

## Talmud Tour

## Berachot 5a-b

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## Berachot 5b-6a – on Prayer and Synagogues

תְּנִיָּא אָבָא בְּנִימִין אוֹמֵר: עַל שְׁנֵי דְבָרִים הָיִיתִי מְצַטְעֵר כָּל יָמַי — עַל תְּפִלָּתִי שְׁתֵּהָא לְפָנַי מְטָתִי, וְעַל מְטָתִי שְׁתֵּהָא גְּתוּנָה בֵּין צָפוֹן לְדָרוֹם. "עַל תְּפִלָּתִי שְׁתֵּהָא לְפָנַי מְטָתִי", מֵאִי "לְפָנַי מְטָתִי"? אֵילִימָא "לְפָנַי מְטָתִי" מִמָּשׁ, וְהָאֵמֵר רַב יְהוּדָה, אָמַר רַב, וְאִיתִימָא רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן לֹוִי: מִנֵּין לְמַתְפַּלֵּל שְׁלֵא יְהֵא דְבָר חוּצָא בֵּינוּ לְבֵין הַקִּיר — שְׁנַאֲמַר: "וַיִּסֵּב חֲזָקָתוֹ פָּנָיו אֶל הַקִּיר וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל"? לָא תִּימָא, "לְפָנַי מְטָתִי", אֶלָּא אִימָא "סָמוּךְ לְמְטָתִי".

The Gemara returns to the topic of prayer. **It was taught in a *baraita* that the *tanna* Abba Binyamin would say: All of my life I have taken great pains with regard to two things: That my prayer should be before my bed and that my bed should be placed north to south.** Abba Binyamin's statement requires explanation. With regard to his statement: **That my prayer should be before my bed**, the Gemara asks, **what does before my bed mean?** **If you say** that it **literally** means that he would stand **before his bed** and pray, it is difficult, as **Rav Yehuda said that Rav said, and some say that Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi said: From where is it derived that one who prays should have nothing separating between him and the wall? As it is stated: "And Hezekiah turned to face**

**the wall and prayed”** (Isaiah 38:2), in order to facilitate his concentration during prayer.

Tosafot: שלא יהא דבר חוצץ בינו לבין הקיר - אבל מלתא דקביעא כגון ארון ותיבה  
:אין זה הפסק. אבל מטה נראה שאין זה קבוע

...but a thing that is fixed like a cupboard and [big] chest, does not interpose. It seems that a bed is not considered to be fixed.

Gemara - That being said, why would Abba Binyamin pray before his bed? Rather, **do not say that before my bed** refers to where he stood during prayer, but **rather, say** that he prayed **adjacent to** the time that he would get up from **bed**.

Rashi: סמוך למטתי – כל ימי נזהרתי שלא לעשות מלאכה ושלא לעסוק בתורה  
:כשעמדתי ממטתי עד שאקרא ק"ש ואתפלל:

‘close to my bed’ – all my life I have been careful not to do any work and not to study Torah from when I got up, till I said the Shema and prayed.

Tosafot: אלא אימא סמוך למטתי - שלא היה עושה מלאכה עד שיתפלל. ורש"י  
פירש אפילו ללמוד שאסור ללמוד קודם תפלה. ולא ידעתי מנא ליה. אבל ראיה דשרי  
ללמוד קודם דלקמן בפרק שני (ברכות דף יד ב) אמרינן דרב מקדים ומשי ידיה ומברך  
ומתני פרקיה וקרי ק"ש כי מטא זמן ק"ש וכו':

‘Rather say close to one’s bed’ – he would not work before he prayed. Rashi explains even not to learn before one prays. I don’t know where he gets that from. But a proof that’s it’s permitted to study [Torah] before prayer is further on in Chapter 2 (14b) which says that Rav would get up early and wash his hands and say the blessing, and then study Mishnah, and when it came to the time for the Shema he would say the Shema.

The Rebbe<sup>1</sup> explains that the Halachah is like Tosafot, that one may study Torah before prayer. Why was Rashi strict?

Because of his concern that the Torah study should be pure, without secondary motives (eg wanting to be thought of as a clever scholar). So he advised praying first, in a spiritual way, which might then make a person more likely to feel the G-dliness in the Torah, when they study Torah after the prayers.

[At the same time, the Habad approach is to study Chassidic teachings before davening, so as to make the prayer more meaningful, thus combining the approach of both Rashi and Tosefot].

”ועל מטתי שְׁתֵּהא נְתוּנָה בֵּין צְפוֹן לְדָרוֹם.”

Abba Binyamin's statement: **And my bed should be placed north to south** was in deference to the Divine Presence, which rests between east and west [for in the Temple, the Holy of Holies was to the west, while the main entrance was to the east]. Therefore, the Sages were careful not to have intercourse while facing east to west (Rashi).

**Halachah:** The Rambam and Rabbi Joseph Karo present this as the Halacha: the bed should not be E-W, ideally even if one is not together with one's spouse. Rabbi Shneur Zalman in his Shulchan Aruch HaRav, cites the same halachah but says that if this is difficult to arrange one should not worry, because the Zohar says one should have the bed E-W rather than N-S<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Torat Menachem vol. 5 p.299

<sup>2</sup> See Rambam, Laws of Beit Habehira 7:9, Shulchan Aruch OH 3:6, 240:17; Shulchan Aruch HaRav 3:9-10 (mahadura kama).

תנא. אבא בנימין אומר: שנים שנכנסו להתפלל, וקדם אחד מהם להתפלל, ולא המתין את חברו. ויצא. טורפין לו תפלתו בפניו, שנאמר: "טורף נפשו באפו הלמענה תעזב ארץ".

Another of Abba Binyamin's statements with regard to the laws of prayer **was taught** in a *baraita*: **Abba Binyamin says: If two people enter a synagogue outside of the city in order to pray, and one began praying before the other and did not wait for the other person to complete his prayer, and left him alone in the synagogue, his prayer is thrown back in his face.** Because he left the other person alone and caused him to be distracted during his prayer, his own prayer is thrown back in his face, **as it is stated: "You who throw your soul in your face, for your sake will the earth be forsaken? The Rock will be moved from its place"** (Job 18:4). This verse indicates that one who left the other person alone effectively causes his soul, as prayer is the outpouring of the soul before G-d, to be thrown in his face. G-d says to that person: For your sake, do you think because you left, the earth will be forsaken, that G-d will leave the world and the prayer of the other person will go unheard?

ולא עוד, אלא שגורם לשכינה שתסתלק מישראל, שנאמר: "וינעתק צור ממקומו". ואין צור" אלא הקדוש ברוך הוא, שנאמר: צור ילדה תשי".

**Not only that, but it causes the Divine Presence to remove itself from Israel, as it is stated** in the continuation of the verse: **"The Rock will be moved from its place."** The rock, G-d, is forced to remove His presence. **And Rock means nothing other than the Holy One, Blessed be He, as it is stated: "Of the Rock that gave birth to you, you have been unmindful, and you have forgotten G-d Who bore you"** (Deuteronomy 32:18).

Tosafot:

המתפלל ולא המתין את חבירו טורפין לו וכו' - פירש רבינו תם דזה היה להם בבתי כנסיות שלהם שהיו בשדה ולכך בלילה יש להתמתין. והר"י היה מאחר תפלתו ומאריך עד שיצאו כולם ואם בתוך כך היה שום אדם בא בבית הכנסת היה מעיין בספר עד שגמרו תפלתם. ונאה להחמיר אף לנו:

Rabbenu Tam explains that the Synagogue would be in the fields and therefore one must wait. Rabbenu Yitzhak (of Danpierres) would spend a longer time praying so as to be the last to leave. If someone came late, he would study a book till that person finished his prayer.

ואם המתין לו מה שְׁכָרוֹ?

**And if he waits for him** in the synagogue, what is his reward? Is his reward proportionate to the punishment received by one who failed to do so?

6a

אָמַר רַבִּי יוֹסֵי בְּרַבִּי חֲנִינָא: זוֹכָה לְבָרְכוֹת הַלָּלוּ, שְׁנַאֲמַר: "לֹא הִקְשַׁבְתָּ לְמִצְוֹתַי וַיְהִי כַנְהַר שְׁלוֹמֶךָ וְצַדִּיקְתֶּךָ כַּגְּלִי הַיּוֹם. וַיְהִי כַחֹל זֶרַעַךָ וְצִאֲצָאֵי מַעֲיָדְךָ" וְגוֹ'.

In terms of this reward, **Rabbi Yosei, son of Rabbi Hanina said:** One who waits in the synagogue for the other to finish his prayer **merits the following blessings, as it is stated:** “**If only you had listened to My mitzvot then your peace would be as a river, and your righteousness as the waves of the sea. Your seed would be as the sand, and the offspring of your body** like the grains thereof; his name would be neither cut off nor destroyed from before Me” (Isaiah 48:18–19). The explanation of this passage is based on the etymological similarity between the word mitzva and the word *tzevet*, which means group. If he keeps the other person company and does not abandon him after his prayer, all of the blessings that

appear later in the verse will be fulfilled in him (*Talmidei Rabbeinu Yona*).

תנא, אבא בנמיין אומר: אלמלי נתנה רשות לעין לראות — אין כל בריה יכולה לעמוד מפני המזיקין.

In another *baraita* it was taught that **Abba Binyamin says: If the eye was given permission to see, no creature would be able to withstand the abundance and ubiquity of the demons and continue to live unaffected by them.**

**Maharsha**

טורפין כו'. כענין שאמרו שיש מלאכי רחמים המביאים תפלת אדם לפניו יתברך ואם אין אדם זוכה לכך יש מלאכים אכזרים ומקטרגין שטורפין את תפלתו ומונעים אותה מלהגיע לפניו יתברך

There are angels of mercy which help the progress of the person's prayer to bring it before Hashem, and accusing angels which have the opposite effect

This shows the importance of Ahavat Yisrael in one's prayer. One must care about others. For this reason the Chabad Siddur includes at the beginning of the daily prayer הרניי מקבל *behold I accept on myself the positive command to love your neighbour as yourself.*

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תנא, אבא בנמיין אומר: אין תפלה של אדם נשמעת אלא בבית הכנסת, שנאמר: "לשמע אל הרה ואל התפלה". במקום רנה — שם תהא תפלה.

**It was taught in a *baraita* that Abba Binyamin said: One's prayer is only fully heard in a synagogue, as it is stated with regard to King Solomon's prayer in the Temple: "Yet have You turned toward the prayer of Your servant and to his supplication, Lord my G-d, to listen to the song and the**

**prayer** which Your servant prays before You on this day” (I Kings 8:28). The following verse concludes: “To hear the prayer Your servant directs toward this place” (I Kings 8:29). It may be inferred that **in a place of song**, a synagogue where G-d’s praises are sung, **there prayer should be**.

— אָמַר רַבִּין בַּר רַב אֲדָא, אָמַר רַבִּי יִצְחָק: מִנַּיִן שֶׁהַקְּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא מְצוּי בְּבֵית הַכְּנֶסֶת — שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בְּעֵדֹת אֵל”.

In explaining Abba Binyamin’s statement, **Ravin bar Rav Adda said that Rabbi Yitzhak said: From where is it derived that the Holy One, Blessed be He, is located in a synagogue? As it is stated: “G-d stands in the congregation of G-d; in the midst of the judges He judges” (Psalms 82:1).** The congregation of G-d is the place where people congregate to sing G-d’s praises, and G-d is located among His congregation.

וּמִנַּיִן לַעֲשֶׂרָה שֶׁמֵתְּפִלְלוּ שֶׁשְׂכִינָה עִמָּהֶם — שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “אֱלֹהִים נֹצֵב בְּעֵדֹת אֵל”.

**And from where is it derived that ten people who pray, the Divine Presence is with them? As it is stated: “G-d stands in the congregation of G-d,”** and the minimum number of people that constitute a congregation is a quorum of ten.

This learnt out from the verse about the Spies (Num.14:27) עד – ‘How long [must I bear] this evil congregation’. There were 12 Spies in all, two of them were good, so that leaves 10 who are called edah, congregation. It is striking that we learn the number of a minyan from a verse about ten Jews who are deemed ‘evil’. This shows in each Jew there is hidden good<sup>3</sup>. One might say the Minyan connects

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<sup>3</sup> SOURCE?

together the points of 'hidden good' in each participant in the Minyan<sup>4</sup>.

וּמִנְיַן לְשִׁלְשָׁה שְׂיֹשְׁבֵי בֵּדִין שְׂשִׁכִינָה עִמָּהֶם, שְׂנֹאֲמַר: "בְּקֶרֶב אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁפֹּט".

**From where is it derived that three who sit in judgment, the Divine Presence is with them? It is derived from this same verse, as it is stated: "In the midst of the judges He judges,"** and the minimum number of judges that comprises a court is three.

וּמִנְיַן לְשְׁנַיִם שְׂיֹשְׁבֵי וְעוֹסְקִין בַּתּוֹרָה שְׂשִׁכִינָה עִמָּהֶם — שְׂנֹאֲמַר: "אִז נִדְּבְרוּ יְרָאֵי ה' אִישׁ אֶל רֵעֵהוּ וַיִּקְשַׁב ה'" וגו'.

**From where is it derived that two who sit and engage in Torah study, the Divine Presence is with them? As it is stated: "Then they that feared the Lord spoke one with the other, and the Lord listened, and heard, and a book of remembrance was written before Him, for them that fear the Lord, and that think upon His name" (Malachi 3:16).** The Divine Presence listens to any two G-d-fearing individuals who speak with each other.

מֵאִי "וַיִּלְחַשְׁבֵי שְׁמוֹ"? אָמַר רַב אֲשִׁי: הָשֵׁב אָדָם לַעֲשׂוֹת מִצְוָה, וְנִאָּנַס, וְלֹא עָשָׂאָה — מַעֲלָה עָלָיו הַכְּתוּב בְּאֵילוּ עָשָׂאָה.

With regard to this verse, the Gemara asks: **What is the meaning of the phrase, "And that think upon His name"?** **Rav Ashi said: If a person intended to perform a mitzva, but due to circumstances beyond his control, he did not perform it, the verse ascribes him credit as if he performed the mitzva, as he is among those that think upon His name.**

This applies also to the way one does the Mitzvah. If one does the Mitzva in an unfeeling way, but one wanted to do it with real

<sup>4</sup> This extrapolates from Lik. Sichot vol. 8 p.3, speaking about 'minyan' in the sense of 'counting'.

feeling and kavvanah, Hashem considers it as if one had that kavvanah (see Tanya last part of ch.16).

וּמִיָּן שֶׁאֶפִּילוֹ אֶחָד שִׁיּוֹשֵׁב וְעוֹסֵק בַּתּוֹרָה שֶׁשְׂכִינָה עִמּוֹ — שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "בְּכֹל הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֲזַכִּיר אֶת שְׁמִי אָבוֹא אֵלָיָה וּבֵרַכְתִּיהָ".

The Gemara returns to Ravin bar Rav Adda's statement: **And from where is it derived that when even one who sits and engages in Torah study, the Divine Presence is with him? As it is stated: "In every place where I cause My Name to be mentioned, I will come to you and bless you"** (Exodus 20:21); G-d blesses even a single person who mentions G-d's name, a reference to Torah study (*Iyyun Ya'akov*).

וְכִי מֵאַחַר דֶּאֱפִילוֹ חֵד, תְּרִי מִבְּעֵינָא?! תְּרִי — מִפְּתָבָן מְלִייהוּ בְּסִפְרֵי הַזְּכוּרוֹנוֹת, חֵד — לֹא מִפְּתָבָן מְלִייהוּ בְּסִפְרֵי הַזְּכוּרוֹנוֹת.

The Gemara asks: **Since** the Divine Presence rests **even** upon **one** who engages in Torah study, **was it necessary** to say that the Divine Presence rests upon **two** who study Torah together? The Gemara answers: There is a difference between them. **Two** people, **their words** of Torah **are written in the book of remembrance**, as it is stated: "And a book of remembrance was written"; however **a single** individual's **words** of Torah **are not written in a book of remembrance**.

וְכִי מֵאַחַר דֶּאֱפִילוֹ תְּרִי, תְּלִתָּא מִבְּעֵינָא?! מַהוּ דְּתִימָא: דִּינָא שְׁלָמָא בְּעֵלְמָא הוּא, וְלֹא אֶתְיָא שְׂכִינָה, קַמְשִׁמְעָ לֵן דִּינָא נְיָמִי הֵינּוּ תּוֹרָה.

The Gemara continues: **Since** the Divine Presence rests **even** upon **two** who engage in Torah study, is it **necessary** to mention **three**? The Gemara answers: Here too, a special verse is necessary **lest you say that judgment is merely to** keep the **peace** among the citizenry, **and the Divine Presence does not come** and rest upon those who sit in judgment as

they are not engaged in Torah study. Ravin bar Rav Adda **teaches us that sitting in judgment is also Torah.**

— וכי מאחר דאפילו תלתא, עשרה מבעיא!? עשרה — קדמה שכינה ואתיא. תלתא. עד דיתבי.

The Gemara asks: **Since** the Divine Presence rests **even** upon **three**, is it **necessary** to mention **ten**? The Gemara answers: **The Divine Presence arrives before a group of ten**, as the verse: “G-d stands in the congregation of G-d,” indicates that when the ten individuals who comprise a congregation arrive, the Divine Presence is already there. For a group of **three** judges, however, the Divine Presence does not arrive **until they sit** and begin their deliberations, as in the midst of the judges He judges. G-d aids them in their judgment, but does not arrive before them.

This passage has focused on the revelation of Hashem which is achieved through Torah study and prayer, especially in a group. A Maamar by the Rebbe from 1974 (Vehecherim, Acharon shel Pesach) speaks of the idea of experiencing the Splitting of the Sea ‘every day’. The Maamar explains the Splitting of the Sea means the revelation of the hidden. Every day we should experience the revelation of the hidden, through our Torah study and Prayer. This passage in the Gemoro emphasizes that indeed this is the effect when we study and daven: the revelation of the Shechinah.

אמר רבי אבין בר רב אדא, אמר רבי יצחק: מנין שהקדוש ברוך הוא מניח תפילין שנאמר: “בשבע ה' בימינו ובזרוע עזו”.

The Gemara cites another aggadic statement: **Rabbi Avin bar Rav Adda said that Rabbi Yitzhak said: From where** is it derived **that the Holy One, Blessed be He, wears phylacteries? As it is stated: “The Lord has sworn by His**

**right hand, and by the arm of His strength”** (Isaiah 62:8). Since it is customary to swear upon holy objects, it is understood that His right hand and the arm of His strength are the holy objects upon which G-d swore.

”בִּימִינוֹ” — זו תורה, שְׁנַאֲמַר: ”מִימִינוֹ אֵשׁ דָּת לְמוֹ”, ”וּבְזְרוּעַ עֲזוֹ” — אֵלוֹ תְּפִילִין, שְׁנַאֲמַר: ”ה' עֵז לְעַמּוֹ יִתֵּן”.

Specifically, **“His right hand”** refers to the Torah, as it is **stated** in describing the giving of the Torah: **“From His right hand, a fiery law for His people”** (Deuteronomy 33:2). **“The arm of His strength,”** His left hand, **refers to phylacteries, as it is stated: “The Lord gave strength to His nation”** (Psalms 29:11), in the form of the mitzva of phylacteries.

וּמִנֵּן שֶׁהַתְּפִילִין עוֹזֵם הֵם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל — דְּכַתִּיב: ”וַיֵּרְאוּ כָּל עַמֵּי הָאָרֶץ כִּי שֵׁם ה' נִקְרָא עָלֶיהָ וַיֵּרְאוּ מִמֶּנָּה”. וְתַנְיָא, רַבִּי אֱלִיעֶזֶר הַגָּדוֹל אוֹמֵר: אֵלוֹ תְּפִילִין שְׁפָרְאוּשׁ.

The Gemara asks: **And from where is it derived that phylacteries provide strength for Israel? As it is written: “And all the nations of the land shall see that the name of the Lord is called upon you, and they will fear you”** (Deuteronomy 28:10). **It was taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Eliezer the Great says: This is a reference to the phylacteries of the head, upon which the name of G-d is written in fulfillment of the verse: “That the name of the Lord is called upon you.”**

אָמַר לִיהוּבָב רַב נַחְמָן בַּר יִצְחָק לְרַב חֲזִיָּא בַר אָבִין: הֲגַי תְּפִילִין דְּמָרִי עֲלָמָא מָה כְּתִיב בְּהוּ? אָמַר לִיהוּבָב ”וַיִּמְדוּ כָּעֲמֻדָה יִשְׂרָאֵל גּוֹי אֶחָד בְּאֶרֶץ”.

**Rav Nahman bar Yitzhak said to Rav Hiyya bar Avin: What is written in the phylacteries of the Master of the world? Rav Hiyya bar Avin replied: It is written: “Who is like Your people, Israel, one nation in the land?”** (I Chronicles 17:21).

G-d's phylacteries serve to connect Him, in a sense, to the world, the essence of which is Israel.

This passage was discussed many times by the Rebbe in connection with the Six Day War and other battles for the security of Israel.

It is also quoted in the Barmitzva Maamar says by a boy at his Barmitzva celebration, expressing the special quality of Tefilin in drawing the 'mind' into the 'midot' (emotions).

*Torah Teachings are Holy – Please treat any Print-out of these Pages with Care*