



Suffering of the Righteous

The *Mishnah* taught (4:15):

Rav Yannai says: we cannot understand [literally, it is not in our hands] the peace of the wicked or even the suffering of the righteous

The *Bartunera*, in his first comment, explains that *Rav Yannai* teaches that we do not know the reason why the wicked appear to succeed while we find that righteous are struck with suffering. This is the age old question, and *Rav Yannai* is responding that we do not have access to the answer.

Rashi adds that not only do we not understand the situation, but it is "not in our hands" to control either.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* comments that while it is clear that we cannot not explain why the wicked prosper, there are a number of reasons why a righteous person may be suffering. Firstly, even though he may appear to be righteous, in truth, this individual is corrupt. Alternatively, we should never suspect that this individual is wicked, but instead, perhaps Hashem is giving him a challenge for some purpose. It could also be that the difficulties were self-inflicted, either deliberately or due to negligence. Finally, it is possible that the difficulty is ultimately beneficial to this individual, either in this world or the next. In short, given the number of explanations, it is not that the suffering of the righteous cannot be understood in general, but that we do not have the ability to explain why a righteous individual suffers.

The *Tifferet Yisrael* continues by explaining the *pasuk*, "*na'ar hayiti, ve'gam zakanti, ve'lo ra'iti zadik nezav...*" – "I was a youth, and also have aged, and I have not seen a righteous man forsaken..." (*Tehillim* 37:25). The *Tifferet Yisrael* explains that youth and old age refer not to one's years. Instead, "old" and "young" refer to one's cognitive approach. The "young" refers to one that is quick to judge (if they notice), while old age refers to one that takes time to contemplate what he observes. *David HaMelech* reflects that at both these times in his life he never saw a *tzadik* abandoned by *Hashem*. *David HaMelech* did not say that he never saw a *tzadik* suffer. But due to all the above stated possible explanations, the *tzaddik's* situation had a purpose – he was never viewed as being abandoned by *Hashem*.

It is important immediately follow the *Tifferet Yisrael* with a comment by Irving Bunim. Despite suffering having some purpose, it does not mean that it should not bother us or that would not empathise. In his final explanation of the *Mishnah*, after a lengthy analysis, he suggests that *Rav Yannai* laments this very fact. When the *Mishnah* writes that "it is not in our hands", *Rav Yannai* reflects that the fact the wicked prosper and righteous suffer no longer bothers us. While the prophets would rally against corruption and evil, even in *Rav Yannai* time things had changed. To close with Irving Bunim's words, "for our own time as well, the words of this *Mishnah* are no less relevant."

Yisrael Bankier

Revision Questions

אבות די: רי – י"ט

- Complete the following statement of *R' Yosi*: (די: רי)
 _____ המכבד את התורה
 _____ וכל המחלל את התורה
- From which three things does *R' Yishmael* say that a person who avoids strict judgement is saved from? (די: זג)
- What three qualities does *R' Yishmael* attribute to an overconfident judge? (די: זג)
- What two warnings do *R' Yishmael* provide a judge? (די: חי)
- What does *R' Yonatan* say regarding on who fixes time for learning despite being in poverty? (די: טי)
- What four things does *R' Meir* say regarding learning? (די: יי)
- What does *R' Eliezer be Ya'akov* say is the result of performing one *mitzvah*? Transgressing one sin? (די: ייא)
- According to *R' Yochanan HaSandler* what is the result of a gathering that is *le'shem shamayim*? (די: יי"א)
- How does *R' Eliezer ben Shamu'a* say that one should treat: (די: יי"ב)
 - The honour of his students?
 - The honour of his friends?
 - The awe of his *Rebbi*?
- According to *R' Yehuda* why should one be careful with his learning? (די: יי"ג)
- According to *R' Shimon bar Yochai* what are the three crowns and what (other) crown rises above them all? (די: יי"ד)
- What does *R' Nehorai* say when *Torah* learning is not found in one's locale? (די: יי"ד)
- Complete the following statement of *R' Yanai*: (די: טי"ו)
 _____ ואף לא _____
- Complete the following statement of *R' Matya ben Charash*: (די: טי"ו)
 הוי _____ כל אדם
 והוי _____ לאריות ואל תהי _____ לשועלים
- To what does *R' Ya'akov* compare this world? (די: טי"ז)
- According to *R' Ya'akov* what two things are better than the entire *Olam HaBah*? (די: יי"ז)
- According to *R' Ya'akov* what is better than the entire *Olam HaZeh*? (די: יי"ז)
- According to *R' Shimon ben Elazar* what are the four times when one should not confront/see his friend? (די: יי"ח)
- What *pasuk* is central to the *Mishnah* in the name of *Shmuel Ha'Katan*? (די: יי"ט)

Melbourne, Australia

Sunday -Thursday

10 minutes before *Mincha Mizrachi Shul*
Melbourne, Australia

Friday & Shabbat

10 minutes before *Mincha Mizrachi Shul*
Melbourne, Australia

Efrat, Israel

Shiur in English

Sunday -Thursday

Rabbi Mordechai Scharf
9:00am
Kollel Magen Avraham
Reemon Neighbourhood

ONLINE SHIURIM

Yisrael Bankier
mishnahyomit.com/shiurim

Rabbi Chaim Brown
www.shemayisrael.com/mishna/

Rabbi E. Kornfeld
Rabbi C. Brown
<http://www.dafyomi.co.il/calendars/myomi/myomi-thisweek.htm>

SHIUR ON KOL HALOSHON

Rabbi Moshe Meir Weiss
In US dial: 718 906 6400
Then select: 1 – 2 – 4

Next Week's Mishnayot...

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	שבת קודש
22 September כ"ב אלול	23 September כ"ג אלול	24 September כ"ד אלול	25 September כ"ה אלול	26 September כ"ו אלול	27 September כ"ז אלול	28 September כ"ח אלול
Avot 4:20-21	Avot 4:22-5:1	Avot 5:2-3	Avot 5:4-5	Avot 5:6-7	Avot 5:8-9	Avot 5:10-11

