

ההלוי-ה UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

The ואנחנו נברך י-ה מעתה ועד פסוק: חז"ל added the **פסוק** to the end of **אשרי** for the following reason: לשלשולי הללוי-ה **ה** to the end of **אשרי** for the following reason: **ה** הללוי-ה. We also know that in order to be among those who finish הלל each day, we need to recite **אשרי** and the last five chapters of **תהילים** all of which begin with the word **ה** הללוי-ה and end with the word **ה** הללוי-ה. But what is the meaning of the word: **ה** הללוי-ה?

פסחים-ק"ז-א'-אמר רב חסדא אמר רבי יוחנן: הללוי-ה וכסי-ה וידידי-ה - אחת הן. רב אמר: כסי-ה ומרחבי-ה - אחת הן. רבה אמר: מרחבי-ה בלבד. איבעיא להו: מרחבי-ה לרב חסדא מאי? - תיקון. איבעיא להו: ידידי-ה לרב מאי? תא שמע, דאמר רב: ידידי-ה נחלק לשנים, לפיכך: ידיד - חול, י-ה - קודש. איבעיא להו: הללוי-ה לרב מאי? - תא שמע, דאמר רב: חזינא תילי דבי חביבא דכתיב בהו הללו בחד גיסא וי-ה בחד גיסא. ופליגא דרבי יהושע בן לוי. דאמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: מאי הללוי-ה - הללוהו בהלולים הרבה. ופליגא דידיה אדידיה, דאמר רבי יהושע בן לוי: בעשרה מאמרות של שבת נאמר ספר תהלים: בניצוח, כנגון, במשכיל, במזמור, בשיר, באשרי, בתהלה, בתפלה, בהודאה, בהללוי-ה. גדול מכולן הללוי-ה, שכולל שם ושבת בבת אחת.

Joseph Heinemann in his book: *Prayer in the Talmud* and Eliezer Levy in his book, *יסודות*, view the word: **ה** הללוי-ה as representing a congregational response. It is how the congregation expresses its agreement with the statements contained in the chapter just read to them. There are several examples of responsive phrases found in **תנ"ך**. The most well known is the word: **אמן**. Eliezer Levy describes the practice as **"מענה" כתפלה**.

Both scholars view the forms of responses in **תנ"ך** as early sources for what became the **תפילות** in the **סידור**. Here are several examples:

במדבר ה'-כב' **וּבָאוּ הַיָּמִים הַמְאָרְרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּמַעֲיָךְ לְעִבּוֹת בְּטָן וְלִנְפֹל יָרֵךְ וְאִמְרָה הָאִשָּׁה אָמֵן | אָמֵן: דְּבָרִים כּו'- כו' אָרוּר אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יָקִים אֶת-דְּבָרֵי הַתּוֹרָה-הַזֹּאת לְעֲשׂוֹת אוֹתָם וְאָמַר כָּל-הָעָם אָמֵן: יִרְמִיחוּ יְאֵ-ה' לְמַעַן הָקִים אֶת-הַשְּׁבוּעָה אֲשֶׁר-נִשְׁבַּעְתִּי לְאַבוֹתֵיכֶם לְתֵת לָהֶם אֶרֶץ זָבַת חֶלֶב וְדָבַשׁ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה וְאֵעַן וְאֵעַן וְאֵמַר אָמֵן ה'. דְּבָרֵי הַיָּמִים א' פָּרָק טז-לו' בְּרוּךְ ה' אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִן-הָעוֹלָם וְעַד הָעוֹלָם וַיֵּאמְרוּ כָל-הָעָם אָמֵן וְהִלֵּל לָה'.**

The use of congregational responses in **תנ"ך** is noted by the **גמרא**:

סוטה ל'-ב'-ת"ר, בו ביום דרש רבי עקיבא: בשעה שעלו ישראל מן הים נתנו עיניהם לומר שירה, וכיצד אמרו שירה? כגדול המקרא את הלל והן עונין אחריו ראשי פרקים. משה אמר

(שמות טו) אשירה לה' והן אומרים אשירה לה'; משה אמר כי גאה גאה והן אומרים אשירה לה'. רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי אומר: כקטן המקרא את הלל והן עונין אחריו כל מה שהוא אומר. משה אמר אשירה לה' והן אומרים אשירה לה'. משה אמר כי גאה גאה והן אומרים כי גאה גאה. רבי נחמיה אומר: כסופר הפורס על שמע בבית הכנסת, שהוא פותח תהילה והן עונין אחריו. במאי קמיפלגי? רבי עקיבא סבר: לאמר - אמילתא קמייתא; ורבי אליעזר בנו של ר"י הגלילי סבר: לאמר - אכל מילתא ומילתא; ור' נחמיה סבר: ויאמרו - דאמור כולהו בהדי הדדי, לאמר - דפתח משה ברישא.

As the גמרא noted above, the same procedure was used in reciting הלל המצרי:

סוכה דף לה-א'-ב'-אמר רבא: הלכתא גיברתא איכא למשמע ממנהגא דהלילא. הוא אומר הללוי-ה והן אומרים הללוי-ה - מכאן שמצוה לענות הללוי-ה. הוא אומר (תהלים קיג) הללו עבדי ה' והן אומרים הללוי-ה - מכאן שאם היה גדול מקרא אותו עונה אחריו הללוי-ה. הוא אומר הודו לה' והן אומרים הודו לה' - מכאן שמצוה לענות ראשי פרקים. אתמר נמי, אמר רב חנן בר רבא: מצוה לענות ראשי פרקים.

It is now clear why תהילים פרקים from הללוי-ה chose these פסוקים to serve as preparation for מצות קריאת שמע and תפלה. The congregants who could not recite the chapters from memory or who did not have a written version from which to read could participate in תפלה by answering at the end of each paragraph with the word: הללוי-ה. This practice further explains why the פסוק of הללוי-ה מעתה ועד עולם הללוי-ה, ואנחנו נברך י-ה, was added to אשרי; it was a means by which those who did not know the words of אשרי from memory or who did not have access to a written version could fulfill their obligation to recite אשרי by responding after אשרי was read with the word: הללוי-ה. By choosing these פסוקים for הלל המצרי, הללוי-ה carried into דומרה פסוקי דומרה the practices used for reciting הלל המצרי.

Why did דוד המלך choose G-d's name of י-ה for this purpose?

פירושי סידור התפילה לרוקח [קט] סדר הלל - הללוי-ה עמוד תרח'- מה ראה דוד ששבת הקב"ה בשם שתי אותיות יותר משאר שמות? לפי שאמר הקב"ה לשאול על ידי שמואל הנביא להלחם בעמלק, וימחה את זכרו אפילו בהמתם, כדי למלאות שמו וזכרו וכסאו ולהשלימו, שכן נשבע כבר הבורא כי יד על כס י-ה מלחמה בעמלק מדור לדור. ומכל מקום אין כסא של הקב"ה שלם עד וכו'. והלך שאול וחמל על מיטב הצאן ועל אנג, ולא עשה שם של י-ה וכסא שלם. וא"ל כרת השם מלכותך, ובא שמואל וימשח את דוד. ולכך התחיל דוד לשבח כל שבחיו וזמירותיו בי-ה, נתגלגל הדבר ולוקח מאחרי הצאן למלוך והודה על כל הטובה, והיינו דאמר דוד לא המתים יהללוי-ה.

TRANSLATION OF SOURCES

'א-קייז-פסחים-R. Hisda said in R. Johanan's name: Hallelujah, Kesjah and Jedidjah are single words. Rab said: Kesjah and Merhabjah are single words. Rabbah said Merhabjah alone is a single word. The scholars asked: What about Merhab Jah in R. Hisda's view? The question stands. The scholars asked: What about Jedidjah in Rab's view? Come and hear: Jedidjah is divisible into two, therefore Jedid is a non-sacred word while Jah [the Lord] is a sacred word. The scholars asked: What about Hallelujah in Rab's view? Come and hear, for Rab said: I saw a copy of the Psalms in my friend's college, wherein Hallalu was written on one line and Jah on the following. Now he disagrees with R. Joshua b. Levi, for R. Joshua b. Levi said: What is the meaning of Hallelujah? Praise him with many praises. Further, he [R. Joshua b. Levi] is self-contradictory. For R. Joshua b. Levi said: The Book of Psalms was uttered with ten synonyms of praise, viz.: nizzuah [victory], niggun [melody], maskil, mizmor [psalm], shir [song], ashre [happy], tehillah [praise], tefillah [prayer], hodayah [thanksgiving] [and] hallelujah. The greatest of all is hallelujah, because it embraces the [Divine] Name and praise simultaneously.

'ב-לוטה-Our Rabbis taught: On that day R. Akiba expounded: At the time the Israelites ascended from the Red Sea, they desired to utter a Song; how did they render the song? Like an adult who reads the Hallel for another and he responds after the adult reads with the words of the first sentence. According to this explanation Moses said: I will sing unto the Lord and they responded, I will sing unto the Lord; Moses said: For He hath triumphed gloriously and they responded, I will sing unto the Lord. R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean declares: Like a minor who reads the Hallel for someone else, and he repeats after the minor all that the minor says. According to this explanation Moses said: I will sing unto the Lord and they responded, I will sing unto the Lord; Moses said: For He has triumphed gloriously and they responded, For He has triumphed gloriously R. Nehemiah declares: Like a school teacher who recites the Shema in the Synagogue, viz., he begins and they read together with him. On what do they differ? R. Akiba holds that the word "saying" (first line of the Shira) refers to the opening verse; R. Eliezer son of R. Jose the Galilean holds that the word "saying" refers to every verse; and R. Nehemiah holds that "and spoke" indicates that they sang all together and the word "saying" shows that Moses began first.

'ב-לוטה-א-Raba observed: One can deduce important rules from the present custom of reciting the Hallel. First rule: from the fact that the leader says Hallelujah and they respond Hallelujah, it may be inferred that it is a religious duty to answer Hallelujah. Second rule: from the fact that he says, Praise Him, you servants of the Lord, and they again respond Hallelujah, it may be deduced that if an adult recites the Hallel for

one, the latter responds Hallelujah. Third rule: from the fact that after he says, Give thanks unto the Lord, and they respond, Give thanks unto the Lord, it may be inferred that it is a religious duty to make a response of the beginning of the sections. So it was also stated: R. Hanan b. Raba ruled: it is a religious duty to make a response of the beginning of the sections.

פירושי סידור התפילה לרוקה [קט] סדר הלל – הללוי-ה עמוד תרח' Why did King David decide to praise G-d using the name of G-d that consists of two letters and not use one of G-d's other names? Because G-d had directed King Saul through the prophet Samuel to do battle with Amalek. Part of G-d's order was to destroy all traces of the Amelaki people including their livestock in order to fulfill the vow that G-d made that destroying all traces of Amalek would fill in G-d's name and G-d's place. The name that G-d used in making the vow was the name that consists of two letters. Then King Saul had pity on the livestock and on King Agag of Amalek. By having pity, King Saul left G-d's name and place incomplete. The prophet Samuel then told King Saul that because he did not follow G-d's command, G-d had terminated King Saul's monarchy. The prophet Samuel then annointed King David to replace King Saul. As a result of those circumstances, King David felt it necessary to praise G-d using the name of G-d that consisted of two letters. King David recognized that it was the failure of King Saul to fulfill G-d's vow and to completely destroy Amalek that led to his appointment. Thus, he wanted to acknowledge his good fortune. It was based on those circumstances that King David composed the verse: It is not the deceased who will praise G-d.

ADDENDUM TO LAST WEEK'S NEWSLETTER

More on the Missing נון in Ashrei

A friend, Harry Peters, brought attention to the fact that among the items found with the Dead Sea Scrolls in Qumran was a scroll containing 'תהילים פרק קמה', the chapter that is known as אשרי. The version of אשרי contained in that scroll differs from our version in two significant ways:

1. There is a verse for the letter נון;
2. There is a refrain after every verse that appears to have served as a congregational response.

The verse for the letter נון reads as follows: נאמן אלוקים בדבריו וחסיד בכל מעשיו. This document forces us to ask the question: is our version deficient or was a verse added to אשרי after דוד המלך composed the chapter? Without doing any research on the subject, here is a quick reaction. The verse that starts with the letter נון in the scroll is troublesome because it borrows too much language from another verse in the same chapter. The last three words are the same three words that are found at the end of the verse for the letter צדי: צדיק ה' בכל דרכיו וחסיד בכל מעשיו. The first three words in the נון verse sound very much like the first three words in the צדי verse. When you scan the other chapters of תהילים that דוד המלך wrote in Aleph-Bet order, you do not find that דוד המלך ever repeats any of the words that he uses for any of the verses. As a result the style for the verse that represents the letter נון in the scroll raises suspicions that it was inserted after דוד המלך composed the chapter.

Why would anyone create a verse for the letter נון? The possibility exists that the scroll was written by a group of Jews who either did not believe in תורה שבעל פה or who had lost contact with תורה שבעל פה. Without having the explanation given in מסכת ברכות for the missing נון, it would be easy to conclude that the version of אשרי in their possession was deficient. The verse for the letter נון may have been added to fill what they believed was a missing verse.

The refrain that is found in the scroll after each verse is as follows: ברוך ה' וברוך שמו. לעולם ועד. That there was a refrain for אשרי in some stage of history would not be surprising. In this week's newsletter, we learned that refrains were common in the early stages of organized Jewish prayer. In fact, it was argued in the newsletter that חז"ל

chose the paragraphs in תהילים that begin and end with הללוי-ה so that the word הללוי-ה could act as a refrain for those who could not recite from memory the words of the paragraphs. Those individuals could then fulfill their obligation by answering הללוי-ה. In addition, the words: ברוך ה' וברוך שמו לעולם ועד that were used in the refrain are remarkably similar to a response that is still used in synagogues today: ברוך הוא וברוך שמו. It appears that the refrain in the scroll was an early version of the response that we still recite today.

יישר כתיב to Harry Peters for bringing this historical document to our attention.