

10 Shevat 5777
Feb. 6, 2017



Bava Basra Daf 15

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May the studying of the Daf Notes be a zechus for their neshamot and may their souls find peace in Gan Eden and be bound up in the Bond of life

The Gemora cites a braisa: The order of the Prophets is, Yehoshua, Judges, Shmuel, Kings, Yirmiyah, Yechezkel, Yeshayah, and the Twelve Minor Prophets.

Let us examine this. Hoshea came first, as it is written, God spoke first to Hoshea. But did God speak first to Hoshea? Were there not many prophets between Moshe and Hoshea? Rabbi Yochanan, however, has explained that [what It means is that] he was the first of the four prophets who prophesied at that period, namely, Hoshea, Yeshayah, Amos and Michah.

The Gemora asks: Shouldn't then Hoshea come first?

The Gemora answers: Since his prophecy is written along with those of Chaggai, Zechariah and Malachi, and Chaggai, Zechariah and Malachi came at the end of the prophets, he is reckoned with them.

The Gemora asks: But why should he not be written separately and placed first?

The Gemora answers: Since his book is so small, it might be lost [if copied separately].

The Gemora asks: Let us see again. Yeshayah was prior to Yirmiyah and Yechezkel. Then why should not Yeshayah be placed first?

The Gemora answers: Because the Book of Kings ends with a record of destruction and Yirmiyah speaks throughout of destruction and Yechezkel commences

with destruction and ends with consolation and Yeshayah is full of consolation; therefore we put destruction next to destruction and consolation next to consolation.

The braisa continues: The order of the Writings is Rus, the Book of Psalms, Iyov, Prophets, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel and the Scroll of Esther, Ezra and Chronicles.

The Gemora asks: Now on the view that Iyov lived in the days of Moshe, shouldn't the book of Iyov come first?

The Gemora answers: We do not begin with a record of suffering.

The Gemora asks: But Rus also is a record of suffering?

The Gemora answers: It is a suffering with a sequel [of happiness], as Rabbi Yochanan said: Why was her name called Rus? Because there issued from her David who replenished the Holy One, Blessed be He, with hymns and praises.

The braisa continues: Who wrote the Scriptures? Moshe wrote his own book and the portion of Bilaam and Iyov. Yehoshua wrote the book which bears his name and [the last] eight verses of the Pentateuch. Shmuel wrote the book which bears his name and the Book of Judges and Rus. David wrote the Book of Psalms, including in it the work of the elders, namely, Adam, Malki Tzedek, Avraham, Moshe, Heiman, Yedusun, Asaph, and the three sons of Korach.



The braisa continues: Yirmiya wrote the book which bears his name, and the book of Melachim (Kings), and the book of Lamentations. King Chizkiyah and his followers wrote the books of Yeshayah, Mishlei (Proverbs), Shir haShirim (Song of Songs), and Koheles (Ecclesiastes). The Anshei Keneses Hagedolah (Men of the Great Assembly) wrote the books of Yechezkel, the twelve prophets, Daniel, and Esther. Ezra wrote the book of Ezra (and Nechemiah), and the book of Divrei Hayamim (Chronicles) to the point of his own lineage. The *Gemora* says that this supports Rav, who says that before Ezra left Babylonia, he listed his lineage. Nechemiah completed the Book of Chronicles.

The *Gemora* now returns to discuss the authorships mentioned in the *braisa*. (14b - 15a)

Yehoshua

Yehoshua authored the book of Yehoshua, and the last eight verses in the Torah, which describe Moshe's death. (15a)

The Last Verses of the Torah

The *Gemora* says that the authorship of the last eight verses is actually a dispute of *Tannaim*. Rabbi Yehudah says - as this *braisa* does - that Yehoshua wrote these verses. Rabbi Shimon objects, since the Torah recounts Moshe writing Torah scrolls and giving them to the nation. If Yehoshua wrote the last eight verses after Moshe died, the Torah scrolls written earlier would have been incomplete. Rather, Rabbi Shimon says that the last eight verses were dictated by Hashem to Moshe (*like the rest of the Torah*), and Moshe wrote them while teary (*unlike the rest of the Torah*).

The *Gemora* quotes a statement of Rav that these eight verses must be read by only one person, and suggests that this follows Rabbi Yehudah's opinion, that these verses were written by a different author than the rest of the Torah.

The *Gemora* deflects this proof. Although Rabbi Shimon holds that these eight verses were written by Moshe, just like the rest of the Torah, they were written differently, and therefore are treated differently for Torah reading. (15a)

The Book of Yehoshua

The *Gemora* asks: How could Yehoshua have written the book of Yehoshua, if it contains his death?

The *Gemora* answers that Elozar finished that section. The final section, when Elozar dies, was completed by Elozar's son, Pinchas. (15a)

Shmuel

Shmuel wrote the book of Shmuel. The end of the book, which describes Shmuel's death, was written by the prophets Gad and Nassan. (15a)

King David : Ten Elders

King David wrote the book of Tehillim, based on the words of ten elders, listed in the *braisa*.

The *Gemora* questions why Aisan Ha'ezrachi, who is quoted in Tehillim, is not listed, and answers that he is Avraham, who is one of the ten listed. Even though Moshe is also called Heiman, both are listed, since the Heiman listed is a different person. (15a)

Moshe

Moshe wrote the Torah, including the story of Bil'am, and the book of Iyov. (15a)

The Book of Iyov

The *Gemora* says this *braisa* supports Rav Levi bar Lachma, who says Iyov lived in the time of Moshe. He proves this from the use of the word *eifo* – *how* – in the book of Iyov, and also in the words of Moshe.

The *Gemora* rejects this proof, since that word appears at other time periods – in the times of Yitzchok, Ya'akov, and Yosef. Rather, the proof is from the verse in Iyov that states *mi yitain basefer v'yuchaku* – *if only [my words] were engraved in a book*, which is a reference to Moshe, who is referred to as *mechokaik* – *the engraver*. (15a)

The Story of Iyov

Rava says Iyov was in the times of the spies sent by the Jews in the Wilderness. Iyov is referred to as a man from the land of *Utz*, and Moshe commanded the spies to see if there was an *aitz* (tree) in the land they were investigating. Since the words sound similar, Moshe was referring to Iyov.

The *Gemora* explains that Moshe was referring to Iyov, who had a long life like a tree, and provided protection like a tree over the people of Canaan in his merit.

A certain scholar was sitting in front of Rav Shmuel bar Nachmeini, and said that Iyov never existed, but was only a parable. Rabbi Shmuel bar Nachmeini said that the verse that relates the details of Iyov's name and locale, to indicate that he was real, and not just a parable, as opposed to the parable the prophet Nassan told King David, which was said in general terms.

Rabbi Yochanan and Rabbi Elozar say that Iyov was one of the Jews who returned from Babylonia to Israel after the destruction of the first Temple, and he learned in Teveria.

The *Gemora* attempts to disprove this from a *braisa* that says that Iyov lived from the time the Jews entered Egypt until they left.

The *Gemora* deflects this *braisa* by saying that it is only indicating the length of Iyov's life, not the time of his life.

The *Gemora* attempts to disprove this from a *braisa* that says that there were seven prophets that prophesied to non-Jews: Bil'am and his father, Iyov and his four friends, Elifaz, Bildad, Tzofar, and Elihu. This *braisa* indicates that Iyov was not Jewish.

The *Gemora* deflects this by noting that Elihu was Jewish, and is still listed. Instead, the *braisa* is listing prophets – Jewish or not – who prophesied primarily to non-Jews.

The *Gemora* disproves this from a *braisa* that says that Iyov was a righteous gentile, whom Hashem wished to reward. When Hashem afflicted him, he blasphemed Hashem, whereupon Hashem paid him his reward in this world, to fully punish him in the next world.

The *Gemora* concludes that the identification of Iyov is a dispute among *Tannaim*, as indicated in a different *braisa*. This *braisa* records the following opinions on the identity of Iyov:

1. Rabbi Elozar – he lived in the times of the Judges, when all was *hevel* - vain, as indicated by the use of the word *hevel* in Iyov
2. Rabbi Yehoshua ben Karchah – he lived in the times of Achashverosh, when beautiful women were sought throughout the world, as indicated by the statement that Iyov's daughters were the most beautiful in the world.
3. Rabbi Nassan – in the times of Sheba, as Iyov's animals and workers were killed by soldiers from Sheba
4. Sages – in the times of the Babylonians, as Iyov's animals and workers were killed by Babylonian soldiers
5. Some say – in the times of Yaakov, and he married his daughter Dina, as Iyov uses the term *nevalos* – disgrace, also used to describe the attack by Shechem on Dina.

The *Gemora* explains that all but for the last opinion must hold that he was Jewish, since Hashem promised Moshe that he would no longer give prophecy to non Jews.

Rabbi Yochanan says that Iyov's generation was licentious, as the verse refers to viewing, which has a connotation of improperly looking at women.



The *Gemora* parenthetically quotes another statement of Rabbi Yochanan about the faults of a generation. The book of Ruth is introduced with the statement – and it was in the days of the judgment of the Judges. This extra use of judgment indicates that the generation was one where the populace would judge their judges, since the judges' personal behavior was inconsistent with their judgments and admonishments.

Rabbi Yochanan gives parables of this interaction. If the judge would tell a person to remove the stolen stick from his teeth (i.e., *correct a transgression*), the person would tell the judge to remove the stolen beam from his eye (i.e., *correct an even larger transgression*). If the judge would tell a person that his coinage was counterfeit, the person would tell the judge that his wine was diluted.

Rabbi Yonasan says that the queen of Sheba referred to in *Tanach* was not the wife of the king, but the ruler herself.

The *Gemora* returns to the story of Iyov, expanding on the dialogue between Hashem and the Satan described in Iyov. The *Gemora* explains that the Satan tells Hashem that from his travels in the world, he has not seen anyone as devoted to Hashem as Avraham. Once Hashem told him that he would receive the land of Israel, even when he had to purchase a burial plot for Sara, he did not question Hashem. Hashem asks the Satan if he has examined Iyov, who is perfect, upright, fears Hashem, and keeps away from bad. (*The Gemora points out that this praise is beyond that said of Avraham, since only after Avraham passed his tenth test did Hashem say that he feared Hashem.*) Rabbi Abba bar Shmuel adds that Iyov was very generous, as he would pay a worker a full *perutah* for less work, and not insist on receiving his change. The Satan responded that Iyov was God fearing because Hashem blessed him.

The *Gemora* explains the facets of Iyov's blessing. The verse says that his work was blessed, which means that whoever received money from him was successful. The verse also says that his sheep broke boundaries (*grew*) in the land, which means that it broke the natural boundaries, as his goats killed wolves. Hashem then allowed the Satan to inflict suffering on Iyov's family and possessions, but not on him. The Satan then came to Iyov and told him that all was well in the field – the cattle were plowing, and the donkeys were grazing next to them. The *Gemora* explains that Hashem gave Iyov a taste of the world to come, since this verse means that the sprouts grew instantaneously after plowing. Iyov then receives the news of the multiple calamities – his animals and workers were killed by soldiers, and his children were killed by their building collapsing. Iyov rends his clothing, but says that just as he was born empty handed, he will leave this world empty handed, and as Hashem gave, Hashem took, Hashem should only be blessed. Hashem pointed out to the Satan that Iyov remained faithful to him, even in the face of the tragedies that befell him. (15a – 16a)

INSIGHTS TO THE DAF

Read Individually

The *Gemora* states that the last eight verses of the Torah, due to their unique nature, are read by an individual. The Rishonim discuss what this statement means. Rav Meshulam (Tosfos 15a Shmona) says that while the rest of the Torah is read by two people – the *chazan* (our ba'al kria) and the person called up to the Torah – these verses must be read only by the person called up to the Torah. Rabbeinu Tam objects to this explanation, and explains that our contemporary practice of having someone else read (*besides the person who gets the aliyah*) was not followed in the times of the *Gemora*, so the *Gemora* could not have been referring to these verses as an exception. Instead, Rabbeinu Tam says that these eight verses must

be read in one *aliyah*, by one person, and not be split between two people. The Shulchan Aruch (OH 428:7) rules like Rabbeinu Tam. The Ri Migash says that these verses must be read by a different person than the verses that precede them, to show that these were written differently. The Rambam (Tefila 13:6) says that these verses may be read without a *minyan*, since they were read differently. The Rama (Darkei Moshe OH 428:4) quotes the Mordechai, who says that the individual stated here is an individual who is extraordinary in his Torah learning, and the Mishna Berura (669:1) cites this as a reason to try and give the Chasan Torah (*which reads the last verses*) to one who is well versed in Torah.

Reading the Torah

Tosfos (15a Shmona) discusses why we indeed have the custom of someone else reading the Torah, and not just the person who gets the *aliyah*. Indeed, in the times of Tosfos, it seems that both would read aloud. Although the Yerushalmi states that it is proper for the *chazan* to be present at the reading, to resemble the method of the Torah being given via an intermediary (Moshe), the Yerushalmi merely means that the *chazan* should stand near Torah, or perhaps quietly prompt the person who gets the *aliyah*. Rabbeinu Tam explains that later generations instituted that the *chazan* should read aloud with the person who is called up, to avoid embarrassing those who do not know how to read the Torah.

DAILY MASHAL

Written in Tears

Rabbi Shimon says that although Moshe wrote the last verses of the Torah, describing his death, he did so differently than the rest of the Torah. The Ritva cites a text that states that for the rest of the Torah, Hashem dictated, and Moshe wrote, while for these verses, Hashem dictated, and Moshe read in tears. According to this text, the eight verses were written differently since tears were used in place of ink. However, our text states that for the rest of the Torah, Hashem dictated, and Moshe repeated and wrote, while for these verses,

Hashem dictated, and Moshe wrote in tears. This text indicates that the only difference was that for the last eight verses, Moshe did not repeat the words, since they were sad for him, but only wrote them, while teary.

The Gr"א explains the *Gemora* differently. The word used for tears is "*dema*," which has the same root as "*dimu'a*" - a mixture. The Gr"א says that all the letters of the Torah are permutations of Hashem's name, and existed before the world did. The letters of the Torah take the form they do today in the revealed manifestation of the Torah, but they exist in other permutations as well. For example, before the world was created, the chapters describing creation existed in different permutations, which did not describe creation. When Hashem dictated the last verses of the Torah to Moshe, before they happened, Moshe wrote them in a different mixture of letters, as they were before the Torah was given.

Excellent advice for a darshan

Our Gemara reminds us that in the era of the Shofetim (Judges) the Jews were so corrupt that they answered the leaders who upbraided them: "Take the beam from between your eyes!" In other words, before you say "Take the splinter from between your teeth", admonishing us for a minor fault, correct your own defects which are like a thick beam compared to our peccadillos.

Rabbi Chayim of Volozhin zt"l explained that Yirmiyah gave darshanim good advice to prevent their audience from criticizing them: A darshan must include himself in his audience, as Yirmiah says: "Let us examine our ways and investigate" (Eichah 3:40). Nachkorah – "let us investigate" – may be divided into two words: nach korah – "the beam rests". By including himself with those castigated, the darshan removes the beam from between his eyes and it "rests".