

## ימים תפילות AS THE MODEL FOR THE סדר תעניות 2-נוראים

In last week's newsletter, we observed that when our Sages called for public fasts in response to a drought, fasting was the only form of prayer that was offered during the first nine fasts. For the next seven fasts, prayer in the form of Shofar blowing was added. From the following series of **משניות** we learn that prayer in the form of **פסוקים**, **סליחות** and **ברכות** were added to the last nine fasts as well:

משנה מסכת תענית פרק ב' משנה א'—סדר תעניות כיצד? מוציאים את התיבה לרחובה של עיר, ונותנים אפר מקלה על גבי התיבה ובראש הנשיא ובראש אב בית דין, וכל אחד ואחד נותן בראשו. הוקן שבהן אומר לפניהן דברי כבושין: אחינו לא נאמר באנשי נינוה (יונה ג')<sup>1</sup> וירא א—להים את שקם ואת תעניתם אלא וירא א—להים את מעשיהם כי שבו מדרכם הרעה, ובקבלה הוא אומר: (יואל ב') וקרעו לבבכם ואל בגדיכם.

*Mishnah. What is the order of the service for fast days? The ark holding the Torah is taken out into the open space of the city. Wood ashes are placed on the ark, on the head of the Nasi and on the head of the court. Each one present also puts ashes on his own head. The elder among them addresses them with words of admonition to inspire repentance: Our brethren, scripture does not say of the people of Ninveh, and G-d saw their sackcloth and their fasting. Instead scripture says: G-d saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and in the prophets it is said, and rend your heart and not your garments.*

Commentary: According to the **משנה**, an ark carrying a **ספר תורה** was brought out into the street. Was that an unusual practice or a regular custom? Professor Zev Safrai in his commentary on the **משנה**, written in collaboration with his father, Shmuel Safrai and his sister, Chana Safrai (hereinafter “Safrai”), alleges that this was an unusual circumstance. In his opinion, the prayer service was held in the street because the number of people attending the service exceeded the capacity of the average synagogue building of that era. Perhaps an alternative explanation can be offered. In our discussion on the origin of the synagogue, we noted that **חז"ל** chose Mondays and Thursdays as the days on which to perform **קריאת התורה** so that **קריאת התורה** would coincide with market days. We further noted that initially **קריאת התורה** on Mondays and Thursdays may have been held outdoors in the market place. The fact that **חז"ל** chose to hold the fasts days on the days on which the markets were open and on which **קריאת התורה** took place may have been intentional. Those were days on which an ark carrying a **ספר תורה** was already being taken outdoors.

The claim by Safrai that the synagogues in existence during the period of the **משנה** were unable to hold large crowds presupposes the widespread existence and use of synagogues at that time. Professor Seth Schwartz in his book: *Imperialism and Jewish Society, 200 B.C.E. To 640 C.E.*, Princeton University Press, 2001, in the chapter entitled: *The Synagogue: Origins and*

1. This may be the source for reading **ספר יונה** on **יום כיפור**.

Diffusions, at page 216, argues that the fact that archaeological evidence reveals that synagogues in Israel (in his words: Palestine) were in existence during the First Century C.E. is not as important to know as the date when synagogues began to play an important role in Jewish Society:

That the synagogue came into being sometime in the Second Temple period does not tell us as much about Jewish Society, then, as has often been claimed. In my view, it is the diffusion of the synagogue that demands more careful consideration, for we can only speak meaningfully about it, and with some hope of being right, when it becomes a significant factor in Jewish society. Origins and the process of diffusion must be addressed because we need to know what it is we are talking about when we talk about the synagogue and the community, and we need furthermore to discuss the dynamics of their diffusion in order to see if we can determine when and why they began to attain more than marginal significance. In this chapter, I will argue that this did not occur before the fourth century.

Professor Schwartz's view that during the period of the משנה synagogues did not play a significant role in Jewish life may support our interpretation of the above חז"ל - משנה - that directed that קריאת התורה on fast days take place in the street and not in synagogues because at that time synagogues were not yet playing a significant role in Jewish society<sup>2</sup>.

Safrai relates one additional fact about the practice of carrying the ספר תורה in a תיבה. Archaeological evidence shows that early synagogues, particularly those operating during the period of the משנה, did not include a built-in ארון קודש. As a result, on all occasions when קריאת התורה took place, the ספר תורה needed to be brought into the synagogue by way of a תיבה, a portable ארון קודש. According to Safrai, permanent ארוני קודש have not been uncovered for synagogues that were built before the Fourth Century C.E., coincidentally matching the time period in which synagogues began to play an important role in Jewish society according to Professor Schwartz.

משנה מסכת תענית פרק ב' משנה ב' - עמדו בתפלה. מורידין לפני התיבה זקן ורגיל ויש לו בנים וביתו ריקם כדי שיהא לבו שלם בתפלה ואומר לפניהם עשרים וארבעה ברכות, שמונה עשרה שבכל יום ומוסיף עליהן עוד שש.

*Translation: Mishna: When they stand up to pray they place before the ark, as leader, an old man conversant with the prayers, who has children and whose house is empty of food, so that his heart is concentrated on his prayers. He recites before them twenty-four Brachos; the eighteen Brachos of Shemona Esrei recited daily, to which he adds six Brachos.*

2. The point made by Professor Schwartz may help lessen the significance of a different issue that has divided scholars; when משנה עשרה was composed. Determining whether שמונה עשרה was composed by אנשי כנסת הגדולה, the Men Of The Great Assembly or by חז"ל, the generation after the destruction of the בית שני, Second Temple, is not as important as establishing when the recital of שמונה עשרה became widespread. In this author's opinion, that occurred after the time of the משנה and was the result of the establishment of the rule of לתפלה נאולה, linking the ברכה of גאל ישראל to the first ברכה of שמונה עשרה.

# להבין את התפלה

Commentary: Safrai points out that the משנה fails to mention one part of the service; i.e. קריאת התורה. In his view, חז"ל would not have required that a ספר תורה be brought out into the street unless קריאת התורה was going to be performed. Since none of the משניות in מסכת תענית discuss the requirement to perform קריאת התורה, Safrai opines that קריאת התורה took place before שמונה עשרה. We can offer two justifications for the practice of performing קריאת התורה before שמונה עשרה on a תענית ציבור. First, we can point to the custom of reciting ברכות ההפטר after reading the הפטרה. We previously noted that some view the ברכות ההפטר as representing the complete prayer portion of the synagogue service on שבת when the practice was first established. If that were the case, then the ברכות ההפטר make have been the model for what we are witnessing in this משנה; i.e. קריאת התורה before תפלה. Second, the קריאת התורה performed on the fast days described in the משנה was as follows:

משנה מסכת מגילה פרק ג' משנה ו'—בתעניות ברכות וקללות<sup>3</sup>; אין מפסיקין בקללות אלא אחד קורא את כולן.

*Translation: Mishna: On public fast days the Torah reading consists of the portion of the Torah that depicts the blessings and the curses (the Tochacha); no break is made in the portion devoted to curses. One person reads the complete section of curses.*

ר' עובדיה מברטנורא מסכת מגילה פרק ג' משנה ו'—ברכות וקללות – אם בחקותי. להודיע שעל עסקי החטא באה פורענות לעולם, ויחזרו בתשובה וינצלו מצרתם.

*Translation: Blessings and curses: This is the portion of the Torah found in Parshas B'Chukosai (the Tochacha). This portion is read to remind the congregation that troubles beseech the Jewish People when they commit sin. Let them repent and they will be forgiven their sins.*

We can conclude that what was chosen to be read as part of קריאת התורה on a תענית was an extension of the דברי כבושין, words of rebuke, that introduced the prayer service, referred to in the first משנה above.

The description of the שליח ציבור in the משנה is also worth noting. Similar words are used to depict the שליח ציבור at several points within the ימים טובים liturgy, particularly within נוסח אשכנז. The example that all will recognize is the prayer of הנני העני ממעש that introduces ראש השנה and יום כיפור. In that prayer, the שליח ציבור says: וקבל תפילתי כתפילת זקן ורגיל

משנה מסכת תענית פרק ב' משנה ג'—ואלו הן זכרונות, ושופרות, (תהלים קב') אל ה' בצרתה לי קראתי ויענני, (תהלים קכא') אשא עיני אל ההרים וגו', (תהלים קל') ממעמקים קראתיך ה', (תהלים קב') תפלה לעני כי יעטוף; ר' יהודה אומר לא היה צריך לומר זכרונות ושופרות אלא אומר תחתיהן (מלכים א', ח', לז') רעב כי יהיה בארץ דבר כי יהיה בארץ, (ירמיהו יד', א') אשר היה דבר ה' אל ירמיהו על דברי הבצרות, ואומר חותמיהן:

*Translation: Mishna: The following are the additional six Brachos that are added to Shemona Esrei: verses of*

3. This differs from our current practice in which we read: ויחל

*Zichronos, verses of Shofaros, and these chapters of Tebillim: (Tebillim 120) In my distress I called unto the Lord; (Tebillim 121) I will lift up mine eyes unto the mountains etc.; (Tebillim 130) Out of the depths have I called You, O Lord; (Tebillim 102) A prayer of the afflicted when he faints. Rabbi Judah says: he need not recite the verses of Zichronos and Shofaros, but instead he should recite the following scriptural passages, (Melachim 1, 8, 37) If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence; (Yirmiyahu 14, 1) The word of the Lord that came to Yitrmiyahu concerning the droughts; and then he should recite the concluding Brachos for each.*

Commentary: Safrai suggests that this Mishna provides a view into the process through which **עשרה שמונה** evolved. In his opinion, the prayer began as **פסוקים** from **תנ"ך**. The **חתימות** were added and then introductory language was introduced. The use of **פסוקים** as the core of the **ברכות** of **עשרה שמונה** is duplicated in **תפלת מוסף שמונה עשרה** of **ראש השנה**. **משנה מסכת ראש השנה פרק ד' משנה ו'** – **אין פוחתין מעשרה מלכיות, מעשרה זכרונות, מעשרה שופרות. רבי יוחנן בן נורי אומר אם אמר שלש שלש מכולן יצא. אין מזכירין זכרון מלכות ושופר של פורענות. מתחיל בתורה ומשלים בנביא. רבי יוסי אומר אם השלים בתורה יצא:**

*Translation: The prayer leader includes no less than ten verses as the Bracha of Malchiyos, ten verses as the Bracha of Zichronos and ten verses as the Bracha of Shofaros. Rabbi Yochanon son of Nuri said: if he recited only three verses for each Bracha that is sufficient. None of the verses chosen should refer to troubled times. The first verse chosen for each Bracha should be taken from the Torah and the last verse should be taken from the Prophets. Those from Scripture are recited in the middle. Rabbi Yossi said that it is acceptable to conclude with a verse taken from the Torah.*

The introductory language that is included in each middle **ברכה** within of **תפלת מוסף שמונה** is known as **ראש השנה עשרה**. **אמורא**, lived in **ארץ רב** a first generation **תקיעתא דרב** and composed the introductory language. One can point to **פסוקי דזמרה** as a further example of a prayer that evolved in the manner describe by Safrai. The **גמרא** has one reference to **פסוקי דזמרה** (מסכת שבת קיח, ב') but no references to the **ברכות** that surround **פסוקי דזמרה**; i.e. **ישתבח** and **ברוך שאמר**. An argument was made within these Newsletters that the **ברכה** of **השיר** of **חתימת הברכה**, **מלך מהולל בתשבחות** of **ברכה**, which is mentioned in the **גמרא**, is the **ברכה** that surrounds **פסוקי דזמרה**. However, the words that introduce the **חתימות הברכה** within both **ברוך שאמר** and **ישתבח** were clearly added at a later date.

Safrai further opines that the form of **עשרה שמונה** for each of the **תפילות** of **ראש השנה** followed the form of **עשרה שמונה** that we now recite as **תפלת מוסף שמונה עשרה** of **ראש השנה**. This means that the middle **ברכות** of each **עשרה שמונה** on **ראש השנה** consisted of **פסוקים**. The following **משנה** in **מסכת ראש השנה** that describes the **ברכות** of **עשרה שמונה** for **ראש השנה**, appears to support Safrai's position because the **משנה** does not limit the application of its rule to only **תפלת מוסף** on **ראש השנה**:

**משנה מסכת ראש השנה פרק ד' משנה ה'** – **סדר ברכות אומר אבות וגבורות וקדושת השם וכולל מלכיות עמהן ואינו תוקע קדושת היום ותוקע זכרונות ותוקע שופרות ותוקע ואומר עבודה והודאה**

4. We follow both opinions.

# להבין את התפלה

וברכת כהנים דברי רבי יוחנן בן נורי. אמר ליה רבי עקיבא אם אינו תוקע למלכיות למה הוא מזכיר? אלא אומר אבות וגבורות וקדושת השם וכולל מלכיות עם קדושת היום ותוקע זכרונות ותוקע שופרות ותוקע ואומר עבודה והודאה וברכת כהנים:

*Translation: This is the order of the Brachos that are to be recited during Shemona Esrei on Rosh Hashbona: Avos, Gevuros, Kedushas Ha'Shem. He should combine the verses representing Malchiyos within the Bracha of Kedushas Ha'Shem but he should not blow Shofar at the end of that Bracha. He then recites the Bracha of Kedushas Ha'Yom, and blows Shofar, the Bracha of Zichronos and blows Shofar and the Bracha of Shofaros and blows Shofar. Then he concludes with the Brachos of Avoda, Hoda'A and Birkas Kohanim. This is the opinion of Rabbi Yochanon son of Nuri. Rabbi Akiva challenged Rabbi Yochanon by asking: if no Shofar blowing takes place after reciting the verses that represent Malchiyos, why recite those verses? Instead this is the order of the Brachos to be recited during Shemona Esrei on Rosh Hashbona: Avos, Gevuros, Kedushas Ha'Shem. He should combine the verses representing Malchiyos within the Bracha of Kedushas Ha'Yom and then blow Shofar, recite the Bracha of Zichronos and blow Shofar and the Bracha of Shofaros and blow Shofar. Then conclude with the Brachos of Avoda, Hoda'A and Birkas Kohanim.*

This משנה in מסכת תענית is further noteworthy because it is the basis for the practice during our own era of reciting the same chapters of תהלים when the Jewish People or the State of Israel is facing a period of difficulty.

משנה מסכת תענית פרק ב' משנה ד'—על הראשונה הוא אומר: מי שענה את אברהם בהר המוריה הוא יענה אתכם וישמע בקול צעקתכם היום הזה, ברוך אתה ה' גואל ישראל; על השניה הוא אומר: מי שענה את אבותינו על ים סוף הוא יענה אתכם וישמע קול צעקתכם, היום הזה ברוך אתה ה' זוכר הנשכחות; על השלישית הוא אומר: מי שענה את יהושע בגלגל הוא יענה אתכם וישמע קול צעקתכם, היום הזה ברוך אתה ה' שומע תרועה; על הרביעית הוא אומר: מי שענה את שמואל במצפה הוא יענה אתכם וישמע בקול צעקתכם היום הזה, ברוך אתה ה' שומע תפלה; על הששית הוא אומר: מי שענה את יונה ממעי הדגה הוא יענה אתכם וישמע בקול צעקתכם היום הזה, ברוך אתה ה' העונה בעת צרה; על השביעית הוא אומר: מי שענה את דוד ואת שלמה בנו בירושלם הוא יענה אתכם וישמע בקול צעקתכם היום הזה, ברוך אתה ה' המרחם על הארץ.

*Translation: The first Bracha, (which is not an additional Bracha but is the Bracha of Go'Ail Yisroel) he concludes with, 'He who answered Avrohom on Mount Moriah (during the Akeida), He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who rescues the Jewish People. The second Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered our fathers at the Red Sea, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who remembers all forgotten things. The third Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered Yehoshua in Gilgal, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who listens to the trumpet blast. The fourth Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered Shmuel in Mizpah, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who hearkens to cries. The fifth Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered Eliyahu on Mount Carmel, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who hearkens unto prayer.*

5. We follow both opinions.

6. This is a reference to the first ברכה that is changed which is גואל ישראל. It is not one of the six extra ברכות.

*The sixth Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered Yonah in the belly of the fish, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who responds in moments of difficulty. The seventh Bracha he concludes with, 'He who answered King Dovid and King Shlomo, his son, in Yerushalayim, He shall answer you and hearken this day to the voice of your cry. Baruch Ata Hashem who has mercy upon the land.*

Commentary: This משנה must be read in conjunction with the previous משנה. When you combine the two משניות, you find that each ברכה began with פסוקים, was followed by a line that opened: מי שענה and closed with a ברכה. The lines that begin: מי שענה are noteworthy because they became the model for the סליחות that we recite. They represent litanies, early forms of פיוטים.

The first of the litanies records that the אברהם אבינו של עולם answered the prayers of אברהם אבינו during the עקידה. The תורה never reveals that אברהם אבינו prayed during the עקידה. Why was a fact not revealed in the תורה included in this prayer and in our סליחות?

ילקוט שמעוני וירא רמז קא'—וישם אותו על המזבחה—עיני אברהם בעיני יצחק ועיני יצחק בשמי שמים. והיו דמעות מנשרות ונופלות מעיני אברהם עד שהיתה קומתו משוטטת בדמעות. א"ל בני הואיל והתחלת על רביעית דמך יוצרך יזמין לך קרבן אחר תחתיך, באותה שעה פער פיו בבכיה וגעה געיה גדולה והיו עיניו מרופפות וצופות לשכינה והרים קולו ואמר אשא עיני אל ההרים מאין יבוא עזרי עזרי מעם ה' עושה שמים וארץ, באותה שעה הן אראלם צעקו חוצה וגוי עמדו מלאכי השרת שורות שורות ברקיע ואומרים זה לזה ראו יחיד שוחט ויחיד נשחט אמרו מי יאמר לפניך על הים זה אלי ואנוהו, שבועת כה יהיה זרעך מה תעשה לה מיד אל תשלח ירך אל הנער:

*Translation: And Avrohom placed Yitzchok on the altar. The eyes of Avrohom were focused on the eyes of Yitzchok and the eyes of Yitzchok were pointed towards Heaven. So many tears flowed from the eyes of Avrohom that soon the waters from his tears reached the height of Avrohom. Avrohom then said to Yitzchok: as soon as I draw a minimum measure of blood from you, Your Creator will cause a replacement sacrifice to appear. At that moment, Yitzchok broke out in tears and emitted a sorrowful cry. His eyes weakened but remained focused on Heaven. Yitzchok then raised his voice and began reciting Tehillim chapter 121. At that moment some of the angels in heaven began to cry out. The ministering angels stood in rows in the sky and said to each other: see how the only Monotheist in the world (Avrohom) is slaughtering and how the only future Monotheist in the world (Yitzchok) is about to be slaughtered. They then turned to G-d and asked: who will say at the Red Sea: That is my G-d; Let me Honor Him; what will happen to the promise You made to Avrohom while viewing the stars in the sky when You promised Avrohom: so will your descendants number. Immediately thereafter G-d exclaimed: do not extend your arm to harm that child.*

This מדרש is significant because it describes several forms of prayer. The first form of prayer found in the מדרש involves a non-verbal act of prayer: the eyes of אבינו are focused on Heaven. From this we learn that where we focus of eyes during prayer is an important element of prayer. A second non-verbal act of prayer is depicted: i.e. crying. The third form of prayer is the recital of פסוקים—in this case, the recital of אשא עיני אל ההרים וגו' (תהלים קכא), one of the chapters of תהלים that became an integral part of the extra ברכות recited as part of שמונה עשרה on a תענית and is recited until today in times of trouble.