

שכל דברי מלכות נחתכין על פיו –

For all the royal matters were decided by his word.

OVERVIEW

The גמרא is discussing what punishment דניאל incurred for offering נבוכדנצר advice. The גמרא offers two opinions; either his stature was diminished (therefore his name was changed to התך), or he was thrown to the lions (which he ultimately survived unscathed). תוספות will argue that we find that he suffered a more sinister fate.

לפי תרגום [של] אחשורוש¹ נענש הרבה שנהרג –

According to the תרגום of אחשורוש, מגילת דניאל, was greatly punished; for he was killed -

דכתיב ויגידו למרדכי את דברי אסתר ולא כתב התם התך –

As it is written in the מגילת אסתר; they related to מרדכי the words of אסתר; however it does not say in that פסוק, that התך told מרדכי. After the מגילה relates that אסתר told התך to explain to מרדכי why she cannot go to אחשורוש on behalf of the Jews; the פסוק merely states that מרדכי was told what אסתר said, but it did not say that התך himself actually told מרדכי. The reason that התך did not tell מרדכי is -

לפי שהרגו המן על שהיה משיב דברים בין אסתר למרדכי –

For the התך killed המן (before he was able to tell מרדכי what אסתר said), for he was the liaison between אסתר and מרדכי. We see from the תרגום that (דניאל) the התך paid with his life. This would seem to contradict our גמרא that the extent of his punishment was to have his stature diminished or to be thrown into the lion's den.

ומיהו גמרא שלנו אין תופס כן – תוספות explains why our גמרא does not mention the punishment of death:

ומיהו גמרא שלנו אין תופס כן –

However, our גמרא does not maintain this; that התך killed המן (therefore they mention other punishments for דניאל) -

דדרשינן במגילה (דף טו,א) והתך להיכן הלך ומפרש לפי שאין משיבין על הקלקלה:

For the גמרא offers a דרשה in מגילה, מסכת מגילה, concerning this very issue. The גמרא there asks, **'and where did התך go'?** Why did he not deliver אסתר's message to מרדכי (that she cannot seek an audience with the king)? **And the גמרא explains;** the reason התך did not carry this message to מרדכי, was **because we do not respond for a disastrous** matter. Since אסתר refused to go to אחשורוש, and this was detrimental for the Jews, התך did not want to be the bearer of bad tidings

¹ See תרגום אסתר ד,יב.

SUMMARY

There are two opinions why התך (דניאל) did not deliver אסתר's message (of refusal to seek an audience with אחשורוש) to מרדכי; and consequently the punishment דניאל received for advising נבוכדנצר. According to the גמרא it is because התך did not want to bring a disturbing message to מרדכי. The punishment he received was that his stature was diminished or that he was thrown into the lion's den. According to the תרגום, however, התך was killed by המן for being the intermediary between מרדכי and אסתר.

THINKING IT OVER

Would it not have been more appropriate that the דיבור המתחיל of this תוספות should have been either 'ודניאל מנלן דאיענש', or 'מאי איכא למימר'; why choose דברי מלכות שכל דברי מלכות נחתכין על פיו? It seemingly has no connection to the issue at hand.²

² It may be pointed out that the time that דניאל was called התך was after the time that he was thrown אריות לגוב. It also seems that the answer of לגוב אריות is not so convincing; otherwise it should have been offered first, before חתכוהו מגדולתו; since this is written clearly in דניאל. It was also much closer in time to the misdeed he performed. The גמרא may be arguing thus: You do not consider גוב אריות a punishment, since he was not harmed. He was also called התך because his prestige did not diminish at all. In fact; שכל דברי מלכות נחתכין על פיו. It carried through all these years into אחשורוש מלכות. There certainly was no punishment! דניאל may be saying on the contrary! דניאל was elevated to such prominence in order to punish him severely!