

דְּלִי צִפְתָּא, וְאִמְר לִיה לְשָׁלוּחָא: חֲזִי מֵאֵי אִיבָא. מִיְהוּ, לָא נִיחָא לִי דְאִיתְהֵי בְהַדִּין עֲלֵמָא.

רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא אֵיתְקַדְשֵׁת לִיה בְּרִיתָהּ (דְּבַר) דְּכַלְבָּא שְׁבוּעָה, שָׁמַע (בַּר) כְּלָבָא שְׁבוּעָה אֲדָרָה הִנָּא מְכַל נְכִסְיָהּ. אֲזַלָּא וְאִיתְנַסְיָהּ לִיה.

בְּסִיתוּרָא הוּדָה גָּנִי בִי תִיבְנָא, הוּדָה קָא מְנַקֵּי לִיה תִיבְנָא מִן מוּזִיָּהּ. אָמַר לָהּ: אֵי הוּאֵי לִי – רְמִינָא לִיךְ יְרוּשָׁלַיִם דְּדַהֲבָא. אַתָּא אֲלֵיָהּ אֵינְדִימֵי לָהּ בְּכַנְשָׂא, וְקָא קְרִי אֲבָבָא. אָמַר לָהּ: הֲבֵו לִי פוּרְתָא דְתִיבְנָא, דִּילְדָתְ אַתְתִּי וְלִית לִי מִידַעַם לְאִגוּנָה. אָמַר לָהּ רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא לְאִנְתִּיתָהּ: חֲזִי גְבָרָא דְאִפִּילוּ תִיבְנָא לָא אֵית לִיה.

אָמְרָה לִיה: זִיל הוּי בִי רַב. אֲזַל תְּרַתִּי סְרִי שְׁנֵין קַמִּי דְרַבִּי אֲלֵיעֶזֶר וְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ. לְמִישָׁלַם תְּרַתִּי סְרִי שְׁנֵין, קָא אַתָּא לְבִיתִיָהּ, שָׁמַע מִן אַחֲוֵי בֵיתִיהּ דְקָאֵמַר לָהּ חַד רִשְׁעָ לְבִיתִיהּ: שְׁפִיר עֲבִיד לִיךְ אֲבוּךְ, חֲדָא – דְלָא דְמִי לִיךְ, וְעוּד – [שְׁבַקְךָ] אֲרַמְלוּת חַיִּית כּוּלְהוֹן שְׁנֵין. אָמְרָה לִיה: אֵי צָאִית לְדִילִי – לִיהוּ תְרַתִּי סְרִי שְׁנֵין אַחֲרַנִּיתָא. אָמַר: הוּאֵיל וְיִהְבֵּת לִי רְשׁוּתָא – אֵיהָדֵר לְאַחֲוֵי. הָדֵר אֲזַל הוּדָה תְרַתִּי סְרִי שְׁנֵין אַחֲרַנִּיתָא.

אַתָּא בְּעֶשְׂרִין וְאַרְבַּעָה אֲלַפִּין זֻגֵי תַלְמִידֵי. נְפִיק כּוּלֵי עֲלֵמָא לְאַפִּיָהּ, וְאִף הִיא קָמַת לְמִיפְקָ לְאַפִּיָהּ. אָמַר לָהּ הֵהוּא רְשִׁיעָא: וְאַתְּ לְהִיכָא? אָמְרָה לִיה: "יֹדַע צְדִיק נִפְשָׁ בְהִמְתּוֹ." אַתְתָּ לְאִיתְחַוִּי לִיה, קָא מְדַחֵן לָהּ רַבָּנָן. אָמַר לָהּ: הִנְחִיזָה לָהּ, שְׁלִי וְשְׁלַכְסָ שְׁלָהּ הוּא. שָׁמַע (בַּר) כְּלָבָא שְׁבוּעָה, אַתָּא וְאִיתְשִׁיל עַל גְּדַרְיָה וְאַשְׁתֵּרִי וְאַשְׁתֵּרִי.

He lifted the mat [tzifeta]<sup>1</sup> upon which he was sitting and said to the messenger: See what there is here. The place was miraculously filled with gold dinars. This demonstrated that Rabbi Yehuda could have had plenty of money if he had so desired. He explained: However, it is not amenable to me to derive benefit in this world.

In connection to the above incident concerning the poverty of scholars and their potential to become wealthy through remarkable circumstances, the Gemara relates an incident: Rabbi Akiva became betrothed to the daughter of bar Kalba Savua.<sup>8</sup> When bar Kalba Savua heard about their betrothal, he took a vow prohibiting her from eating all of his property. Despite this, she went ahead and married Rabbi Akiva.

In the winter they would sleep in a storehouse of straw, and Rabbi Akiva would gather strands of straw from her hair. He said to her: If I had the means I would place on your head a Jerusalem of Gold,<sup>9</sup> a type of crown. Elijah the prophet came and appeared to them as a regular person and started calling and knocking on the door. He said to them: Give me a bit of straw, as my wife gave birth and I do not have anything on which to lay her. Rabbi Akiva said to his wife: See this man, who does not even have straw. We should be happy with our lot, as we at least have straw to sleep on.

She said to him: Go and be a student of Torah. He went and studied Torah for twelve years before Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua. At the completion of the twelve years, he was coming home when he heard from behind his house that one wicked person was saying to his wife: Your father behaved well toward you. He was right to disinherit you. One reason is that your husband is not similar to you,<sup>10</sup> i.e., he is not suitable for you. And furthermore, he has left you in widowhood in his lifetime all these years. She said to him: If he listens to me, he should be there for another twelve years. Rabbi Akiva said: Since she has given me permission through this statement, I will go back and study more. He turned back and went to the study hall, and he was there for another twelve years.

Eventually he came back accompanied by 24,000 pairs of students. Everyone went out to greet him, as he was by then a renowned teacher, and she too arose to go out to greet him. That wicked person said to her: And to where are you going? As she was excessively poor, she was not dressed in a grand manner, as fit for the wife of one so esteemed. She said to him: "A righteous man regards the life of his beast"<sup>11</sup> (Proverbs 12:10); he knows that I am in this state as a result of my dedication to him. She came to present herself before Rabbi Akiva, but the Sages tried to fend her off, as they were unaware of her identity. He said to them: Leave her. Both my Torah knowledge and yours are hers. When bar Kalba Savua heard that the famous man was his son-in-law, he came before halakhic authorities and requested the dissolution of his vow, and it was dissolved.

NOTES

That he is not similar to you – דְּלָא דְמִי לִיךְ: The Commentary on *Nedarim* explains that this man meant that Rabbi Akiva was not suitable for her. The Maharsha explains that this person was referring to Rabbi Akiva's inferior lineage, as he was a descendant of converts, whereas the daughter of bar Kalba Savua came from one of the most illustrious families of Judea.

יֹדַע צְדִיק נִפְשָׁ – אֵינְדִימֵי לָהּ: Some commentaries explain that she already knew the identity of the great scholar who came to town, and that is why she was confident about going out to greet him. Others claim she was unaware that it was her husband. Rather, she had simply heard of the arrival of a famous Sage and was sure that a great Torah scholar would not humiliate a poor woman.

LANGUAGE

Mat [tzifeta] – צִפְתָּא: Similar to the Arabic صفة, *suffah*, a mat or some other kind of mattress.

BACKGROUND

Bar Kalba Savua – בַּר כְּלָבָא שְׁבוּעָה: Kalba Savua was the name, or perhaps the epithet, of a prominent family from Judea, and bar Kalba Savua was from this family. This family was renowned for its great wealth, and was listed as one of the three wealthiest families in Jerusalem during the time of the destruction of the Second Temple. The family was also known for its philanthropy and hospitality. The standard explanation for their name is that anyone who came to them hungry as a dog [kalba] would leave satisfied [savua]. However, that was probably a homiletic interpretation of their name. Its more likely meaning is that the family descended from Caleb ben Jephunneh, as related in the Jerusalem Talmud.

Jerusalem of Gold – יְרוּשָׁלַיִם דְּדַהֲבָא: According to descriptions throughout rabbinic literature, a city of gold was apparently a mural crown representing the shape of a city and its walls. Accordingly, a Jerusalem of Gold was a gold mural crown with Jerusalem and its walls emblazoned upon it. Jewelry of this kind was quite expensive. Only the wealthiest of women would don it.

The Jerusalem of Gold that Rabbi Akiva promised his wife is mentioned several times throughout the Talmud. In the Jerusalem Talmud, it is told that the wife of the *Nasi*, Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel, complained to him that she did not have so luxurious an ornament. He asked her: Would you have done for me what Rabbi Akiva's wife did for him? Rabbi Akiva's wife sold the braids of her hair so that he could study Torah; she deserved that ornament.



Coin of Jerusalem from the time of Antoninus Pius, depicting Tyche with a mural crown

Ram of a ship [*eila disfineta*] – אֵילָא דְסַפִּינְתָא: Some assert that the word comes from the Greek εἰλεός, *eileos*, a hiding place. It apparently refers to a sculpture attached to the bow of a ship in the form of a man or a beast, e.g., a ram. Warships would affix statues of rams with iron horns in order to gore enemy ships, whereas ships used for peaceful transport would attach them as decoration.



Fragment of a Roman tombstone dating back to the third century, depicting a boat with decorative statues

Log [*gavza*] – גַּוְזָא: Probably from Iranian languages, where it can refer to a goad or prod, as in the Parthian word *gawāz*. In Babylonian Jewish Aramaic it can simply mean sticks, cut branches, or logs.

Ishmaelite [*Serukita*] – סְרוּקִיתָא: Possibly derived from the Latin *Saraceni*, meaning Arabs.

מִן שֵׁית מִיְלֵי אֵיעֵתֵר רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא: מִן בְּלָבָא שְׂבוּעָה, מִן אֵילָא דְסַפִּינְתָא – דְּכָל סַפִּינְתָא עֲבָדִין לֵיהּ מִיָּן עֵינָא. זֵימְנָא חֲדָא אֲנָשִׂיָּה עַל כִּיף יַמָּא. אֲתָא הוּא אֲשַׁבְחִיהָ.

וּמִן גַּוְזָא – דְּזֵימְנָא חֲדָא יְהִיב אַרְבַּעָה זְוֵי לְסַפּוֹנָאֵי, אָמַר לָהּ: אֵייתִי לִי מִדְּעַם, וְלָא אֲשַׁבְּחוּ אֶלָּא גַּוְזָא עַל כִּיף יַמָּא. אֲתִיבָהּ לֵיהּ, אָמְרוּ לֵיהּ: עֲבִיד מַרְנָא עֲלֵיהּ. אִישְׁתַּבַּח דְּהוּה מְלִי דִינְרֵי, דְּזֵימְנָא חֲדָא טַבְעַת סַפִּינְתָא וְכוּלֵי עֵיִסְקָא הָהּ מַחִית בְּהוּא גַּוְזָא, וְאִישְׁתַּבַּח בְּהוּא זֵימְנָא.

דִּמְן דְּסְרוּקִיתָא, וּמִן מְטֻרְנִיתָא,

The Gemara adds: Rabbi Akiva became wealthy from six things. First, from the money he received from Kalba Savua after his vow was dissolved. Second, he gained money from the ram of a ship [*eila disfineta*],<sup>L</sup> as craftsmen would fashion a sculpture of a type of sheep for every ship, which would be placed on its bow, and which would be used to conceal money. On one occasion, the sailors forgot this ram on the seashore, and Rabbi Akiva came and found it with the money stored inside.

And third, he became wealthy from a log [*gavza*]<sup>L</sup> of wood,<sup>N</sup> as on one occasion he gave four dinars to sailors and said to them: Bring me something worthwhile. And they found only a log of wood on the seashore. They brought it to him and said to him: May our master wait with this until we bring a more worthy item. He found that the log was full of dinars, as on one occasion a ship sunk and all the merchandise, i.e., the money, owned by the people on the ship was placed in that log, and it was found on that occasion by the sailors.

Rabbi Akiva became wealthy from a convoy of Ishmaelites [*Serukita*].<sup>NL</sup> And he became wealthy from a certain lady. Rabbi Akiva borrowed money from a lady and said that God would be his guarantor. When it came time to return the loan, the king's daughter became insane and threw a purse of jewelry into the sea, which was found by that lady. She told Rabbi Akiva that his guarantor had paid his debt and she allowed him to keep the loan.

## NOTES

A log [*gavza*] of wood – גַּוְזָא: Some commentaries explain the word *gavza* according to its usual meaning, a log of wood or a beam (*Aruk*; *Rosh*). Others claim that it means a box (Commentary on *Nedarim*; *Ran*).

From Ishmaelites – דִּמְן דְּסְרוּקִיתָא: The *Bah* claims that this phrase should appear earlier in the text, that the ship with the ram sculpture had belonged to Ishmaelites. The Maharsha concurs, reasoning that without this modification, the Gemara lists seven sources for Rabbi Akiva's wealth, not six.

## Perek VI

## Daf 50 Amud b

## PERSONALITIES

Turnus Rufus – טוּרְנוֹסְרוּפּוֹס: This is the appellation given to the Roman governor Quintus Tineius Rufus, ruler of Judea during the bar Kokheva revolt. He was given this nickname because he suppressed the revolt with the utmost cruelty. It comes from the Greek *τύραννος*, *turannos*, which means ruthless tyrant.

The Talmud records several of his discussions with Rabbi Akiva. It was he who sentenced Rabbi Akiva to a torturous death. The Gemara also relates that he ordered the plowing of the Temple Mount following the destruction of the Temple, as a symbol of its complete obliteration.

Ketia bar Shalom – קְטִיעָא בַּר שְׁלוֹם: Ketia bar Shalom is the name, or perhaps the nickname, of a prominent Roman who defended the Jews against the emperor's intention to order their annihilation. Despite his success in preventing this decree, he provoked the emperor's wrath and was himself put to death. Just before his execution, he bequeathed his fortune to Rabbi Akiva and his colleagues, and Rabbi Akiva received half.

וּמִן אִשְׁתּוֹ שְׁל טוּרְנוֹסְרוּפּוֹס, וּמִן קְטִיעָא בַּר שְׁלוֹם.

רַב גַּמְדָּא יְהִיב אַרְבַּעָה זְוֵי לְסַפּוֹנָאֵי לְאִתְוֵי בְּהוֹן מִידְּעַם, לָא אֲשַׁבְּחוּ. אֲתִיבָהּ לֵיהּ בְּהוֹן קוֹפָא. אִישְׁתַּמִּיט, עַל לְחֻרְתָּא, חֲפְרוּ בְּתַרְוֵיהּ, אֲשַׁבְּחוּהּ דְּרַבִּיעַ עַל מַרְגְּלֵייתָא, אֵייתִינוּן לֵיהּ בּוֹלְהוֹן.

אָמְרָה לֵיהּ בֵּת קִיסֵר לְרַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן חֲנַנְיָה: תּוֹרָה מְפֹאֲרָה בְּכָלֵי מְכוּעְרָ! אָמַר לָהּ: לְמַדִּי מִבֵּית אָבוֹךְ, בְּמָה מְנִיחִין יַיִן? אָמְרָה לֵיהּ: בְּמָאֵי דְפַחְרָא. אָמַר לָהּ: בּוֹלֵי עֲלֵמָא בְּפַחְרָא וְאִתּוֹן בְּמָאֵי דְפַחְרָא?! אִתּוֹן אֲחֵיתוֹן בְּמָאֵי דְכִסְפָּא וְדָהָבָא!

And Rabbi Akiva also grew wealthy from the wife of Turnus Rufus,<sup>P</sup> who converted and gave him her money, and from Ketia bar Shalom,<sup>P</sup> a Roman minister who bequeathed his fortune to him.

**S** The Gemara relates a similar incident: Rav Gamda gave four dinars to sailors to bring him something from overseas in exchange for them. However, they did not find anything of worth, so they bought him a monkey with the coins and brought it to him. The monkey escaped and entered a hole. When they dug after it to retrieve it, they found it crouching over pearls, and they brought all of the pearls to Rav Gamda.

The daughter of the emperor said to Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya: You are the epitome of magnificent Torah, but it is stored in an ugly vessel, as Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hananya was an unattractive man. He said to her: You may learn the answer to your statement from your father's house. In what container do you place wine? She said to him: In earthenware vessels. He said to her: Is it conceivable that everyone stores their wine in earthenware vessels, and you also store it in earthenware vessels? Is there no distinction between the emperor and ordinary people? You should place your wine in vessels of silver and gold.

Wine in vessels of silver and gold – **חמרא במאני דכספא ודהבא** – Wine was not stored in metal vessels because wine and vinegar dissolve most metals, including copper and even silver. Furthermore, many of the compounds of these metals are poisonous, which not only impaired the taste of the wine but even caused a serious health risk.

Until it shrinks – **עד דמתוקרא** – Like other proteins, eggs that are cooked for a long time will shrivel in size. In tractate *Shabbat* (38a), the Talmud mentions eggs that shriveled to the size of hawthorns, smaller than a common grape.

And if there is a lesion – **ואם אית כיבא** – This practice of examining the stomach and the intestines was based on the capacity of an egg to absorb other materials. Accordingly, a lesion should leave a mark on the egg. A well-cooked egg is small enough to be swallowed whole and hard enough not to be digested, allowing it to exit the intestines whole. It thereby served as an instrument for this examination.

## NOTES

If they were ugly, etc. – **אי הו סנו וכו'** – According to *Tosafot* (*Ta'anit* 7a), cited by the Maharsha, this means: Had they hated beauty. He explains that there is no essential relationship between one's appearance and his wisdom. Just as an ugly person can be a great scholar, so can a handsome man. Rather, Rabbi Yehoshua meant that one who knows he is handsome is likely to spend too much time cultivating his looks and his impression on others, which will have a detrimental effect on his studies. He therefore asserted that if those handsome scholars had hated their good looks and paid no attention to them, they would have been more learned.

With a stalk [*kuleha*] – **בקולחא** – Some commentaries maintain that *kuleha* is merely another name for a *turemita* egg (*Tosafot*; Rosh). Others explain that it is a highly diarrhetic drink, which Shmuel would take for examination of his intestines (Rabbi Yitzhak Tzarfati). In the *Arukh*, the term is interpreted as a cabbage stalk. Shmuel swallowed it whole in order to check his intestines, as is done with a *turemita* egg, which was not available to Shmuel. The size of the stalk would cause Shmuel to suffer and swoon while swallowing it.

Who was working with *keloppasin* – **היה עושה בקלופסין** – A worker is generally permitted to partake of the fruit he is handling (see Deuteronomy 23:25–26). However, this principle is subject to several limitations. One limitation is that he may partake only of the particular type of fruit he is working with at the time. This mishna therefore teaches that although *keloppasin* and *benot sheva* are both figs, they are not considered the same species with regard to this *halakha* (*Tosafot*; Rosh).

## HALAKHA

Working with *keloppasin*, etc. – **היה עושה בקלופסין וכו'** – A worker working with one type of tree is not permitted to partake of the fruit of a different species, even if he plans on working with that type of tree later (Rambam *Sefer Mishpatim*, *Hilkhot Sekhirut* 12:10; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Hoshen Mishpat* 337:9).

אזלת ורמת חמרא במאני דכספא ודהבא, וסרי. אמר לה: אף אורייתא כן. והאיכא שפירין וגמירין! אמר לה: אי הו סנו – הו גמירין טפי.

She went and placed the wine in vessels of silver and gold,<sup>B</sup> and it spoiled. Rabbi Yehoshua said to her: The same is also true of the Torah. It spoils if it is contained in a handsome person. She asked him: But are there not people who are both good looking and learned in Torah? He said to her: If they were ugly<sup>N</sup> they would be even more learned.

היא דאתיא לקמיה דרב יהודה מנהרדעא לדינא, ואיתחייבת מן דינא. אמרה ליה: שמואל רבך הכי דנן? אמר לה: ידעת ליה? אמרה ליה: אין. גוצא, ורבה פריסיה, אוכס ורבה שיניה. אמר לה: לבויה קאתיה? תיהו היהיא אתתא בשמתא! פקעה ומתה.

A certain woman came before Rav Yehuda of the city of Neharde'a for judgment, and she was found guilty in the judgment of her case. She said to him: Would Shmuel your teacher have judged me in this manner? He said to her: Did you know him? She said to him: Yes. He was short and potbellied. He was dark and his teeth were large. He said to her: Did you come here to disparage him by describing him in this manner? Let that woman be in a state of excommunication. After he excommunicated her, her belly split open and she died, as a punishment for having disparaged a Torah scholar.

“ומותר בביצה טורמיטא”. מאי ביצה טורמיטא? אמר שמואל: עבדא דעביד לה שוי אלפא דיגרי, ומעיל לה אלפא זימני במיא חמימי, ואלפא זימני במיא קרירי, עד דמתוטרא כי היכי דבלעיתה. ואם אית כיבא – סרד עליה, וכד נפקא ואתיה – ידע אסיא מאי סמא מתבעי ליה ובמאי מתסי.

§ The mishna teaches that if one said: Cooked food is *konam* for me, and for that reason I will not taste it, he is prohibited from tasting a loose cooked food but is permitted to taste a thick one, and he is likewise permitted to eat a *turemita* egg. The Gemara asks: What is a *turemita* egg?<sup>L</sup> Shmuel said: A slave who knows how to prepare it is worth a thousand dinars. And this is how one prepares it: He insets it into hot water a thousand times and in cold water a thousand times, until it shrinks<sup>B</sup> enough so that it can be swallowed whole. And if there is a lesion<sup>B</sup> in one's intestines, part of the lesion adheres to the egg, and when the egg emerges the doctor knows what medicine the patient requires and with what he can be healed. It is therefore an important dish for medicinal purposes.

שמואל הוה בדיק נפשיה בקולחא עד דמסתרין אינשי ביתיה עליה שריהו.

The Gemara relates: Shmuel would examine himself with a stalk<sup>N</sup> that he would swallow for this purpose. This would weaken his body and cause him to look faint to such an extent that the members of his household would tear their hairs out for him in grief, as they would think he was dying.

תנן התם: היה עושה בקלופסין – לא יאכל בבנות שבע, בבנות שבע – לא יאכל בקלופסין. מאי קלופסין? מינא דתאיני דעבדין מנהון לפדי.

Besides vows, there are other areas of *halakha* where there is a distinction between different varieties of the same food. We learned in a mishna there (*Ma'asrot* 2:8): A hired worker who was working with *keloppasin*,<sup>NHL</sup> a type of fig, may not partake of *benot sheva*, a different species of fig, during his work. A worker may partake only of the fruit that he is handling at the time (see Deuteronomy 23:25–26). Similarly, if he was working with *benot sheva* he may not partake of *keloppasin*. The Gemara asks: What are *keloppasin*? The Gemara answers: A type of fig from which compote [*lifdei*]<sup>L</sup> is made.

ההוא גברא דיהב עבדא לחבריה לאגמוריה אלפא מיני לפדי, אנמריה תמני מאה. אזמניה לדינא לקמיה דרבי. אמר רבי: אבותינו אמרו “נשינו טובה”, אנו אפילו בעינינו לא ראינו.

The Gemara relates: There was a certain man who gave a slave to his friend so that the friend would teach him how to prepare a thousand varieties of compote from figs. However, he taught him only eight hundred. He therefore brought his friend for judgment before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi said: Our forefathers said: We have forgotten prosperity (see Lamentations 3:17). They forgot the opulence they enjoyed in better times, but they at least experienced it. By contrast, we have not even seen it with our eyes. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi had not imagined that so many types of compote could be prepared from figs.

## LANGUAGE

A *turemita* egg – **ביצה טורמיטא** – According to the Gemara, this is an egg that was cooked to such an extent that it had thoroughly shriveled. The Rambam, however, interprets the term as related to the Greek τρομητός, *tromētos*, which are slightly cooked eggs.

*Keloppasin* – **קלופסין** – Apparently a variant of the word *beloppayin* mentioned above (49b). Both words mean a type of fig.

Compote [*lifdei*] – **לפדי** – Apparently from Greek, some claim that it stems from the word λοπαδεύω, *lopadeuo*, which means to prepare a dish.

PERSONALITIES

**רבי שמעון** – Rabbi Shimon, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi – **ברבי**: Rabbi Shimon was the youngest son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and a close student of his. He was a member of the circle of the great students of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and discussed various halakhic issues with them. He was especially close to Rabbi Ḥiyya, who was also his partner in the silk business.

It is evident from several stories that Rabbi Shimon was meticulous about his honor, which he considered related to the honor of the *Nasi*. In particular, he was careful to ensure that nothing he did would imply offense to his great father.

At least one of Rabbi Shimon's statements is found in the Mishna, although he lived in the transitional generation between *tanna'im* and *amora'im*. His teachings are often introduced by the phrase: It was said, which is used for *amora'im*.

Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi considered Rabbi Shimon to be a great scholar. Before Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's death, he appointed him to be the *Hakham*, the third highest position in the Sanhedrin after the *Nasi* and the president of the court. Rabban Gamliel, Rabbi Shimon's older brother, was appointed by Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi to take his place as *Nasi*.

**רבי עבד ליה הלולא לרבי שמעון ברבי**  
**כתב על בית גננא: עשרין וארבעה אלפין**  
**ריבואין דינרין נפקו על בית גננא דין**  
**ולא אומניה לבר קפרא. אמר ליה: אם**  
**לעוברי רצונו כך – לעושי רצונו על אחת**  
**כמה וכמה. אומניה, אמר: לעושי רצונו**  
**בעולם הזה כך – לעולם הבא על אחת**  
**כמה וכמה.**

**יומא דמחייך ביה רבי, אתאי פורענותא**  
**לעלמא. אמר ליה לבר קפרא: לא**  
**תבדיחן, ויהיבנא לך ארבעין גרוי חיטין.**  
**אמר ליה: ליחיו מר**

**S** The Gemara relates: **Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi made a wedding for Rabbi Shimon, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.<sup>p</sup> Someone wrote on the canopy:<sup>n</sup> 24,000 myriad dinars were expended on this canopy, and nevertheless Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi did not invite bar Kappara to the wedding. The insulted bar Kappara said to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi: **If to those who transgress God's will, i.e., you who act improperly, their reward is such, as Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi was very wealthy, all the more so those who perform His will are to be rewarded. Upon hearing his reaction, Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi invited him. Bar Kappara then said: If to those who perform His will their reward is such in this world, all the more so will they be rewarded in the World-to-Come.****

The Gemara relates additional incidents that occurred between the two scholars. **On a day when Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi would laugh,<sup>n</sup> calamity would befall the world, as Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's sufferings would atone for the sins of the Jewish people. He therefore said to bar Kappara: Do not cause me to laugh, and I will give you forty *se'a* of wheat in return. Bar Kappara said to him: The Master will see**

NOTES

**Someone wrote on the canopy – כתב על בית גננא:** The Maharsa writes that this was written by bar Kappara himself.

his lifetime. He was careful to maintain a solemn state of mind, shunning all forms of joy and lightheartedness (*lyyun Ya'akov*). Bar Kappara felt that it was nevertheless a great mitzva to gladden others, especially those who generally withdraw from laughter. He therefore went to great lengths to give joy to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi (Maharsha).

**On a day when Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi would laugh – יומא דמחייך ביה רבי:** Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi was renowned for his holy ways. In fact, he was referred to as Our Holy Teacher even in

Perek VI  
 Daf 51 Amud a

NOTES

**Singing [kirekanei] – קירקני:** The Ran maintains that the word stems from *kirkur*, with the letter *kuf*, which means to crow. Accordingly, bar Kappara meant that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's wife should sing. *Tosafot* and the Rosh hold that the term refers to dancing, like the word *kirkur* with the letter *kaf*. In The Commentary on *Nedarim* and the *Arukh*, the word is defined as pouring, as evident later in the story, where bar Kappara asks for Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's wife to pour him wine.

LANGUAGE

**Singing [kirekanei] – קירקני:** There are various opinions with regard to the source and meaning of this word. Some assert that it comes from the Hebrew root *kuf*, *reish*, *kuf*, *reish*, which means to sound. In Syrian it means to sing. Others claim that it comes from the Greek *χορικός*, *chorikos*, which refers to dance accompanied by music. According to this interpretation, bar Kappara requested that Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's wife dance before him like her husband.

**דכל גרויא דבעינא שקילנא. שקל**  
**דיקולא רבה, חפיה כופרא וסחפיה**  
**על רשיה. ואול ואמר ליה: ליכיל לי מר**  
**ארבעין גרוי חיטי דרשינא כך. אחור**  
**רבי. אמר ליה: לאו אזהרתך דלא תבדיחן!**  
**אמר ליה: חיטי דרשינא קא נסיבנא.**

**that any *se'a* I wish I will take. He took a large palm basket, smeared it with tar, and overturned it upon his head, and went, and said to Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi: Let the Master measure for me the forty *se'a* of wheat that I am owed by you. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi laughed at this and said to him: Did I not warn you not to make me laugh? He said to him: What I am taking from you is simply the wheat that I am owed by you.**

**אמר לה בר קפרא לברתיה דרבי: למחר**  
**שתינא חמרא בריקודא דאבונך ובקירקני**  
**דאמך. בן אלעשה חתניה דרבי הוה,**  
**ועשיר גדול הוה, אומניה לבי הלולא**  
**דרבי שמעון ברבי.**

The Gemara relates another story. **Bar Kappara<sup>p</sup> said to the daughter of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi, whose husband's name was ben Elasa: Tomorrow I will drink wine at your father's dancing and your mother's singing [kirekanei].<sup>nl</sup> Ben Elasa was the son-in-law of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and was a very wealthy man. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi invited him to the wedding of Rabbi Shimon, son of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi.**

PERSONALITIES

**Bar Kappara – בר קפרא:** Bar Kappara lived in Eretz Yisrael during the transitional generation between the *tanna'im* and the *amora'im*. His first name is unknown, although some claim it was Shimon. His family relationship, if he had one, to Rabbi Elazar HaKappar is also unclear.

Bar Kappara was one of the most important disciples of Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi. He composed an anthology of *baraitot* quoted in the Talmud as bar Kappara's Teachings. His rulings are found in many places in the Talmud. He was also renowned as one of the most prominent homilists of his generation, and several of his homiletic teachings appear in the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmud. Bar Kappara was famous for his brilliance and sharpness as well. Many of his sayings on different subjects are cited in

the Talmud. Apparently, he was also considered an expert in Bible in his day, as even Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi would consult with him with regard to the meaning of verses in the Bible. His tendency to utter sharp retorts and his jocularity embarrassed Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi's family on several occasions, yet Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi still held him in great esteem. He too lauded Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi and was the first to eulogize him at his funeral.

Almost all of the first generation *amora'im* of Eretz Yisrael were students of his, including Rabbi Yehuda ben Padda, his nephew. They often cited *halakhot* in his name.

Bar Kappara lived in the Galilee, at least toward the end of his life, and was buried in the city of Parod, southeast of Safed.