

The verses contradict each other

קשו קראי אהדדי –

OVERVIEW

The גמרא asked that the two פסוקים concerning דרך contradict each other. The פסוק¹ of נקבה is בה while the פסוק² of נקבה is זכר (זכר is שבעה). Our תוספות suggests that it is common for various words to be both זכר and נקבה; thus minimizing the question. Nevertheless there is validity to the question.

תוספות anticipates a difficulty:

אף על גב דמצינו כמה דברים שנקראים בלשון זכר ונקבה –

Even though we find many items that are read in both a masculine and feminine form; why therefore does the גמרא state that קשו קראי אהדדי, when this is a common occurrence?!

תוספות will now mention various words which are both זכר ונקבה:

דכתיב (יחזקאל ב) יד שלוחה אלי והנה בו מגילת ספר –

As it is written ‘a hand is stretched out (שלוחה – נקבה) to me and behold there is a written scroll in it’; in the hand (בו – זכר)

וכן השמש באה (בראשית טו) השמש יצא (שם יט) –

And similarly ‘the sun set’ (באה – נקבה); ‘the sun shone’ (יצא – זכר) –

המחנה האחת והכהו (שם לב) –

‘The one camp (האחת – נקבה) and he will smite it’ (והכהו – זכר) [the camp].

תוספות offers examples in the משנה וגמרא where words are both זכר ונקבה:

וכן בלשון חכמים מצינו (שבת דף כא,א) גבי נר שכבתה אין זקוק לה נר שכבה (שם דף מד,א) –

And similarly in the expression of the sages we find various words which are זכר ונקבה. For instance there is, ‘a candle which was extinguished; he is not obligated to it’ (to relight the candle) where כבתה is נקבה; while it also states ‘a candle which was extinguished (זכר – כבה), similarly –

הלכה חמורך טרפון (סנהדרין דף לג,א) –

‘Your donkey ר' is gone (הלכה – נקבה); in addition –

השוכר את החמור והבריקה והוליכה בהר (בבא מציעא דף עח,א). –

One who rented a donkey and it (הבריקה – נקבה) became injured and he led it (הוליכה – נקבה) in the mountain; and we find בלשון זכר –

לא הספיק בעל הפרה למשוך את החמור עד שמת החמור (כתובות דף עו,א) וכהנה רבות –

¹ שמות (יתרו) יח,כ.

² דברים (תבא) כח,ז.

'The owner of the cow did not manage to pull the donkey until the donkey died (מת – זכר), and there a many such examples where words are both זכר ונקבה. The question remains why does the גמרא say that קשיא נמי and קשו קראי אהדדי (just) because we find דרך to be both זכר ונקבה?!

responds, that indeed there are many such examples -

– **מיהו היכא דאיכא לשנויי משנינן**³ –

Nevertheless wherever we can answer and explain the choice of gender in the משניות (and the פסוקים) **we offer an answer -**

– **ובקראי נמי יש שום דרשה**⁴ –

And similarly in the פסוקים where we find a dual gender word there **is also some דרשה** to explain the choice of the פסוק (whether we are aware of it or not).

offers an alternate explanation:

– **אי נמי⁵ לפי שראה המשניות ששינו לשונם אחרי שני הפסוקים**⁶ –

Or you may also answer that **since** the גמרא **saw that the משניות changed their expression** (between זכר and נקבה) **following the two פסוקים** (which also use זכר ונקבה) -

היה רוצה לתת בהם טעם ודקדוק עליהם:

The גמרא **wanted to explain them** and show how **exact they are.**

SUMMARY

There are many words (both in the פסוקים and משניות) which are זכר ונקבה. We attempt to offer a reason why the תנא uses either gender, or a דרשה why the תורה uses a specific gender, wherever possible. Alternately we search for a reason (only) when we see a pattern as by דרך.

THINKING IT OVER

What is the difference between the first answer of תוספות and the א"נ?

³ We ask this question (only) when there is answer (see רש"ש).

⁴ Perhaps תוספות is saying that concerning the משניות the תנא was not always particular, however if we can explain his choice of gender we will do so. Concerning the פסוקים however we cannot dismiss the changes as being haphazard; rather there is a דרשה each time the פסוק chooses one gender over the other.

⁵ The א"נ maintains that generally we are not concerned with the gender changes (even if we can manage an explanation); however here it is different.

⁶ Concerning דרך we find that both in the פסוקים and the משניות it is used as both זכר ונקבה. This was sufficient reason for the גמרא to explain this unusual phenomenon.