

LANGUAGE

A woman whose suspected promiscuity is publicly spoken of [*duma*] – דומה: The Sages use this term with regard to anything that serves as the subject of gossip and rumors. It is usually, though not always, used in a negative sense.

HALAKHA

If a married woman engages in adulterous sexual intercourse her children are considered of unflawed lineage – אשה מונה בניה כשרין: If a woman is rumored to have committed adultery, one need not be concerned that perhaps her children are *mamzerim*, even if she is the subject of communal gossip, in accordance with the ruling of Rav Taḥalifa. However, there is reason for concern that perhaps she has acquired the status of a *zona*, i.e., a woman who has engaged in sexual intercourse with a man forbidden to her, and if her husband is a priest he is forbidden by Torah law to remain married to her. Furthermore, even an Israelite should refrain from marrying her in order to distance himself from alleged impropriety. If she is extremely promiscuous, her children's lineage is also considered uncertain, as the Gemara's dilemma concerning whether the husband will ensure she does not become impregnated by another man stands unresolved. The Rema writes that even so, if she states that her children are of unflawed lineage, her testimony is accepted. If she behaved extremely licentiously before her marriage but not afterward, then even if she was once seen committing adultery, her children are considered of unflawed lineage (Rambam *Sefer Kedusha*, *Hilkhot Issurei Bia* 15:20; *Shulḥan Arukh*, *Even HaEzer* 4:15).

דומה ואל ישא בת דומה, שזו באה מטיפה כשרה, וזו באה מטיפה פסולה;

ורבי יוחנן אמר: ישא אדם בת דומה ואל ישא דומה, שזו עומדת בחזקת כשרות, וזו אינה עומדת בחזקת כשרות.

מיתבי: נושא אדם דומה! אמר רבא: ותסברא נושא לכתחלה? אלא אם נשא: תני נמי בת דומה.

והלכתא: ישא אדם בת דומה ואל ישא דומה, דתני רב תחליפא בר מערבא קמיה דרבי אבהו: אשה מונה – בניה כשרין, רוב בעילות אחר הבעל.

בעי רב עמרם: היתה פרוצה ביותר, מהו? אליבא דמאן דאמר אין אשה מתעברת אלא סמוך לווסתה, לא תיבעי לך, דלא ידעי בה ולא מנטר לה.

בי תיבעי לך – אליבא דמאן דאמר אין אשה מתעברת אלא סמוך לטבילתה. מאי? כיון דידע בה – נטורי מנטר לה, או דלמא כיון דפרוצה ביותר – לא? תיקו.

a woman whose suspected promiscuity is publicly spoken of [*duma*],<sup>1</sup> and not marry the daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity, as this woman, who is herself suspected of promiscuity, comes from seed of unflawed lineage; but that woman, the daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity, comes from seed of flawed lineage, as she might be a *mamzeret*.

And Rabbi Yoḥanan says: It is better that a man marry the daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity, and not marry a woman suspected of promiscuity, as this daughter maintains the presumptive status of virtuousness, but that woman suspected of promiscuity does not maintain the presumptive status of virtuousness.

The Gemara raises an objection to Rabbi Yoḥanan's statement from a *baraita*: A man may marry a woman suspected of promiscuity. Rava said in response: And how can you understand the *baraita* at face value? The *baraita* states that a man may marry her *ab initio*, yet clearly it is undesirable to do so. Rather, the wording of the *baraita* is imprecise, and one must render it: If one married a woman suspected of promiscuity, she is permitted to him. Since the *baraita* is imprecise, one should also correct it and teach: The daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity.

The Gemara concludes: And the *halakha* is that it is better that a man marry the daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity, and not marry a woman suspected of promiscuity. This is as Rav Taḥalifa, from the West, i.e., Eretz Yisrael, taught before Rabbi Abbahu: If a married woman engages in adulterous sexual intercourse, her children are considered of unflawed lineage,<sup>2</sup> as most instances of sexual intercourse are attributed to the husband, and consequently it is presumed that the children were conceived by the husband and not by the paramour. Therefore, the daughter of a woman suspected of promiscuity is not suspected of being a *mamzeret*.

Rav Amram raises a dilemma: What is the *halakha* if the woman was extremely promiscuous and one cannot reasonably attribute most instances of intercourse to the husband? Are her children considered of unflawed lineage, or is their lineage uncertain? According to the opinion of the one who says that a woman becomes pregnant<sup>3</sup> only close to the time of the onset of her menstruation, you do not need to raise this dilemma, as the husband does not know the time of this, i.e., the time of her menstruation, in advance, and he does not watch her actions in order to prevent her from conceiving from another man. Her children are therefore of uncertain lineage.

When do you need to raise this dilemma? It is necessary according to the opinion of the one who says that a woman becomes pregnant only close to the time of her immersion. What is the *halakha*? Can it be assumed that since he knows the time of this, i.e., of her immersion, he watches her actions on that day in order to prevent her from conceiving from another man; or perhaps, since she is extremely promiscuous, her husband cannot adequately watch her and her children are considered of uncertain lineage? The Gemara concludes: The dilemma shall stand unresolved.

BACKGROUND

A woman becomes pregnant – אשה מתעברת: A woman can become pregnant only at the time of ovulation, which usually occurs around fourteen days before she menstruates. The time of a woman's immersion is seven days after she ceases to menstruate. Consequently, the duration of the time between ovulation and the time of menstruation or the time of immersion depends on the length of a woman's menstrual cycle. A woman with a regular menstrual cycle of approximately a month will ovulate around two weeks after the beginning of menstruation, close to the time of her immersion, while a woman with a much shorter menstrual cycle will ovulate closer to the time she ceased menstruating.

To compare a man to a woman and a woman to a man – לְהַקִּישׁ אִישׁ לְאִשָּׁה וְאִשָּׁה לְאִישׁ: If the husband or the wife has a physical defect that prevents either of them from fulfilling the literal details stated in the verses, the woman does not drink the bitter water. Furthermore, because the Torah compares a man to a woman and a woman to a man, the woman does not drink the bitter water if one of them has a physical defect that would have prevented the other from fulfilling the details stated in the verses had he or she had that same defect. Consequently, the wife of a man who is blind, deaf, lame, missing a hand, or mute, does not drink the bitter water. Likewise, a woman who is blind, deaf, lame, missing a hand, or mute does not drink the bitter water (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 2:2–3).

§ The mishna states (24a): **And these are the women to whom the court issues a warning** in place of their husbands: One whose husband became a deaf-mute or became an imbecile, or if he were incarcerated in prison. **The Sages taught:** The verse states: “If the wife of any man goes astray” (Numbers 5:12). As the verse could have said: The wife of a man, **what is the meaning when the verse states:** “The wife of any man”? It serves to include the wife of a deaf-mute, and the wife of an imbecile, and the wife of an insane person, and one whose husband went overseas, and one whose husband was incarcerated in prison; and it teaches that the court issues a warning to these women in order to disqualify them from receiving payment of their marriage contract.

One might have thought that the court’s warning is effective **even to have the women drink** the bitter water; therefore, **the verse states:** “Then the man shall bring his wife to the priest” (Numbers 5:15), indicating that only the warning issued by the husband causes his wife to drink. **Rabbi Yosei says:** The court’s warning is effective **even to have her drink, and when her husband is released from prison he has her drink.**

The Gemara asks: **With regard to what do they disagree?** The Gemara answers: **The Rabbis hold that we require** the same person who issues the warning to bring the woman to the Temple, as the verse states: “**And he warned his wife... then the man shall bring his wife to the priest**” (Numbers 5:14–15). **And Rabbi Yosei holds that we do not require** that the actions stated in the verse, i.e., “**And he warned... then the man shall bring,**” be performed by the same person; and although only the husband may bring the woman to the priest to drink the bitter water, the warning may be issued by the court.

§ **The Sages taught** that the verse: “This is the law of jealousy, **when a wife, while under her husband, goes astray and is defiled**” (Numbers 5:29), is superfluous, and serves to **compare a man to a woman and a woman to a man.**<sup>4</sup> The Gemara asks: **With regard to what halakha** is this comparison necessary? **Rav Sheshet says:** This teaches that **just as if the husband was blind he would not have her drink**, as it is written: “**And it was hidden from the eyes of her husband**” (Numbers 5:13), indicating that the *sota* ritual applies only if the husband was capable of seeing her infidelity but did not do so; so too, with regard to the woman, **if she were blind, she would not drink.** **Rav Ashi also says:** **Just as a lame woman and a woman without hands would not drink**, as it is written:

“**And the priest shall stand the woman before the Lord... and place the meal-offering of memorial in her hands**” (Numbers 5:18), indicating that if she is unable to stand up straight or if she does not have hands with which to accept the offering, then she does not drink; so too, if the husband were lame or without hands, **he would not cause his wife to drink.** **Mar Bar Rav Ashi says:** **Just as a mute woman would not drink**, as it is written: “**And the woman shall say: Amen, Amen**” (Numbers 5:22), indicating that she must be able to speak; so too, if the husband were mute, **he would not cause his wife to drink.**

“וְאִלּוּ שְׁבִיט דִּין כּו'. תִּנּוּ רַבָּנִן: “אִישׁ” – מֵהַ תִּלְמוּד לֹאמַר: “אִישׁ אִישׁ? לְרִבּוּת אִשָּׁת חֵרֶשׁ, וְאִשָּׁת שׁוֹטֵה, וְאִשָּׁת שְׁעָמּוּם, וְשֶׁהֶלֶךְ בַּעֲלָהּ לְמִדְּוַיַּת הַיָּם, וְשִׁהָהָ חֲבוּשׁ בְּבֵית הָאֲסוּרִין – שְׁבִיט דִּין מִקְנֵז לָהֶן לְפֻסְלוֹן מִכֶּתִיבָתָן.

יָכוֹל אֶף לְהַשְׁקוֹתָן – תִּלְמוּד לֹאמַר: “וְהֵבִיא הָאִישׁ אֶת אִשְׁתּוֹ”. רַבִּי יוֹסִי אָמַר: אֶף לְהַשְׁקוֹתָהּ, וְלִכְשִׁינָא בַּעֲלָהּ מִבֵּית הָאֲסוּרִין יִשְׁקָהּ.

בְּמָמַי קָא מִפְּלָגִי רַבָּנִן סְבָרִי: בְּעִינִי “וְקָנָא...וְהֵבִיא”. וְרַבִּי יוֹסִי סְבָרִי: לֹא בְּעִינִי “וְקָנָא...וְהֵבִיא”.

תִּנּוּ רַבָּנִן: “אִשְׁרֵי תִשָּׁטֵה אִשָּׁה תַּחַת אִישָׁה” – לְהַקִּישׁ אִישׁ לְאִשָּׁה וְאִשָּׁה לְאִישׁ. לְמָמַי הִלְכְּתָא? אָמַר רַב שִׁשְׁתִּי: בְּשֵׁם שָׂאֵם הוּא סוּמָא לֹא הִיָּה מִשְׁקָהּ, דְּכַתְּבִיב: “וְנִעְלַם מֵעֵינֵי אִישָׁה”, כִּךְ הִיא אִם הִיָּתָה סוּמָא לֹא הִיָּתָה שׁוֹטֵהָ. רַב אֲשִׁי אָמַר: בְּשֵׁם שְׁחִיגָרַת וְגִידְמַת לֹא הִיָּתָה שׁוֹטֵהָ, דְּכַתְּבִיב:

#### Perek IV Daf 27 Amud b

“וְהָעֶמִיד הִכְהֵן אֶת הָאִשָּׁה לִפְנֵי ה'... וְנָתַן עַל כַּפֶּיהָ”, כִּךְ הוּא אִם הִיָּה חִיגָר אוֹ גִידֵם לֹא הִיָּה מִשְׁקָהּ. מָר בַּר רַב אֲשִׁי אָמַר: בְּשֵׁם שְׂאִילְמַת לֹא הִיָּתָה שׁוֹטֵהָ, דְּכַתְּבִיב: “וְאָמְרָה הָאִשָּׁה אָמֵן אָמֵן”, כִּךְ הוּא אִם הִיָּה אֵילִם לֹא הִיָּה מִשְׁקָהּ.

הדרן עלך ארוסה

**Just as the water evaluates her fidelity, etc. – כָּשֶׁם שֶׁהַמַּיִם בּוֹדְקִין אוֹתָהּ וְכוּ׳** The Jerusalem Talmud cites a number of additional derivations, most of which are quoted in *Tosafot*, for the *halakha* that the water evaluates not only the wife but the paramour as well. Among the sources is the fact that the numerical value of the word used to describe the ability of the water to cause the curse, *hame'arerim* (Numbers 5:18), is 496. This is twice the number 248, which corresponds to the number of limbs in a person's body. It indicates that the water evaluates not only the 248 limbs of the woman, but the 248 limbs of the alleged paramour as well.

**The two times that it is stated in the passage: She is defiled – שְׁנֵי פַעַמִּים הָאִמּוּרִים בִּפְרָשָׁה נִטְמָאָה** – In fact, this phrase is stated more than twice in the passage, and therefore the early commentaries discuss which verses are being discussed here and why the others are not counted here, as they are later. Rashi explains that only two mentions of the phrase are expounded here because the other mentions are interpreted elsewhere as teaching other *halakhot*.

**On that same day – בּוֹ בַּיּוֹם** – Rashi comments, based on the Gemara (*Berakhot* 28a), that whenever the Mishna uses this description it is referring to the day that Rabban Gamliel was removed from his position as *Nasi* of the Sanhedrin and was replaced by Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya. On that day many halakhic matters were discussed, elucidated, and clarified, many of which are cited in tractate *Eduyyot*. It appears that this day marked a change in the method of study in the study hall, as rather than having the discussion centered only around the *Nasi*, other Sages were able to express their opinions with greater freedom. Some commentaries explain that apparently the initial statement of Rabbi Akiva in this mishna was also stated on that day, and that is why the mishna continues to mention other seemingly unconnected matters that were taught on that day.

**A loaf that has second-degree impurity...can render other food impure with third-degree impurity – כֶּכֶר שֶׁנִּי שְׂמִטָּמָא אֶת הַשְּׁלִישִׁי** – A loaf that has second-degree impurity refers to one that is rendered impure by being placed in an earthenware vessel, such as an oven, which itself has first-degree impurity. Rabbi Akiva states that this loaf, which has second-degree impurity, can impart third-degree impurity to another loaf, even if the other loaf is non-sacred. Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai seems to take the opposite extreme opinion, that a loaf with second-degree impurity cannot transmit impurity even to a loaf of *teruma*. However, the *halakha* is not in accordance with either of these extreme opinions; an item that has second-degree impurity can transmit impurity to *teruma* and consecrated food, thereby disqualifying them from being eaten, but it cannot transmit impurity to non-sacred food.

**MISHNA** Just as the water evaluates her fidelity,<sup>NH</sup> so too, the water evaluates his, i.e., her alleged paramour's, involvement in the sin, as it is stated: "And the water that causes the curse shall enter into her" (Numbers 5:24), and it is stated again: "And the water that causes the curse shall enter into her and become bitter" (Numbers 5:27). It is derived from the double mention of the phrase "and...shall enter" that both the woman and her paramour are evaluated by the water.

Furthermore, prior to her drinking the water, just as she is forbidden to her husband, so too is she forbidden to her paramour,<sup>H</sup> because in contrast to the verse stating: "Is defiled [*nitma'a*]" (Numbers 5:14), a superfluous conjoining prefix *vav* is added to a later verse, rendering the phrase: "And is defiled [*venitma'a*]" (Numbers 5:29). The addition indicates another prohibition, that of the woman to her paramour. This is the statement of Rabbi Akiva.

Rabbi Yehoshua said: That was how Zekharya ben HaKatzav would interpret it, i.e., he also derived from the superfluous *vav* that the woman is forbidden to her paramour. Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi says an alternate source: The two times that the defilement of the wife is stated in the passage, namely: "And he warns his wife, and she is defiled" (Numbers 5:14),<sup>N</sup> and the later verse: "When a wife, being under her husband, goes astray and is defiled" (Numbers 5:29), indicate that her defilement results in two prohibitions. One is that she is forbidden to her husband and one is that she is forbidden to her paramour.

**§ On that same day<sup>N</sup>** that Rabbi Elazar ben Azarya was appointed head of the Sanhedrin, Rabbi Akiva interpreted the verse: "And every earthen vessel into which any of them falls, whatever is in it shall be impure [*yitma*], and you shall break it" (Leviticus 11:33), as follows: The verse does not state: Is impure [*tamei*], but rather: "Shall be impure," in order to indicate that not only does the vessel itself become ritually impure, but it can now render other items ritually impure. This teaches with regard to a loaf that has second-degree ritual impurity status due to its being placed inside an earthenware vessel that had first-degree impurity, that it can render other food with which it comes into contact impure with third-degree impurity<sup>N</sup> status.

#### HALAKHA

**Just as the water evaluates her fidelity, etc. – כָּשֶׁם שֶׁהַמַּיִם בּוֹדְקִין אוֹתָהּ וְכוּ׳** At the very same time that the *sota* dies, her paramour with whom she committed the act of adultery dies as well, in the same manner as she did, no matter where he may be at the time (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 3:17).

**Just as she is forbidden to her husband so too is she forbidden to her paramour – כָּשֶׁם שֶׁאִסוּרָה לִבְעַל כֵּךְ אִסוּרָה לְבוֹעֵל** – If a woman who was warned by her husband subsequently secludes herself with the man she was warned about, she is forbidden

to her husband as well as to her paramour. If the paramour transgresses the *halakha* and marries her, he is obligated to give her a bill of divorce. However, if a man engages in sexual intercourse with a married woman in such a manner that she remains permitted to her husband, e.g., if he rapes her, she is not rendered forbidden to him in the event she is either widowed or divorced (*Beit Shmuel*). For a summary of some of the many discussions surrounding this *halakha* see *Arukh HaShulhan* (Rambam *Sefer Nashim*, *Hilkhot Sota* 2:12; *Shulhan Arukh*, *Even HaEzer* 11:1, 178:17).



Who will remove the dirt from your eyes – מי יגלה עפר – **מי יגלה עפר**: This phrase is understood to mean: How I wish that you were resurrected from death. This is because during burial the eyes of the deceased are covered with dirt, and this expression alludes to the time when the deceased will remove the dirt as he opens his eyes and sees again (*Mitzpe Eitan*).

Two thousand cubits for fields and vineyards – ואלפים: **אמה שדות וכרמים**: Rashi explains this to mean that every Levite city was surrounded by a two-thousand-cubit area on all sides; the inner one thousand cubits were set aside as the city's tract of open space and the outer one thousand cubits were designated for fields and vineyards. The Rambam, however, rules in accordance with the straightforward meaning of the mishna (see *Kesef Mishne*), that beyond the one thousand cubits of the city's tract of open space was an additional two thousand cubits of fields and vineyards. Accordingly, the limits of the Levite cities stretched three thousand cubits outward in every direction.

### HALAKHA

One thousand cubits as a tract, etc. – אֶלֶף אַמָּה מִגֶּרֶשׁ וכו' – The Levite cities are provided with a surrounding area spanning a radius of three thousand cubits; the first thousand cubits constitute the tract and the remaining two thousand are used for fields and vineyards. This ruling is in accordance with the Rambam's understanding of the statement of Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili. This is not in accordance with Rabbi Akiva's ruling, as most authorities agree that by Torah law the Shabbat limit is not two thousand cubits as Rabbi Akiva maintains (*Rambam Sefer Zera'im, Hilkhos Shemitta VeYovel* 13:2 and *Kesef Mishne* there).

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻׁעַ: מִי יִגְלֶה עֹפֶר מֵעֵינַיִךְ רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זִכְאִי, שֶׁהֵייתָ אוֹמֵר: עֲתִיד דּוֹר אַחֵר לְטַהֵר כְּבוֹר שְׁלֹשִׁי, שָׂאִין לוֹ מִקְרָא מִן הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהוּא טָמֵא. וְהֵלֵא רַבִּי עֲקִיבָא תַלְמִידֶיךָ מִבֵּיא לוֹ מִקְרָא מִן הַתּוֹרָה שֶׁהוּא טָמֵא, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "כֹּל אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹכוֹ יִטְמָא."

בו ביום דרש רבי עקיבא: "ומדות מחוץ לעיר את פאת קדמה אלפים באמה" וגו', ומקרא אחר אמר: "מקיר העיר וחוצה אלף אמה סביב".

אי אפשר לומר "אלף אמה" שכבר נאמר "אלפים אמה", ואי אפשר לומר "אלפים אמה" שכבר נאמר "אלף אמה". הא ביצד? אלף אמה מגרש, ואלפים אמה תחום השבת.

רבי אליעזר בנו של רבי יוסי הגלילי אמר: אלף אמה מגרש, ואלפים אמה שדות וכרמים.

בו ביום דרש רבי עקיבא: "אז ישיר משה ובני ישראל את השירה הזאת לה' ויאמרו לאמר" – שאין תלמוד לומר "לאמר", ומה תלמוד לומר "לאמר"? מלמד, שהיו ישראל עונין שירה אחרי של משה על כל דבר ודבר בקוראין את הלל ("אשירה לה' כי גאה גאה"). לכן נאמר "לאמר".

After hearing Rabbi Akiva's statement, Rabbi Yehoshua said: Who will remove the dirt from your eyes,<sup>N</sup> Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai,<sup>P</sup> so that you could live and see this? As you would say: In the future, another generation is destined to deem pure a loaf that contracted third-degree impurity, as there is no explicit verse from the Torah stating that it is impure. But now Rabbi Akiva, your disciple, brings a verse from the Torah indicating that it is impure, as it is stated: "Whatever is in it shall be impure."

Furthermore, on that same day Rabbi Akiva interpreted the verses with regard to the Levite cities as follows: One verse states: "And you shall measure outside the city for the east side two thousand cubits ... this shall be for them the open land outside the cities" (Numbers 35:5), and another verse states: "And the open land around the cities, which you shall give to the Levites, shall be from the wall of the city and outward one thousand cubits round about" (Numbers 35:4).

It is impossible to say that the area around the cities given to the Levites was only one thousand cubits, as it is already stated: "Two thousand cubits." And it is impossible to say that two thousand cubits were left for them, as it is already stated: "One thousand cubits." How can these texts be reconciled? One thousand cubits are to be set aside as a tract<sup>H</sup> of open land surrounding the city, and the two thousand cubits are mentioned not in order to be given to the Levites, but to indicate the boundary of the Shabbat limit, beyond which it is forbidden to travel on Shabbat. This verse thereby serves as the source for the two-thousand-cubit Shabbat limit.

Rabbi Eliezer, son of Rabbi Yosei HaGelili, says otherwise: One thousand cubits were given to the Levites as an open tract of land, that could not be planted or built upon, and two thousand cubits of additional land were given to the Levites for planting fields and vineyards.<sup>N</sup>

Additionally, on that same day Rabbi Akiva interpreted the verse: "Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to the Lord, and said, saying" (Exodus 15:1), as follows: As there is no need for the verse to state the word "saying," because it states the word "said" immediately prior to it, why must the verse state the word "saying"? It teaches that the Jewish people would repeat in song after Moses every single statement he said, as is done when reciting *hallel*. After Moses would recite a verse, they would say as a refrain: "I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted" (Exodus 15:1). It is for this reason that the word "saying" is stated, in addition to the word "said."

### PERSONALITIES

Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai – רַבִּי יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זִכְאִי – Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai was the youngest of Hillel the Elder's students. He headed the Sanhedrin after the destruction of the Second Temple and was one of the greatest leaders in the history of the Jewish people. He lived to an old age and served as the leader of the Jewish people for many years. The Sages said of him that there was not a single area of Torah that he neglected. Despite his prominence, he was a modest individual who greeted every person he met, including gentiles in the marketplace.

Even while the Temple stood Rabban Yohanan was acknowledged as a leading Torah scholar, and most of the Sages of that generation were his students. He strongly opposed the Jewish Great Revolt against the Romans and instead attempted to resolve issues with Rome peacefully. As one of the leaders of the besieged Jerusalem, he was aware that the city would soon fall. He succeeded in escaping with the help of several

of his students in order to appear before the Roman general Vespasian, who received him warmly. When his prediction that Vespasian would be appointed emperor was fulfilled, Vespasian rewarded him by allowing him to establish a new center of Torah study and Jewish leadership in Yavne and by saving the life of the Nasi, Rabban Gamliel.

In Yavne Rabban Yohanan instituted a wide range of ordinances that offered hope for Jewish continuity in the absence of the Temple, even as they served to commemorate the Temple and promised the possibility of its ultimate rebuilding. The results of his efforts are integral to the modern practice of halakhic Judaism. His students taught Torah throughout Eretz Yisrael following the destruction of the Temple, and he served as a mentor for Rabban Gamliel of Yavne, who succeeded him in the leadership capacity as the acting *Nasi*.

Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus – רבי יהושע בן הורקנוס: This Sage is mentioned only in this mishna, and it is unknown who he was. It would appear from the context that he was a disciple of Rabbi Akiva. Some scholars maintain that he was the younger brother of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, but there is no evidence of this.

## NOTES

And still the matter is even – ועדיין הדבר שקול: According to the simple interpretation of the mishna, the reason for the ambiguity is the discrepancy between the two ways in which the word “lo” can be understood. However, Rabbi David Luria questions this interpretation, as the word “lo,” written with the letter vav, is generally understood as meaning: To him. He therefore suggests that the ambiguity exists even assuming the meaning of: To him, as the verse can be read either as a declarative sentence: “Though He will slay me, still I will trust in Him”; or it can be read as a rhetorical question: “Shall I still trust in Him even if He slays me?” Therefore, further evidence is necessary to resolve the ambiguity, as the problem cannot be resolved through the verse itself.

The disciple of your disciple – תלמיד תלמידך: Earlier in the mishna Rabbi Yehoshua refers to Rabbi Akiva as the disciple of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, although Rabbi Akiva, like Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus, was only a disciple of his disciples, as he studied under Rabban Yohanan’s students Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Yehoshua. The Rambam (Commentary on the Mishna) explains that Rabbi Yehoshua refers to Rabbi Akiva as Rabban Yohanan’s disciple in order to emphasize that due to the spectacular degree of Rabbi Akiva’s scholarship, he could be considered worthy of being a disciple of Rabban Yohanan himself, while Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus, whose greatness was of a smaller magnitude, did not deserve as lofty a description. Alternatively, since Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus was a student of Rabbi Akiva, he was therefore referred to as a disciple of Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai’s disciple (*Torat Hayyim*).

Rabbi Nehemya says: The people sang the song together with Moses as is done when reciting *Shema*, which is recited in unison after the prayer leader begins, and not as is done when reciting *hallel*.

On that same day Rabbi Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus<sup>p</sup> taught: Job served the Holy One, Blessed be He, only out of love, as it is stated: “Though He will slay me, still I will trust in Him” (Job 13:15). And still, the matter is even,<sup>n</sup> i.e., the verse is ambiguous, as there are two possible interpretations of the verse. Was Job saying: I will await Him, expressing his yearning for God; or should the verse be interpreted as saying I will not await Him. As the word “lo” can mean either “to him” or “not,” it is unclear which meaning is intended here. This dilemma is resolved elsewhere, where the verse states a clearer indication of Job’s intent: “Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me” (Job 27:5). This teaches that he acted out of love.

Rabbi Yehoshua said: Who will remove the dirt from your eyes, Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai, so that you could live and see this? As you taught all your life that Job worshipped the Omnipresent only out of fear, as it is stated: “And that man was wholehearted and upright, and God-fearing, and shunned evil” (Job 1:1); but now Yehoshua ben Hyrcanus, the disciple of your disciple,<sup>n</sup> has taught that Job acted out of love.

**GEMARA** It is stated in the mishna that just as the water evaluates whether the woman was unfaithful, so too, the water evaluates whether he committed this sin. The Gemara asks: To whom does this refer? If we say that it is referring to the husband, what did the husband do that he should be evaluated? And if you would say

רבי נחמיה אומר: בקורין את שמע וְלֹא בקורין את הַלֵּל.

בו ביום דרש רבי יהושע בן הורקנוס: לֹא עָבַד אֱיֹב אֶת הַקְדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא אֶלָּא מֵאַהֲבָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “הֵן יִקְטֹלֵנִי לֹא אֵיחָל.” וְעַדִּין הַדָּבָר שָׁקוּל, לֹא אֲנִי מִצָּפָה אוֹ אֲנִי מִצָּפָה? תִּלְמוּד לומר: “עַד אֲנֻעַם לֹא אֲסִיר תִּמְתִּי מִמֶּנִּי,” מִלְּמֵד שֶׁמֵּאַהֲבָה עָשָׂה.

אָמַר רַבִּי יְהוֹשֻעַ: מִי יִגְלֶה עֲפָר מֵעֵינַי רַבִּן יוֹחָנָן בֶּן זַכַּי, שֶׁהֵייתָ דוֹרֵשׁ כָּל יָמֶיךָ שֶׁלֹּא עָבַד אֱיֹב אֶת הַמָּקוֹם אֶלָּא מִיִּרְאָה, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: “אִישׁ תָּם וְיֹשֵׁר יֵרָא אֱלֹהִים וְסָר מֵרָע,” וְהֵלֵא יְהוֹשֻעַ תִּלְמוּד תִּלְמוּדֶיךָ לְמַד שֶׁמֵּאַהֲבָה עָשָׂה.

גמ' "אותו". למאן? אילימא לבעל, בעל מאי עביד? וכי תימא,