

**Berachot 60 Daf Ditty in memory of my mother's first Yahrzeit
Esther bas R. Eliyahu Avraham**



- אָמַר רַב אֲחָא מְשׁוּם רַבִּי לֵוִי: מַאי קָרָא — “חֲסֵד וּמִשְׁפָּט אֲשִׁירָה לְךָ ה' אֲזַמְרָה”. אִם חֲסֵד — אֲשִׁירָה, וְאִם מִשְׁפָּט — אֲשִׁירָה.

Rav Aḥa said in the name of Rabbi Levi: What is the verse that alludes to this? “I will sing of loving-kindness and justice; unto You, O Lord, will I sing praises” (Psalms 101:1). Rav Aḥa explains: If it is loving-kindness, I will sing, and if it is justice, I will sing. I will thank God in song for the bad just as for the good.

- רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל בַּר נַחֲמָנִי אָמַר, מִהֶכָּא: “בֵּה' אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר בְּאֱלֹהִים אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר” — בֵּה' אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר — זֶה מִדַּת פּוֹרְעָנוֹת.

Rabbi Shmuel bar Naḥmani said: The proof is from here, as it is stated: “In God, I will praise His word; in the Lord, I will praise His word” (Psalms 56:11). The Gemara explains that In God, I will praise His word; that is the revelation of God’s attribute of benevolence, while: In the Lord, I will praise His word; that is the attribute of suffering; even if God brings suffering to bear upon me, I will still praise Him.

Why is the Gemorro discussing a scriptural support for blessing over good and evil tidings, if the Mishna already gave us a verse:

חֲבִיב אָדָם לְבָרָךְ עַל הַרְעָה פְּשָׁם שֶׁהוּא מְבָרָךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה, שְׁנֵאמַר (דברים ו) וְאֶהְבֵּת אֶת יי אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל לְבָבְךָ וּבְכֹל נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכֹל מְאֹדְךָ. בְּכֹל לְבָבְךָ, בְּשֵׁנֵי יְצָרֶיךָ, בְּיֶצֶר טוֹב וּבְיֶצֶר רָע. וּבְכֹל נַפְשְׁךָ, אֲפֹלוּ הוּא נוֹטֵל אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ.

Love God with your heart(s) with both inclinations, with all your
“might” or alternatively (punning me’od with mida)

וּבְכָל מְאֹדָהּ, בְּכָל מְמוֹנָהּ. דְּבַר אַחַר בְּכָל מְאֹדָהּ, בְּכָל מְדָה וּמְדָה שֶׁהוּא
מוֹדֵד לָךְ הָיִי מוֹדָה לּוֹ בְּמֵאֵד מְאֵד. לֹא יִקַּל אָדָם אֶת רֵאשׁוֹ כְּנִגְדֵי שְׁעָר

Mida/moded/meodecha....

So, why do we need Talmudic sources cited in our Daf?

The source of R. Levi is Psalm 101

לְדוֹד מְזִמּוֹר חֶסֶד־וּמִשְׁפָּט אֲשִׁירָה לָךְ יְהוָה אֲזַמְרָה: ¹

Of David. A psalm. I will sing of faithfulness and justice; I will chant a hymn
to You, O LORD.

The *vav* of *umishpat* is parsed as “whether” (not as in pshat “and”) kindness or justice I will sing of Thy praises. The focus is on the impact on the self....whether it be good or bad I will continue to sing.

Contrast this with R. Shmuel’s prooftext from Psalm 56:

בְּאֱלֹהִים אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר בְּיְהוָה אֶהְלֵל דְּבַר: ¹¹

In God, whose word I praise, in the LORD, whose word I praise,

The focus here is on the Divine, the same verb for praise is used in this parallelism, however the name for the Divine is different. The *drush*

assumes different roles of the Divine, one, Elohim, as judge (Ex 22:8, Rashi)¹ the other YKVK, representing mercy.

The citations reflect their differences with each other even though both seem to resist the punning of the Mishnah wishing a stronger scriptural source.

R. Levi focuses on chessed and Mishpat that which objectively happens to a person requiring the same song, the same emotional response, reflecting a faith in the relationship between the singer and the object of reverence.

R. Shmuel however is more reflective on the “midah” that which is meted out from the Divine and whether the midah is “good” vs “punishment” presumably evil. If the midah meted out is good then its source is YKVK whether if its punishment then the divine appellation is ELOHIM. The midah reflects the divine personality the *midas haDin* vs *midas haRachamim*. This is philosophical reflection or rationalization of the need to give *hallel* or praise.

¹

עַל־כָּל־דְּבַר־פְּשַׁע עַל־שׁוֹר עַל־חֲמוֹר עַל־שֶׁהָ עַל־שִׁלְמָה עַל־כָּל־אֲבֹתָהָ אֲשֶׁר
יֹאמַר כִּי־הוּא זֶה עַד הָאֱלֹהִים יָבֹא דְבַר־שְׁנֵיהֶם אֲשֶׁר יִרְשִׁיעַן אֱלֹהִים יִשְׁלַם
שְׁנַיִם לְרֵעֵהוּ: (ס)

In all charges of misappropriation—pertaining to an ox, an ass, a sheep, a garment, or any other loss, whereof one party alleges, “This is it”—the case of both parties shall come before God: he whom God declares guilty shall pay double to the other.

During the last year of Aveilus, Halacha has required Eugen and I to recite the kaddish thrice daily, a doxology of praise to the Almighty despite the pain and agony of loss.

The emotions evolved through the course of the year from confusion to anger to blame to acceptance. Saying it last night and today during the Yahrzeit evoked all these emotions rolled into one, a complexity of feeling, but above all gratitude for this enigmatic doxology, like an old friend one visits again.

Maybe R. Levi's demand for emotional acceptance and R. Shmuel's reflective mediation are incorporated into the Mishnaic pun, With every midah He meets out, acknowledge His will (whether good times or bad).

May Her memory be for a blessing