

Toldot Shimshon

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Chapter II – Mishnah 3

הווי זהירין בְּרִשׁוֹת, שְׂאִין מְקַרְבִּין לוֹ לְאָדָם אֶלָּא לְצוּרָךְ עֲצָמָם. נִרְאִין כְּאוֹהֲבֵין בְּשַׁעַת הַנְּאֻתוֹ, וְאִין עוֹמְדִין לוֹ לְאָדָם בְּשַׁעַת דוֹחֲקוֹ.

Be careful [in your dealings] with the ruling authorities, for they draw close to someone only for their own needs. They seem like friends when it is in their own interest, but they do not stand by a man in the hour of his distress.

אִזְהָרָה כְּפוּלָה וּמְכוּפְלָת לַתַּנָּא, עָלֵינוּ. אֶבֶל יֵשׁ לְדַקְדָּק, מֵאֵי אֶתְּמָא לְאִשְׁמוּעֵינוּ בְּאַרְיכוּת לְשׁוֹנוֹ, יוֹתֵר מִמָּה שֶׁהַשְּׂמִיעָנוּ שְׂמִיעָה שְׂקָדָם לוֹ, בְּקִיצוֹר "וְאֵל תִּתְנַדַּע לְרִשׁוֹת". וְעוֹד, מֵהוּ הַלְשׁוֹן "אִין עוֹמְדִין לוֹ לְאָדָם", הִיָּה לוֹ לֹמֵר, וְאִין אוֹהֲבֵין לְאָדָם. וּמֵהוּ "בְּשַׁעַת דוֹחֲקוֹ", הִיָּה לוֹ לֹמֵר, בְּשַׁעַת צָרְכּוֹ.

“A doubled and quadrupled”¹ warning of the Tanna is imposed upon us. But we need to investigate, what is he coming to inform us by his lengthy language, more than what we heard from Shemaiah, who preceded him, in short, “and do not attempt to draw near to the ruling authority.”²

Also, what is the meaning of the language, “they do not stand by a man”? It should have said, “they don’t befriend a man.”

Also, what is the meaning of “in the hour of his distress”? It should have said, “in the hour of his need.”

וְנִרְאָה, שֶׁכּוּנֵת הַתַּנָּא לְהַשְׂמִיעָנוּ מֵהַשְּׂמִיעָה מֵהַרִּי"ק שֶׁאֵלֶּה ג', עַל קַהֲלָא אֶחָד שֶׁהָלוּ מַעוֹת לְשָׂרָה, בְּעֵבֹר שֶׁהִבְטִיחָם לְנַפְתּוֹת לְהֵם הַמְּסִים הַקְּבוּעִים, וּלְבַסּוֹף לֹא רָצָה. וְאַחַר כֵּן מֵת הַשָּׂרָה, וְיִוְרְשִׁיו נִתְּמַלְאוּ רַחֲמִים עַל הַקַּהֲלָא בְּעֵבֹר הַהֲלָאָה שֶׁעָשׂוּ לְשָׂרָה שְׂמֵת, וְנִיכּוּ לְהֵם מֵהַמְּסִים הַקְּבוּעִים. וּבֵין כֵּן וּבֵין כֵּן, יִרְדּוּ מִנְּקֻסֵיהֶם קִצָּת בְּעָלֵי חַגְוֹת שֶׁהָיוּ בְּעַת הַרְאִשׁוֹן שׁוֹתֵפִים בְּכָל הַמְּסִים וְהַהֲלָאָה, וְעַתָּה, אֲשֶׁר מְטָה יָדָם וְאִין לְהֵם עוֹד חַגְוֹת פְּתוּחָה לְפְרוּעַ מַס, אֵינָם נִקְהָנִים כְּלֹיִם מְנִיכּוּי זֶה שֶׁעָשׂוּ לְקַהֲלָא יוֹרְשֵׁי הַשָּׂרָה.

It appears that the intent of the Tanna was to inform us what the Maharik wrote, in question 3 of his sefer,³ on one community that loaned money to a government official,

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¹ Pesach Haggadah, Magid, Dayenu: “How much more so is the good that is doubled and quadrupled that the Omnipresent [bestowed] upon us . . .”

² *Pirkei Avot*, Chapter I, Mishnah 10.

³ Joseph Colon ben Solomon Trabotto (“Maharik”) (c. 1420–80), Italy’s foremost Talmudist of his era. The reference is to his responsa, *Teshuvot Maharik*.

because he promised them to deduct the money from their taxes,⁴ but in the end, he did not want to reduce their taxes. Afterward, the official died, and his heirs were filled with mercy for the community regarding the loan they had made to the official who had died, and they deducted the money from their taxes.⁵

Between this going back of the official on his word **and that** reprieve given by his heirs, **a few storeowners who had initially participated in paying all the taxes and** advancing the loans **lost their possessions. Now that they are empty-handed and they no longer have an open store to pay tax, they enjoy nothing from the deduction** from taxes **that the heirs of the official made for the community.**

וְלָכוּ, אֵלֵי הַיְהוּדִים טוֹעֲנִים נֶגֶד הַקְּהָל, כִּי כֹאשֶׁר סִייעוּ בַעַת הַהִלְוָאָה, כֵּן הָיָה נוֹתֵן שִׁסְתִיעוּ בְּרִינַח הַיּוֹצֵא מֵאוֹתָהּ הַלְוָאָה, דִּהְיִינוּ נִיכּוּי הַמַּסִּים. וְהַקְּהָל טוֹעֲנִים, כִּי בַעַת הַהִלְוָאָה כָּבַר הָיוּ הַמַּעוֹת אַבּוּדוֹת, שֶׁהָרִי הַשָּׂר בְּחֹזֶק יָד כָּפָה הַיְהוּדִים לְפָרוֹעַ הַמַּסִּים בְּלִי נִיכּוּי, כֹּאִילוּ לֹא הָלְווּ לוֹ כֶּלֶל. וְאִם אַחֲרֵי מוֹת הָאֲדוֹן הָיָה מִיּוֹשֶׁר לִכְבּ יוֹרְשָׁיו לִנְכוּת לַיְהוּדִים, זָכוּ הַיְהוּדִים שֶׁפּוֹרְעִים מִסַּ עֲתָה, כְּזוֹכָה מִן הַהֶפְקָר, אֲבָל לֹא אוֹתָם הַיְהוּדִים שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם מִסַּ עֲתָה, לְפִי שֶׁאֵין לָהֶם עוֹד חֲנוּת. וְהַשִּׁיב הָרַב הַגִּנְזָר בְּטַעֲנוֹת חֲזָקוֹת, שֶׁהָיָה עִם הַקְּהָל, דִּפְשִׁיטָא שֶׁכָּבַר נִתְיָאָשׁוּ הַבְּעָלִים הָרֵאשׁוֹנִים קוֹדָם מִיַּת הַשָּׂר, וְלֹא כֹל כְּמִינֵיהוּ עֲקָשׁוּ לומר לֹא נִתְיָאָשׁוּ, וְהָבִיא רְאִיּוֹת לְדַבְּרֵי, וְעִיִּין שָׁם.

Therefore, these individuals brought a claim against the community, that as they assisted at the time of the loan, the law provides that they be assisted now by the benefit resulting from that loan, namely, the reduction of the taxes enjoyed by the community.

The community claimed that at the time of the loan, the funds were already lost, because the official used coercion to force the Jews to pay the taxes without any deduction, as if they had not lent to him at all. If, as it happened, after the master's death, the hearts of his heirs were satisfied to reduce the taxes of the Jews, then the Jews who now were paying taxes should benefit, like one who benefits from ownerless property. But that is not the case for those Jews who have no tax to pay now, because they no longer have a store to create taxable income.

The aforementioned rabbi, the Maharik, replied with strong arguments, that the law was with the community. He held that it was obvious that the first owners had already despaired of recovery before the official's death, and it is not in their power now to say that they hadn't despaired, and he brought a proof to his words, and see there.

⁴ The text reads הַמַּסִּים הַקְּבועִים, “the fixed taxes.” The term “fixed tax” typically means a head tax, a set amount imposed on each individual. However, in this context, it apparently means taxes set by the taxman based on a person's income, as opposed to funds voluntarily offered.

⁵ The Maharik does not identify the city or the year. He refers to the new ruler as a duchess.

ולרמוז על זה, אמר התנא "הווי זהירין בְּרִשׁוֹת", לא מאמינו להבטחות השׁר, ולא תלוו לו על פי הבטחתו שיבטיח להטיב לכם, רק תעשו כל מאמצי כח שלא להלוות לו, אם לא יעשה מתחלה הטוב שמבטיח לעשות לאחר זמן. לפי "שאינו מקרבין לו לאדם אלא לצורך עצמם", וההבטחה שלו אינה מעלה ולא מורדת, שפך הוא דרכם, להיות "גראין פארהבין" וכו'. ואף אם לאחר זמן מתקיים הבטחתו, הוא כזוכה מן ההפקר. וטענות ההבטחה הראשונה, "אין עומדין לו לאדם בשעת דוחקו", פלומר, בשעה שאינו נהנה עוד מקיום ההבטחה מחמת דוחקו, שאין לו עוד לפרוע מס, שהרי תכף כשהלוו, היו נקראים המעות אבודות, מהטעם שאין מקרבין וכו'.

To allude to this risk, the Tanna said, "Be careful [in your dealings] with the ruling authorities," i.e., don't believe in the promises of the official, and don't lend to him based upon his promise that he promises to do you good. Rather, just make every effort not to lend to him, if he won't initially do the good thing that he instead promises to do after a while. Because "they draw close to someone only for their own needs," and his promise is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage, for this is their way: "They seem like friends when it is to their own interest."

Even if after some time his promise will be fulfilled, it is as one who benefits from ownerless property. The claims of the first promise "do not stand by a man in the hour of his distress," as if to say, at the hour when he no longer benefits from the fulfillment of the promise due to his distress. That is when he no longer has to pay a tax, because immediately when they made the loan, the funds were considered lost, for the reason that "they draw close to someone only for their own needs."

אֵלָא שְׁלִפֵי דְבָרֵי הַתַּנָּא מְשֻׁמַּע, שְׂאָף אִם לֹא חֲזַר בּוּ, וְתַכְרָה כְּשֶׁהֲלוּ הָיוּ יוֹרְדִים מִנְכַסֵּיהֶם אֵינָהּ יְחִידִים קוֹדֵם שִׁיתְחִיל נִיכּוּי הַמַּס, אֵינָם יְכוּלִים לְטַעוֹן נֶגֶד הַקְּהֵל הַטַּעֲנָה, דְּכָשֵׁם שִׁסְיֵיעוּ בְּהוֹצָאָה, כִּדְ יִסְתִּיעוּ בְּנִיכּוּי, שְׁהָרִי תַכְרָה כְּשֶׁהֲלוּ, כְּבָר הָיוּ אַבּוּדוֹת, וּמָה שִׁינְפָה לָהֶם אַחַר כֵּן, מִן שְׂמִיָּא הוּא דְרַחֲמֵי עֲלֵיהוּ. וְאָף עַל פִּי שְׁהַמְלִיךְ יִפְרַע לָהֶם לְזִמְן שְׂאָמֵר, שְׁלֹא חֲזַר בּוּ כְּלָל, עִם כָּל זֶה, יֵשׁ סְבָרָא לִזְמַר שְׂאָף עַל פִּי כֵן זְכוּ הַקְּהֵל מִן הַהִפְקָר, וְאֵין בְּטַעֲנַת הַיְחִידִים מִמֶּשׁ. דְּהָרִי אֲמַרִינּוּ הַתַּנָּא, הַמְצִיל מִן הָאָרִי וּמִן הַדּוּב, הָרִי הוּא שְׁלוֹ. וְאָף עַל פִּי שְׁלַפְעָמִים אָדָם יְכוּל לְהַצִּיל מִיָּדָם, כְּדָאֲמַרִינּוּ בְּפָרָק ט' דְּמַצִּיעָא, רוּעָה שְׁהַנִּים עֲדָרוּ וּבָא לְעִיר, וּבָא זָאב וְטָרַף, אָרִי וְדָרַס, אֲוֹמְדִים אוֹתוֹ אִם יְכוּל לְהַצִּיל, חַיִּיב. וְאִם לֹא, פְּטוּר. וְשִׁמַּע מִינָהּ, דְּאָף שְׁלַפְעָמִים יְכוּלִים לְהַצִּיל, אָף עַל פִּי כֵן, הַמְצִיל מִן הָאָרִי וּמִן הַדּוּב סְתָמָא, הָרִי הֵם שְׁלוֹ. וְאִי לֹא הָיָה תַנִּי אֵלָא "אֵין מְקַרְבִּין לוֹ לְאָדָם אֵלָא לְצוּרְךָ עֲצָמָם", הִנֵּה מְשֻׁמַּע, הִינּוּ מְלִיךְ פְּרַס וּמְדִי, הִינּוּ אָרִי וְדוּב, וְאֲדָרְבָּא גְרִיעַ מִינֵיהוּ, דְּהַתָּם אֲפִשְׁר לְהַצִּיל לְפַעְמִים בְּרוּעִים וּבְמַקְלוֹת, מָה שְׂאִין כֵּן הָכָא, דְּמִי יֵאמֵר לוֹ מָה תַעֲשֶׂה.

However, according to the Tanna's words, it means that even if [the official] did not go back on his word, and immediately after making the loan, some individuals suffered a drop in their assets before the reduction of the tax began, they cannot make the claim against the public. They can't claim that just as they assisted with the outlay, so too they should be assisted with the reduction, because as soon as they made the loan, they had already lost. As far as how they would benefit from the reduction afterward, may Heaven have mercy upon them.

Even though in this hypothetical case the king paid them at the time that he said he would, as he did not go back on his word at all, nevertheless, there is reason to say that regardless, the community benefited from ownerless property, and there is no substance to the claim of the individuals. For it is said there, one who rescues [an item] from a lion or bear,

this [item] belongs to him.⁶ This is true even though it is sometimes possible to rescue things from them, as it says in the ninth chapter of tractate Bava Metzia:

[Regarding] a shepherd who was herding [the animals of others], and he left his flock and came to the town, and a wolf came and tore [an animal apart], or a lion came and trampled an animal, we don't say that had he been there he would have rescued [it and therefore is liable due to his absence]. Rather, [the court] estimates [with regard] to him: If he could [have] rescued [it had he been there], [he is] liable. If not, [he is] exempt [from liability].

- Bava Metzia 106a

I.e., typically, the shepherd wouldn't have been able to rescue the animal, so it's considered as though it is ownerless. If someone else did actually rescue it from the dangerous carnivore, the animal will belong to the rescuer, rather than having to be returned to the shepherd. **Hear from this, that even though sometimes they are able to rescue, nevertheless, the one who rescues an item from the lion and from the bear without any further qualification, [the rescued item] is his,** it belongs to the actual rescuer.

If [the Tanna] had only taught, “for they draw close to someone only for their own needs,” he would have meant the king of Persia and Media, this was the lion and the bear.⁷ **But to the contrary,** these human rulers are even inferior to [the animals], that there in the case of the animals, it's possible to sometimes rescue with shepherds and sticks!⁸ **That is not the case here, for who would have the nerve to say to [the human ruler], “what will you do?”**

והנה שמעינו דאפילו לא חזר בו, אלא שיגרדו מנכסיהם קודם שיתחיל ניפוי המס, אין יכולים היחידים לטעון נגד הקהל, הפך מה שכתב מהרי"ק, דדוקא בשביל שמתחלה חזר בו המלך, משום הכי, זכו הקהל מן ההפקר. הא לאו הכי, שלא חזר בו, לא היו זוכים מן ההפקר.

We would hear from this analysis that even if [the official] would not go back on his word, rather that [the store owners] would experience a reduction of their assets prior to the reduction of the tax, the individuals would not be able to make a claim against the community.

This is **the opposite of what the Maharik wrote, that specifically because the king initially went back on his word, because of this, the community benefitted from ownerless property. If that were not so,** according to our understanding of the Maharik, **that [the official] did not go back on his word, [the community] would not have benefitted from ownerless property.**

⁶ Bava Metzia 24a: “Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar would say: [In the case of] one who rescues [a lost item] from a lion, or from a bear, or from a cheetah, or from the tide of the sea, or from the flooding of a river; [and in the case of] one who finds [a lost item] in a main thoroughfare or a large plaza, or in any place where the multitudes are found, these [items belong] to him due to [the fact] that the owner despairs of their [recovery].”

⁷ Prov. 28:15: “A roaring lion and a prowling bear is a wicked man ruling a helpless people.” Rashi actually identified the lion as the symbol for Babylon (Jer. 5:6), the bear as the symbol for Persia (Dan. 7:5), and the wolf as the symbol of Media (Jer. 5:6).

⁸ Bava Metzia 93b.

לְכֵן הוֹסִיף הַתַּנָּא, נִרְאִין כְּאוֹהֲבֵין וְכוּ', אַף עַל פִּי שְׂאִין מְקַרְבִּין אֲלֵא לְצוּרָה עֲצָמָם, אִין הֵדִין כְּמוֹ אַרְי וְדוֹב, שְׁהָרִי אַרְי וְדוֹב, הֵם בְּאִים בְּפִנּוּנָה לְטְרוּף טְרוּף כְּשׁוֹנָאִים. וְאֵלּוּ אֲדַרְבָּא, נִרְאִין כְּאוֹהֲבֵין. וְדַמְיָא לְמֵאִי דְאֲמַרִּין בְּפִרְקֵי י' דְּבַבְא קַמָּא דְּרַף ק"ט"ז], אֲדַעְתָּא דְּאַרְיָא אֲפֻקְרִיהּ, אֲדַעְתָּא דְּכוּלֵי עֲלָמָא, לֹא אֲפֻקְרִיהּ. וְכַתְּבוּ שְׁם הַתּוֹסְפוֹת, לֹא דַמְיָא לְהֵיא דְּהַמְצִיל מִן הָאַרְי וּמִן הַדּוֹב, הָרִי הוּא שְׁלוֹ. דְּהֵתָם וְדֵאִי שְׁהָרִי בְּאֵ לְטְרוּף טְרוּף, מְתִיבָא לְגַמְרֵי. אֲבָל הֵכָא, הָאַרְי הֵיךָ נִלְוָה עִמָּהֶם וְשׁוֹמֵר בְּהִמּוּתֵיהֶם מִחַיּוֹת וְלִסְטִים, וְאֲפֻשֵׁר שְׁפַעְעִים הֵיךָ שְׁבַע, הֵלְכָה אִינוּ מְפַקִּיר אֲלֵא אֲדַעְתָּא דְּאַרְיָא, וְעִיּוֹן שְׁם. וְאַף הַמְלִיךְ נִרְאֵה כְּאוֹהֵב, וְלֹא שְׂיִיד בֵּיהּ יְאוּשׁ מְעִיקְרָא, שְׁלַפְעִים אִין לוֹ צוּרָה כֹּל כְּדָ לְמַעוֹת.

Therefore, the Tanah added, they seem like friends when it is to their own interest, even though they draw close to someone only for their own needs. The law is not like a lion and bear—for a lion and bear, they come with the intention of preying on prey as haters. But these human rulers, to the contrary, are seen like friends. This is similar to what is said in the tenth chapter of tractate Bava Kama, page 116:

Rav Safra was traveling in a caravan, [and] a certain lion [followed them], accompanying them [along the way]. Every night, [the travelers] would send one of their donkeys to [the lion], and [the lion] would eat [it]. When Rav Safra's time arrived [to feed the lion], he sent it [his] donkey but [it] did not eat it. Rav Safra went ahead and acquired it [back as it was now ownerless property].

Rav Aaha of Difti said to Ravina: Why did he need to acquire it? [Wasn't it still his?] **He made it ownerless** [by sending it to the lion, but it was] **made ownerless [only] with the intention that the lion** [would eat it]. **It was not made ownerless with the intention that everyone** [else could acquire it. Accordingly, no one else could have acquired the donkey. Ravina] **said to him: Rav Safra did so as an added precaution** [i.e., lest someone else claim it, leading to a dispute].

- Bava Kama 116a

The Tosafists explain:

This [case] cannot be compared to [the ruling in Bava Metzia 24a], **“If someone saves [an animal] from a lion or from a bear, this [item] belongs to him, because the owner has despaired [of its recovery].” Because there, certainly the lion came to prey on prey, and the owner has despaired completely. But here, the lion was a companion with them and was guarding their cattle from wild beasts and robbers, in return for a donkey every night. It was possible that sometimes he was satiated and would not eat the donkey. Consequently, they were renouncing ownership [of the donkey] only on condition that the lion would eat them, and in our case, it did not eat the donkey.**

- Tosafot on Bava Kama 116a

Even the king appeared to be a friend, and from the outset despairing of recovery was not relevant, for sometimes he did not have such a great need for funds.

אָבֵל עִם כָּל זֶה, הַטְעָנוֹת הָאֵלוּ אֵין עוֹמְדִין לוֹ לְאָדָם בְּשַׁעַת דּוֹחֵקוֹ. דְּמַדְקָאֵמַר "בְּשַׁעַת דּוֹחֵקוֹ", וְלֹא אָמַר "בְּדוֹחֵקוֹ", מִכְּלָל דְּשַׁעַת אַחֲרָת הִיא זוֹ, וְזַמַּן אַחֲרָת הוּא, וְאֵינּוּ זַמַּן וְשַׁעַת הַהִלָּנְאָה, וְהִכִּי דָמִי, כְּגוֹן שְׁחֹזֵר בּוֹ בִּינֵי וּבִינֵי, שְׂאֵז חָל הֵיאִוּשׁ, כְּמוֹ שְׂפַתְבַּ מְהַרֵּי"ק וְכַב"ל.

But with all this, these claims “do not stand by a man in the hour of his distress.” That is, from the fact that it says “in the hour of his distress,” and doesn’t say “at his distress,” by inference that this is a different hour being referenced. This is a different time, and it is not the time and hour of the loan. What is an example? Such as he went back on his word in the meantime, that then they became despairing of recovery, as the Maharik wrote, as above.

אֵלֶּא שְׂיֵשׁ לְתַמּוּהַ עַל מְהַרֵּי"ק, לְמָה לֹא טַעַן הָרַב טַעָנָה אַחֲרָת נֶגְדַּ הַיְחִידִים, שְׁהוֹאִיל שְׁהַמְעוֹת אֵלוּ שְׁהִלּוּ לְמַלְךְ אֵינּוּ חוֹזֵר וּפּוֹרַע אוֹתָם, אֵלֶּא מְנַפֵּה לָהֶם מִן הַמַּס, וְזֶה הַמַּס הוּא לְכָל מִי שְׂיֵשׁ לוֹ חֲנוּת, פְּשִׁיטָא וְדַאי שְׁהַמַּס הַזֶּה יִהְיֶה נְמִי הַגְּדוֹל לְפִי גוֹדֵל חֲנוּתוֹ, וְהַקָּטָן לְפִי עָרֵף חֲנוּתוֹ, וּבְדַאי שְׁכּוֹלָם לֹא פָרְעוּ בְּשַׁנָּה, וּמַעֲיָקְרָא כְּשִׁהִלּוּ וְלֹא פִירְשׁוּ וְהִתְנּוּ בִּינֵיהֶם, אִם כּוֹ, סָבְרוּ וְקִבְּלוּ שְׂאֵף אִם הָאֶחָד יִגְדִּיל חֲנוּתוֹ יוֹתֵר מִחֲבֵירוֹ קוֹדָם גָּמַר הַנִּיפּוּי, שְׂיִזְכָּה בּוֹ. וְהוּא הַדִּין לְמִי שְׂיִזְרַד מִזְכָּסִיו. וּבְדוֹחֵק צָרִיף לוֹמַר, שְׁהַדָּרָף הִנֵּה שְׂכָל מִי שְׂיֵשׁ לוֹ חֲנוּת הֵן גְּדוֹלָה הֵן קְטָנָה, יִפְרַע בְּשַׁנָּה.

Rather, one has to wonder about the Maharik: Why the rabbi didn’t make a different claim against the individuals. That is, the king didn’t refund and repay these funds that they lent to him; rather he reduced the tax for them, and this is the tax for everyone who has a store, i.e., who has income. It is obvious and certain that this tax could also be greater according to the size of his store, or smaller according to the value of his store, and certainly not everyone will be repaid equally.

The answer is that **initially, when they made the loan and they didn’t clarify otherwise and they agreed between themselves, if so, they considered and agreed that if one of them increased his store more than his friend prior to the completion of the deduction, that he would merit it. This is the law for one whose assets decrease. With distress, it needs to be said, that the path was that everyone who had a store, whether greater or smaller, would collect equally.** That is why the Maharik didn’t make this argument, but instead relied on the fact that they had despaired of collection after the official broke his word.

וּבְמַשְׁנֵה זוֹ לֹא תִנִּי "הוּא הִנֵּה אוֹמֵר", לְפִי שְׁהוּא עֲנִינְן אַחַד מִמֵּשׁ עִם הַמַּשְׁנֵה הַקּוֹדֶמֶת, שְׁמַתְחִלָּה אָמַר, "זִכּוֹת אָבוֹתָם מְסִיעֵתָם" לְהַעוֹסְקִים עִם הַצָּבּוֹר, שְׁלֹא יָבּוּא לָהֶם נִזְק וְהַפְסֵד. וּבְמַשְׁנֵה זוֹ רָצָה לְהוֹדִיעַ, שְׁדָרָף מַלְכֵי פָרַס וּמַדֵּי לְחֹזֵר מִהַבְּטָחָתָם, וְעַם כָּל זֶה, אִם הַעוֹסְקִים עִם הַצָּבּוֹר יִתְעַסְקוּ לְשֵׁם שְׁמַיִם, בְּדַאי שְׁזִכּוֹת אָבוֹתָם מְסִיעֵתָם, שְׁלֹא יָבּוּא שׁוּם הַפְסֵד לְצָבּוֹר, וּמַה שְׁהַבְּטִיתָם הַמְּלָךְ, כֵּן יַעֲשֶׂה, וְלֹא יִחֹזֵר בּוֹ.

In this Mishnah, it doesn’t teach “he used to say,” which is the usual formula when a new teaching of a previously-introduced Tanna appears, because this is actually one matter with the preceding Mishnah. That is, initially, i.e., in Chapter II, Mishnah 2, [Rabban Gamliel] said, “the merit of their forefathers sustains” those who are engaged with the community, that no harm and loss should come to them. In this Mishnah, he wanted to announce that the way of the kings of Persia and Media is to go back on their promise, and despite this, if those who are engaged with the community are engaged for the sake of Heaven, then certainly the merit of their fathers will assist them, that no loss will come to the community, and what the king has promised them, he will do, and he won’t go back on his word.

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