreed over the interpretation of this verse. One says: God smote him for his forgetfulness [*shalo*], because he did not remember that the Ark can carry itself. And one says: God smote him because he lifted the edges [*shulayyim*] of his garment in front of the Ark and relieved himself in its presence.ⁿ

The verse states: “And he died there with the Ark of God” (II Samuel 6:7). Rabbi Yoḥanan says: Uzzah entered the World-to-Come, as it is stated: “With the Ark of God.” Just as the Ark exists forever, so too, Uzzah entered the World-to-Come.

The verse states: “And David was displeased [*vayyihar*] because the Lord had broken forth upon Uzzah” (II Samuel 6:8). Rabbi Elazar says: *Vayyihar* means that his face changed colors and darkened like baked bread [*harara*] from displeasure.

And to the descendants of Kohath he did not give, etc. – **וְלִבְנֵי קָהָת לֹא נָתַן וכו'** – The question arises, how could it be that David and the entire nation forgot something that was explicitly written in the Torah? One answer is that David thought that this mitzva pertained only to Israel's travels in the wilderness, when the Ark was carried on a regular basis, but it did not apply at this later time (*Keli Yakar*). Others explain, based on the tradition that Saul took the tablets during the war with the Philistines and brought them to Shiloh, that during the time of David, the Ark contained only the broken tablets. Consequently, David believed that the *halakhot* of carrying the Ark did not apply in this situation (*Zahav Sheva*). Another possibility is that because the Ark was already returned to them on a wagon by the Philistines, they believed it was permitted to transport the Ark in that manner.

HALAKHA

They carry them upon their shoulders and brought it in a wagon – **בַּבִּתָּחַ יִשְׂאוּ** – When the Ark of the Covenant is carried from one place to another it may not be carried by an animal or on a wagon. Rather, it is a mitzva for people to carry it on their shoulders (Rambam *Sefer Avoda*, *Hilkhot Kelei HaMikdash* 2:12).

The Gemara questions this statement: **If that is so, anywhere that the word *vayyihar* is written, including when it is referring to God, should it be interpreted this way as well?** The Gemara answers: **There, it is written:** “And the anger of the Lord was kindled [*vayyihar af*]” (II Samuel 6:7), whereas **here, the anger [*af*] is not written, but only *vayyihar*.** Therefore it is interpreted differently.

Rava taught: For what reason was David punished with Uzzah's death? He was punished because he called matters of Torah: Songs, as it is stated: “Your statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage” (Psalms 119:54).

The Holy One, Blessed be He, said to him: Matters of Torah are so difficult and demanding that it is written: “Will you set your eyes upon it? It is gone” (Proverbs 23:5), i.e., one whose eyes stray from the Torah even for a moment will forget it, and you call them songs? For this reason I will cause you to stumble in a matter that even schoolchildren know, as it is written with regard to the wagons brought to the Tabernacle: “And to the descendants of Kohath he did not give,^N because the service of the holy things belongs to them; they carry them upon their shoulders” (Numbers 7:9). And although the Ark clearly must be carried on people's shoulders, David erred and brought it in a wagon.^H

§ When the Philistines returned the Ark during the period of Samuel, it is stated: “And He smote of the men of Beit Shemesh because they had gazed upon the Ark of the Lord” (I Samuel 6:19). The Gemara asks: Because they gazed upon it, God smote them? Why did their action warrant this punishment? Rabbi Abbahu and Rabbi Elazar disagreed with regard to the interpretation of the verse. One says that they were punished because they were reaping their crops and prostrating themselves at the same time; they did not stop working in reverence for the Ark. And one says that they also spoke denigrating words:

Who angered you, i.e., the Ark, so much that you became so angry that you gave yourself into captivity? And who came to you to appease you?

The verse states: “And He smote of the people seventy men, fifty thousand men” (I Samuel 6:19).^N Rabbi Abbahu and Rabbi Elazar disagree over the interpretation of the verse. One says that there were seventy men, and each and every one of them was equivalent to fifty thousand men. And one says that there were fifty thousand men, and each and every one was equivalent to the seventy men in the Sanhedrin.

With regard to David's journey with the Ark to Jerusalem, the verse states: “And when they who carried the Ark of the Lord had gone six paces, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling” (II Samuel 6:13). And it is written elsewhere that he sacrificed “seven oxen and seven rams” (I Chronicles 15:26). Rav Pappa bar Shmuel says: For each and every step David took, he sacrificed an ox and a fatling, and for every six steps that he took, he sacrificed seven oxen and seven rams.

Rav Hisda said to him: If that is so, and he sacrificed an offering for every step that he took, you have filled all of Eretz Yisrael with altars, as they had to build a new altar for each offering. Rather, Rav Hisda said: For every six steps he sacrificed an ox and a fatling, and for every six sets of six steps he sacrificed seven oxen and seven rams.

NOTES

Seventy men, fifty thousand men – **שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ – חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ**: It is explained in *Targum Yonatan* that the seventy elders of the nation died, and another fifty thousand from the rest of the nation died.

The Maharsha explains that the Gemara deviates from the simple meaning that 50,070 men died, as, if this were the correct meaning, the verse should have written: Seventy men and fifty thousand men. Furthermore, the repetition of the word “men” indicates that the seventy men were actually fifty thousand men, as the Gemara explains.

אֶלֶּלָא מִמֶּתָהּ, כָּל הַיָּכָא דְכִתְיִב “וַיַּחַר” הָכִי נִמְי! הָתֵם כְּתִיב “אָף”, הָכֵא לֹא כְּתִיב “אָף”.

דְּרִשׁ רַבָּא: מִפְּנֵי מָה נִעְנֵשׁ דָּוִד? מִפְּנֵי שְׁקָרָא לְדַבְרֵי תוֹרָה וּמִיּוֹרוֹת, שְׁנָאֵמַר: “וּמִיּוֹרוֹת הָיוּ לִי חֲקִיךְ בְּבֵית מְגוּרִי”.

אָמַר לוֹ הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא: דְּבַרֵּי תוֹרָה שְׁכָתוּב בֵּהֶן “הִתְעִיף עֵינֶיךָ בּוֹ וְאִינְנוּ”, אִתָּהּ קוֹרָא אוֹתָן וּמִיּוֹרוֹת? הֲרֵינִי מְכַשִּׁילְךָ בְּדָבָר שְׁאֵפִילוֹ תִינּוּקוֹת שֶׁל בֵּית רַבָּן יוֹדְעִין אוֹתוֹ, דְּכִתְיִב: “וְלִבְנֵי קָהָת לֹא נָתַן כִּי עֲבַדְתָּ הַקֹּדֶשׁ” וְגו', וְאִיהוּ אִתְּיָהּ בַּעֲגָלָתָא.

“וַיֵּךְ בְּאַנְשֵׁי בֵּית שֹׁמֶשׁ כִּי רָאוּ בָאָרוֹן” – מִשּׁוֹם דָּרְאוּ וַיֵּךְ אֱלֹהִים? רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר. חָד אָמַר: קוֹצְרִין וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִּים הָיוּ, וְחָד אָמַר: מִיָּלִי נָמִי אָמֹר.

Perek VII
Daf 35 Amud b

מֵאֵן אֲמִרְיָךְ (לְהָא) דְּאִימְרִיָּית וּמֵאֵן אִתָּא עֲלֶיךָ דְּאִיפְיִיסָת.

“וַיֵּךְ בְּעָם שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף אִישׁ” – רַבִּי אֲבָהוּ וְרַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר, חָד אָמַר: שִׁבְעִים אִישׁ הָיוּ, וְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד שְׁקוּל כְּחֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף; וְחָד אָמַר: חֲמִשִּׁים אֶלֶף הָיוּ, וְכָל אֶחָד וְאֶחָד שְׁקוּל כְּשִׁבְעִים סֵנְהֶדְרִין.

“וַיְהִי כִּי צָעְדוּ נִשְׂאֵי אָרוֹן ה' שִׁשָּׁה צָעִדִים וַיִּזְבַּח שׂוֹר וּמְרִיא”, וּכְתִיב: “שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וּשְׁבַעֲהָ אֵילִים!” אָמַר רַב פָּפָא בְּרַ שְׁמוּאֵל: עַל כָּל פְּסִיעָה וּפְסִיעָה – שׂוֹר וּמְרִיא; עַל כָּל שֵׁשׁ וְשֵׁשׁ פְּסִיעוֹת – שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וּשְׁבַעֲהָ אֵילִים.

אָמַר לִיהִי רַב חֲסֵדָא: אִם כֵּן, מִילָאֲתָ אֵת כָּל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמוֹת! אֲלֵא אָמַר רַב חֲסֵדָא: עַל כָּל שֵׁשׁ וְשֵׁשׁ פְּסִיעוֹת – שׂוֹר וּמְרִיא; עַל כָּל שִׁשָּׁה סְדָרִים שֶׁל שֵׁשׁ פְּסִיעוֹת – שִׁבְעָה פָּרִים וּשְׁבַעֲהָ אֵילִים.

At first a javelin [*kidon*] but ultimately established [nakhon] – בְּתַחֲלָה כִּידוֹן וּלְבָסוֹף נָכוֹן – According to one interpretation in the *Arukh*, the Gemara is saying that at first there was judgment [*din*] and then there was order [nakhon]. According to a second interpretation, *kidon* means tragedy or brokenness. Rashi suggests a similar explanation of the phrase, based on a verse from Job.

An extra degree of understanding – בִּינָה יְתִירָה – According to the opinion that the entire Torah was written on the stones, the extraordinary expertise of these scribes was expressed through their ability to copy the Torah within a few hours, before the stones were plastered over (see *Tosafot*). Others explain that they managed to peel off the plaster from the stones without damaging the writing (*Yagel Ya'akov*). Another explanation is that although they could see only the plaster, the scribes understood that something important was written underneath, and peeled off the plaster to copy it (*Ben Yehoyada*).

LANGUAGE

Scribes [*noteirin*] – נוֹטֵירִין: From the Latin term notarius, which is perhaps borrowed from Greek. It refers to a scribe, a writer, or someone who copies official documents.

בְּתִיב: “כִּידוֹן”, וּכְתִיב: “נָכוֹן”! אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן: בְּתַחֲלָה כִּידוֹן, וּלְבָסוֹף נָכוֹן.

נִמְצְאָתָא אֲתָה אֹמֵר: שְׁלֹשָׁה מִיָּנִי אֲבָנִים הָיוּ; אֶחָד שֶׁהָקִים מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב, שְׁנָאֲמַר: “בְּעֶבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן בְּאֶרֶץ מוֹאָב הוֹאִיל מֹשֶׁה בְּאֶרֶץ” וְגו', וְלֵהֲלֹן הוּא אֹמֵר: “וְכָתַבְתָּ עֲלֵיהֶן אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת” וְגו'. וְאֲתֵיָא “בִּיאַר”, בִּיאַר;

וְאֶחָד שֶׁהָקִים יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן, שְׁנָאֲמַר: “וּשְׁתִּים עֶשְׂרֵה אֲבָנִים הָקִים יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בְּתוֹךְ הַיַּרְדֵּן”; וְאֶחָד שֶׁהָקִים בְּגִלְגָל, שְׁנָאֲמַר: “וְאֵת שְׁתִּים עֶשְׂרֵה הָאֲבָנִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר לָקָחוּ” וְגו'.

תֵּנוּ רַבָּנִי: בִּיצֵד כְּתָבוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת הַתּוֹרָה? רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אֹמֵר: עַל גְּבִי אֲבָנִים כְּתוּבָה, שְׁנָאֲמַר: “וְכָתַבְתָּ עַל הָאֲבָנִים אֶת כָּל דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה הַזֹּאת” וְגו', וְאַחֲרֵי כֵן סָדוּ אוֹתָן בְּסִיד;

אָמַר לוֹ רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן: לְדַבְּרֶיךָ, הֵיכָן לָמְדוּ אוֹמוֹת הָעוֹלָם תּוֹרָה? אָמַר לוֹ: בִּינָה יְתִירָה נָתַן בָּהֶם הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא, וְשִׁגְרוּ נוֹטֵירִין שְׁלֵהֶן וְקִילְפוֹ אֶת הַסִּיד וְהַשִּׁיאֻהוּ. וְעַל דָּבָר זֶה נִתְחַתֵּם גִּזְרֵי דִינָם לְבִיאַר שַׁחַת, שֶׁהָיָה לָהֶן לִלְמֹד וְלֹא לָמְדוּ;

רַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן אֹמֵר: עַל גְּבִי סִיד כְּתוּבָה, וְכָתָבוּ לָהֶן לְמִשָּׁה: “לִמְדוּ אִתְּכֶם לַעֲשׂוֹת כְּכָל” וְגו'. הָא לָמְדִיתְ, שְׂאֵם הָיוּ חוֹזְרִין בְּתִשְׁבּוּבָה הָיוּ מְקַבְּלִין אוֹתָן.

אָמַר רַבָּא בַר שִׁילָא: מַאי טַעְמָא דְּרַבִּי שְׁמַעוֹן? דְּכָתִיב: “וְהָיוּ עַמִּים מְשֻׁרְפוֹת סִיד”, עַל עֶסְקֵי סִיד.

וְרַבִּי יְהוּדָה? כִּי סִיד, מַה סִיד אֵין לוֹ תַקְנָה אֶלָּא שְׁרִיפָה, אִף אוֹמוֹת הָעוֹלָם אֵין לָהֶם תַקְנָה אֶלָּא שְׁרִיפָה.

It is written that Uzzah died “when they came to the threshing floor of Chidon” (1 Chronicles 13:9), and elsewhere it is written that it was “the threshing floor of Nacon” (11 Samuel 6:6). Rabbi Yohanan says: At first the Ark was similar to a javelin [*kidon*], as it caused Uzzah's death. But ultimately, after the people asked for forgiveness, it was established [nakhon],^N i.e., placed, in the house of Obed Edom, where it was a source of blessing.

S The Gemara returns to the discussion of how the Ark was brought into Eretz Yisrael. You are found saying that there were three sets of stones. One is a set that Moses erected in the land of Moab, as it is stated: “Beyond the Jordan, in the land of Moab, Moses took upon himself to expound [*be'er*] this law, saying” (Deuteronomy 1:5). And it states there with regard to the mitzva to erect the stones on Mount Ebal: “And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law clearly elucidated [*ba'er*]” (Deuteronomy 27:8). It is derived through a verbal analogy between the word “*be'er*” that appears with regard to Moses, and the word “*ba'er*” that appears with regard to the mitzva to write the Torah on the stones on Mount Ebal that Moses also wrote down the Torah on stones.

And there is one set that Joshua erected in the Jordan, as it is stated: “Joshua also set up twelve stones in the midst of the Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests that bore the Ark of the Covenant stood, and they are there to this day” (Joshua 4:9). And there is one set that Joshua erected in Gilgal, as it is stated: “And these twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up in Gilgal” (Joshua 4:20).

The Sages taught: How did the Jewish people write the Torah? Rabbi Yehuda says: They wrote it on stones, as it is stated: “And you shall write on the stones all the words of this law” (Deuteronomy 27:8). And afterward they plastered them over with plaster.

Rabbi Shimon said to him: According to your statement that they plastered over the writing, how did the nations of the world study Torah? He said to him: The Holy One, Blessed be He, granted them an extra degree of understanding,^N and they sent their scribes [*noteirin*],^L and they peeled off the plaster and copied it down. And on account of this matter their decree to be sent to the pit of destruction was sealed, as once the Torah was in their possession they should have studied it, and they did not study.

Rabbi Shimon says: That is not what happened. Rather, the Jewish people wrote the text of the Torah on top of the plaster, and they wrote below for the gentiles to read that the verse commands the Jewish people to destroy the gentile inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael: “Lest they teach you to do like all their abominations” (Deuteronomy 20:18). You derive from the fact that they wrote this verse that if the gentiles who lived in Eretz Israel would have repented, the Jews would have accepted them, i.e., allowed them to live in Eretz Yisrael.

Rava bar Sheila said: What is the reason for the opinion of Rabbi Shimon? As it is written: “And the peoples shall be as the burnings of plaster” (Isaiah 33:12). This is homiletically interpreted to mean that the nations were punished on account of matters of plaster, i.e., they did not study the Torah that was written on plaster.

The Gemara asks: And how does Rabbi Yehuda, who holds that the Torah was not written on plaster, interpret this verse? The Gemara answers: He explains that the gentiles are like plaster; just as plaster has no remedy but burning, i.e., it is created by burning stone, so too, the nations of the world have no remedy other than burning in Gehenna.

בְּמֵאן אֶזְלָא הָא דְתַנָּא: "וְשִׁבִיתָ
שְׂבִיו" – לְרִבּוֹת כְּנַעֲנִים שְׂבָחוּצָה לְאֶרֶץ
שָׂאם חוּזְרִין בְּתִשּׁוּבָה מִקְבְּלִין אוֹתָן?

In accordance with whose opinion is **that which is taught** in a *baraita*: The verse states: “When you go forth to battle against your enemies, and the Lord your God delivers them into your hands, **and you take them captive**” (Deuteronomy 21:10), implying that there is no obligation to destroy them, **to include** not only gentiles who are not Canaanites, but even **Canaanites that are living outside of Eretz Yisrael,^N as, if they repent, they are accepted** and allowed to live in Eretz Yisrael.

NOTES

To include Canaanites that are living outside of Eretz Yisrael – לְרִבּוֹת כְּנַעֲנִים שְׂבָחוּצָה לְאֶרֶץ: The early commentaries have different opinions with regard to the relationship of the Jews to Canaanites living in Eretz Yisrael, Canaanites living outside of Eretz Yisrael, and other gentile nations who want to make peace with the Jews. This issue is dependent on another debate with regard to the offer that Joshua sent to the inhabitants of Eretz Yisrael to make peace with the Jewish people, as discussed in the Jerusalem Talmud: Was this offer dependent merely on their acceptance of the political rule of the Jews, or did they also have to agree to cease idol worship and to observe the seven Noahide mitzvot? See a discussion of the different opinions in *Lehem Mishne* (Rambam *Sefer Shofetim, Hilkhot Melakhim UMilhemoteihem* 6:1). The differing opinions with regard to that

issue are dependent upon the understanding of the dispute between Rabbi Yehuda and Rabbi Shimon. Several commentaries understand that the matter under discussion is whether or not there is a distinction with regard to the possibility of accepting Canaanites under Jewish rule between the Canaanites who lived in Eretz Yisrael and those who lived outside of Eretz Yisrael; other commentaries disagree. Furthermore, the reason behind the distinction requires clarification. It is possible that the verse stating: “You shall keep alive no one who breathes” (Deuteronomy 20:16), refers only to the Canaanites living in Eretz Yisrael, and only under certain circumstances. Alternatively, it is possible that once the Jewish people entered Eretz Yisrael, the Canaanites living there could no longer be trusted to accept the mitzvot.