

## מכי אתא רב לבבל – בבל (the time) when רב came to

### OVERVIEW

רב said that from the time that רב came to בבל, we consider בבל as א"י in regards to saying בפ"נ. Our תוספות will discuss why is it that since רב came to בבל it was considered as א"י.

#### פירש הקונטרס והרבה ישיבות -

**explained<sup>1</sup>** that from the time that רב came to בבל **and increased** the amount of **ישיבות**, we considered בבל to be like א"י; that there are **עדים מצויין לקיימו**.<sup>2</sup>

presents a question on this explanation:

**וקשה דאם כן מאי פריך ממתניתין דמעכו לצפון שנשנית קודם שבא רב לבבל<sup>3</sup> -**

**And it is difficult** to understand this interpretation, **for if indeed it is so**, that the reason why בבל is considered א"י is because רב increased the amount of **ישיבות** there, **what** does the **ask** on הונא **from our משנה** which states **that from עכו northward** it is considered חו"ל as far as בפ"נ is concerned?! How can there be a contradiction according to רש"י, from the **משנה**, **which was taught before רב came to לבבל?! At the time of the משנה**, indeed בבל was considered חו"ל. However once רב came to בבל after the **משנה**, it was considered to be like א"י on account of the many **ישיבות** that רב established there. Therefore תוספות rejects רש"י's interpretation.

offers a different explanation.

#### ומפרש רבינו תם מכי אתא רב לבבל -

**And the ר"ת explains** that the phrase **'מכי אתא רב לבבל'**, does not mean that בבל became like א"י after רב came to בבל, but rather, that we realized that בבל is (and was) like א"י, when רב came to בבל -

#### והורה לנו שמימות יכניה שגלו עמו לבבל החרש והמסגר -

**and רב taught us that from the days of יכניה** the **מלך יהודה**, whom **נבוכדנצר** **exiled to לבבל**, together with the **חרש והמסגר** eleven years before **חורבן בית ראשון**, from that point on -

#### דינה להיות כארץ ישראל לגיטין -

**The rule is that בבל should be like א"י concerning גיטין.** The **חרש והמסגר** were

<sup>1</sup> ד"ה מכי.

<sup>2</sup> גלות יכניה בקיאה לשמה since the time of יכניה. רש"י agrees that they were

<sup>3</sup> See 'Thinking it over' # 2.

the great תלמידי חכמים in that generation.<sup>4</sup> They assured that בבל became a מקום תורה where there were many ישיבות.

וכן מפרש בריש בכל מערבין<sup>5</sup> (עירובין דף כח,א) ובסוף מרובה (בבא קמא דף פ,א) -

And that is also how the ר"ת explains the גמרא in the beginning of פרק בכל מערבין and the end of מרובה<sup>6</sup>.

ולא גרס אמר רב הונא אמר רב שרב עצמו לא היה אומר מכי אתא רב לבבל -

And the text should not read 'אמר רב הונא אמר רב'; the words 'אמר רב' should be deleted from the text,<sup>7</sup> for רב himself would not have said: 'when רב came to בבל'.<sup>8</sup>

ויש מפרשים מכי אתא רב לא רב ממש אלא כלומר רבנים ובעלי תורה:

And some explain that the phrase 'מכי אתא רב', does not refer actually to the אמורא called רב but rather it means Rabbis and תורה scholars in general. According to this interpretation we can be גורס 'אמר ר"ה אמר רב' since רב was not referring to himself when saying לבבל מכי אתי רב לבבל.

## SUMMARY

There are three interpretations of the phrase מכי אתא רב לבבל.

1. רש"י maintains that בבל received the status of א"י once רב arrived there and established many ישיבות. This made בבל a place where there are עדים מצויין. Our תוספות rejects this פשט, for how can the גמרא ask a question on רב from the משנה which was written before רב came to בבל.
2. תוספות maintains that רב taught that בבל had the status of א"י since גלות. The חרש והמסגר saw to it that many ישיבות were established in בבל. יכניה.
3. The יש מפרשים say that 'רב' means, רבנים ובעלי תורה; when they came to בבל (before the times of writing the משנה); בבל received the status of א"י.

<sup>4</sup> See רש"י ד"ה מכי. See the גמרא later on סע"א פה, why they were referred to as חרש והמסגר.

<sup>5</sup> There is a contradiction there as to the opinion of רב whether one can make an עירוב with חזיו (a certain type of straw). The גמרא attempted to reconcile the contradiction (in the ה"א) that the opinion that it is permitted refers to the time after רב came to בבל. The explanation is (see רש"י ד"ה כשות) that after רב came to בבל, he realized that it is a מאכל אדם and fit for an עירוב, but not that because he came to בבל it became מותר.

<sup>6</sup> The גמרא there states that לבבל רב אתא מכי אתא רב לבבל for it does damage to the fields. רב הונא maintains that רב taught them that בבל is like א"י since there is a majority of Jews living there, it (was and) is prohibited to raise דקה even prior to the arrival of רב.

<sup>7</sup> It seems that some texts read 'אמר ר' אבא אמר רב הונא אמר רב עשינו וכו'.

<sup>8</sup> It would seem that according to רש"י's interpretation, we are certainly not גורס 'אמר רב', for it would be arrogant that רב should say that when I came to בבל and established the ישיבות, that changed the status of בבל. Our תוספות is saying that even according to his פשט, that רב was not taking any credit at all for the status of א"י בבל, nevertheless it would seem inappropriate for רב to mention his own name; מכי אתא רב לבבל.

According to interpretations 1&2 we are not 'אמר רב' גורס, however according to interpretation #3 we may be 'אמר רב' גורס.

### **THINKING IT OVER**

1. How are we to understand the 'איתמר נמי אמר ר' אבא וכו' according to רש"י? What is it that the 'איתמר נמי is supporting?<sup>9</sup>

2. מכי אתי רב לבבל כו' disagree as to the meaning of רש"י and תוספות. How can then בבל כא"י ask a question on רב from our משנה (indicating that בבל was from before the times of the משנה as תוספות maintains), perhaps we are to interpret מכי אתי רב לבבל as רש"י does<sup>10</sup> and there will be no contradiction from our משנה (which preceded רב)?!<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See מהרש"א (הארוך).

<sup>10</sup> See footnote # 3.

<sup>11</sup> See אמ"ה # 78.